

**Planning Department**  
**Camden Council**  
Camden Town Hall  
Judd Street  
London  
WC1H 9JE

21<sup>st</sup> June 2018

Our ref: 5ADP 566

Dear Sirs

### 13 ST. AUGUSTINES ROAD, NW1 9RL

Please find attached a full planning application regarding the front boundary and garden treatments at the above address. These differ from the originally approved scheme for which permission was granted on the 4th February 2014 (2013/5715/P). The following documents are provided in support of this submission:

- Plans as approved (5ADP 566-02C - 2 sheets)
- Plans as existing (5ADP 566-02D - 3 sheets)
- Plans as proposed (5ADP 566-02E - 3 sheets)
- Arboricultural statement (by Tree Projects)
- Location plan.

The following statement will serve to put the application into context and provide the Camden planning department with information they will require to make an informed evaluation.

#### **1. Background**

The site comprises a four storey semi-detached building located on the north-west side of St Augustine's Road, towards the junction with Agar Grove. The property is divided into two self-contained flats; a lower ground floor maisonette (13B), and a 4-bed dwelling on ground and upper floors (13A). The property is located within the Camden Square Conservation Area and is identified as making a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area, forming a pair with No. 15.

#### **2. Previous relevant applications**

04/02/2014 - (2013/5715/P) Conditional permission granted for a basement excavation beneath footprint of existing property, with front and rear lightwells. Erection of a single storey rear extension and two-storey side extension, and the installation of a dormer window and two conservation-style rooflights to side roofslope, all to provide additional accommodation to two existing self-contained flats.

04/12/2014 - (2013/5715/P) A non-material amendment to vary a condition was granted, to increase the size of the basement (by 6sqm), remove a rear external staircase and introduce a window at

ground floor level to 'basement and single storey rear extension and two-storey side extension and dormer' approved under prior planning permission.

09/12/2015 – (2015/6940/PRE) A pre-application enquiry was made to determine the possibility of alterations to the front garden and boundary treatment with a view to providing for one off street parking space.

17/04/2016 – (2015/3283/P) A full application was granted to demolish the existing front steps, side porch and garden side wall.

22/09/2017 – (2017/5311/P) A full application was made to achieve retrospective permission for front garden and boundary treatments which had been constructed, but did not conform with approved designs. The application was subsequently withdrawn under advisement from the Council, to be revised and re-submitted in due course.

Reference may be made to the aforementioned within the following paragraphs.

### **3. Reason for application**

Construction at 13 St. Augustines Road has now been completed. My client has been contacted by Camden Council regarding the discrepancy between what was originally approved and what has been constructed with regards to the front garden and boundary treatments. An enforcement notice (Case No: RS/PE/ EN17/0336) has been issued and after discussion with the case officer, it has been agreed that an application should be made to offer a revised scheme for consideration.

### **4. Design rationale behind current construction**

The approved design for the front garden and boundary treatment can be seen in the attached plans 5ADP 566-02C 1 & 2. In essence, it retained the previously existing incongruous piers with a white picket fence as a garden boundary. The garden area itself was to be improved with planting and allow for two cycle spaces and bin storage.

This proposal addresses the issues highlighted by the Council planner during an on-site visit and in subsequent email exchanges.

In discussing the current design, it is of value to address each of the features which have been built into the existing garden and boundary treatment, in their context within St. Augustines Road. These are:

- The piers
- The double entrance
- Concealed bin & cycle storage
- Use of railings in the boundary treatment to garden
- Overall appearance in relation to street scene

### **The piers:**

St. Augustines Road descends towards Murry Street at an angle of between 1 and 2 degrees and therefore the piers are of slightly different height when viewed individually. However, all the capping stones match in height when viewed at eye level, forming a satisfying and symmetrical linear arrangement. The overall height is no higher than the tallest of the original piers. The piers are made of brick, which has been rendered and painted white to match the lower area of the property itself and is consistent with many of the properties along the same road. The dry cast stone 'regency' capping stones provide a quality finish to the overall appearance of the piers. These same capping stones can be seen at several of the other properties along the road, No. 23 being one such example. Also, pier design and scale along the road is varied and disparate, as are the boundary treatments, which can no longer be said to 'characterise' the area, if indeed they had done in the past. Two of the existing piers have been removed in this proposal to leave an original number of three.

### **The double entrance:**

The double entrance has now been removed, with the original entrance now being the sole point of access to the property. Internally to the garden area, a small side gate allows access to flat 13B, via a reduced length path. This arrangement will be disguised by an extra area of planting.

### **Concealed bin & cycle storage:**

The simple exercise of walking up and down St. Augustines Road brings to the attention the unsightliness of different colour waste and recycling bins in front gardens. Some residences have very old concrete, mostly pebble dashed, bin stores which in most cases are decrepit and nearly just as unsightly. Mention was made in application **2015/3283/P** that the 'previously approved front bin store will be enlarged to suit the requirements of the additional dwelling'.

The idea behind the proposed design solution at No. 13 is to conceal these unsightly objects behind an unassuming façade. This proposal also shows the storage unit reduced in height by 200mm. Any lower than this and the bins will not fit in. The storage unit has also been reduced in length by over half. The elevation face will in turn be hidden behind planting and the storage unit could potentially have an additional planter on top to further reduce any perceived impact.

### **Use of railings in the boundary treatment to garden**

Prior to the current refurbishment and enhancement of No. 13, this property had lain derelict for many years. The Ash tree in the front garden had grown beyond its intended size and consequently knocked over the previously existing low boundary wall. The trunk section at ground level is now of such a diameter that it is not possible to re-build a traditional boundary wall. Applications were made to fell this tree years ago, all meeting with refusal. Eventually, permission was granted to reduce the crown and thereby the overall scale of the tree. Nonetheless, the size at the base remains an issue. The previous solution had been to erect a white painted picket fence. The report on pre-application enquiry **2015/6940/PRE** identified this solution as 'highly incongruous within the street scene. This proposal, with the benefit of Tree Projects' arboricultural report, proposes to, depending on site conditions, construct a low brick wall as requested, between the two piers in

front of the Ash tree. The wrought iron railing fence, painted black, to tie in with the railings on the upper ground floor window 'balconies', will be reduced in proportion, to sit atop this wall.

**Overall appearance in relation to street scene:**

The report on pre-application enquiry **2015/6940/PRE** mentions that, the property being in a conservation area, the test which any proposal is assessed against is to '...preserve and enhance the character and appearance of the existing site...', it also goes on to state that 'paths, boundary walls and other details characteristic of the street should be retained or reinstated unless new solutions can be presented which enhance the area'. It also goes on to state that '...works to restore or replace the front boundary treatment with a sensitive alternative would be welcomed'. By the aforementioned, we strongly feel that we have demonstrated that a sensitive alternative has indeed been found, within the confines of site restrictions, such as the Ash tree for example and would go so far as to argue that an exemplary solution has been found to concealing unsightly bins and bicycles etc., thereby enhancing the enjoyment of the appearance of a front garden and improving the street scene as it stands.

Further development will occur along this street, as is already the case, bringing with it the requirement for sensitive solutions to such problems as have been dealt with in this statement. Contrary to opinions stated in the pre-application report previously mentioned, St. Augustines Road appears, to a design professional such as myself, who is not local and has visited the area a handful of times, not to have front boundary uniformity.

The property at No. 13 has been tremendously enhanced by the recent complete refurbishment, evidenced by several local residents who were approached during a recent visit. The overall consensus was, at worst, that it was 'nice'.

Whilst we are sensitive to the intricacies of an individual's 'taste', we submit that, while not built to the originally approved design, the proposed front garden and boundary treatment is considerate and actually serves to enhance the street scene, adding an air of quality to the property.

We therefore ask that you consider this planning proposal for the works described above and shown in the attached drawings.

We trust our application meets with your approval. Should you require any further information or clarification, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Yours faithfully

5 Arches Design & Planning

Matthew J. Scholes