Planning reference 2018/1058/P

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Attention of Lisa McCann, planning department
Lisa.mccann@camden.gov.uk

Planning objection from 41 Countess Road

The reasons for objections are as follows:

I believe Camden Council policy is to encourage green spaces but the extension proposed will build over a large part of the garden, which is contrary to your green credentials.

The development is harmful to my residential amenity. Because of the nature my patio and garden area (large trees at the end of the garden) such a development will wall me in. I am concerned about the height of the walls and the glass roof.

The property is situated in the Kentish Town Conservation Area. As set out in the Kentish Town Conservation Area Appraisal 2011, the character of Countess Road within the Conservation Area context is defined by the series of three-storey residential properties within narrow plots and with long rear gardens. The Appraisal is clear that the character of the residential properties within the Conservation Area is that they are of homogeneous design, usually with slate roofs

The proposed development is for a single storey extension at ground floor level, with a glass roof and which would substantially shorten the rear garden. All of these characteristics would be a significant departure from the current streetscape and would harm the setting of the Conservation Area.

No heritage impact assessment nor assessment of impacts on the Conservation Area has been carried out as part of the Application (the submitted Planning Statement is also insufficiently detailed to make up for this) but it is clear that the proposed development would harm the setting of the Conservation Area, potentially to a substantial degree, meaning that planning permission should be refused in accordance with the Council's statutory duty under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and National Planning Policy Framework 2012. Even in the event that the Council considers that the proposed development would cause less than substantial harm to the Conservation Area, planning permission should still be refused because there are evidently no public benefits to the proposed development, and any benefits that the applicant may espouse are certainly insufficient to outweigh the harm that the development would cause to the Conservation Area, the preservation of which must be given great weight in the Council's decision making.

The Conservation Area Appraisal at section 5.9 also makes it clear that, currently, all the properties on Countess Road make a positive contribution to the Conservation Area. Should the proposed development be carried out, the property will no longer make this positive contribution - indeed, it will detract from the Conservation Area. Planning permission should therefore be refused.

The Appraisal also highlights at section 6 that one of the key risks to the Conservation Area is incremental intensity of residential use, including with the infilling of rear gardens. This is exactly what is being proposed by this Planning Application. The same section makes it clear that there is little capacity for new development within the Conservation Area, and the examples of development listed as potentially positive does not include rear extensions to existing residential units. Planning permission should therefore be refused.

The proposed development will also not meet the minimum space standards for either of its bedrooms, which is unacceptable and contrary to planning policy. It will not therefore create a sustainable development and, regardless of the assertions of the Applicant, will not create an appealing or acceptably habitable residential property.

It is surprising to me that there has been no design and access statement submitted with the Application, given its location in the Conservation Area, where design is obviously a key issue for consideration. As such, it does not seem to me that the Council can be confident that the design of the proposed development will be appropriate in this area.

Parin Young
16/5/2017