

Camden Square Conservation Area Advisory Committee

**81 St Augustine's Road
London NW1**

Date: 15 November 2018

Planning application Reference: 2018/4411/P

Proposal: Erection of infill extension at lower ground floor level, external insulation and render to existing lower ground and ground floor projecting wing; replacement of door with sash windows, additional window to side elevation and replacement of sash window with French doors at upper ground floor level including terrace and relocation of external stairs to southern boundary; replacement of conservatory with fully glazed extension with rooflight at 1st floor level; enlargement of existing dormer with hot water solar panel above and rooflight; all to rear elevation. Enlargement of dormer and relocation of rooflight to front elevation.

Summary: As it stands, we **object** to the proposed development. Concerns over its bulk and unresolved technical problems indicate that the proposed development will neither maintain nor enhance the Camden Square Conservation Area and in its current state should therefore be rejected.

Comments:

1. Although the drawings are generally of a reasonable standard, certain essential structural elements are omitted in section.
2. The height and volume of the proposal (bulk) are inappropriate
 - 2.1. The rear dormer is too dominant. Two nearby examples have been cited as comparable. That at 84 St Augustine's Road is quite a bit narrower, but, significantly, according the approved planning application 2015/1968/P has not been built. The dormer is significantly taller and appears wider than the drawing. (Calling attention to this development, of which another element has already been subject of a demolition and enforcement notice, the architect has helpfully revealed to us other aspects not constructed as drawn. Camden may also wish to take enforcement action against the much larger inset rear balcony and an apparent door to the flat roof of the extension adjacent.)
 - 2.2. The other cited rear dormer, to 14 South Villas, is much smaller than the current proposal. The side clearances are labelled as 1160mm in the January 2012 application drawing, rather than 500mm shown in the current application for 81 St Augustine's Road. Moreover its front face is set far back from the eaves (about halfway up the rear pitch), significantly reducing its prominence.
3. The scale and proportion of the development do not relate to the neighbouring buildings

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- 3.1. The generally horizontal treatment of the rear extensions could be considered a reasonable contrast to the verticality of the original, but the large, wide sash window to the second floor rear extension is proportionally oversized for its high position as well as unlikely to be technically achievable as a timber sliding sash window.
4. While the internal layouts appear attractive, numerous technical issues are not dealt with.
 - 4.1. The roof to the first floor room atop the rebuilt extension is shown as completely flat and implausibly thin, and a rooflight shown in plan does not appear in rear or side elevation.
 - 4.2. No slope is shown to the front dormer roof.
 - 4.3. The rear dormer is implausibly drawn, with areas of very thin walls and roof immediately behind the windows, which would represent serious cold-bridges and not receive building control approval. Its roof and solar panel therefore would be more prominent than drawn, and the proposed rooflight in the remaining slope above (shown longer in roof plan than in section) is highly unlikely to be practicable.
 - 4.4. In addition, the section and lower ground floor plan shows no way of supporting the retained rear bay above if the bottom storey of it were removed. This would have a significant bearing on the newly extended main room.

Technically unresolved representations showing roofs lower or thinner than feasible are extremely common in the planning applications on which we comment. The resulting structures are usually more prominent than drawn and it is disappointing that these technical issues are not recognised earlier in the planning process.

5. If the oversized rear dormer were significantly reduced and the numerous technical aspects more thoroughly considered and convincingly drawn, we would be likely to find this proposal appropriate and acceptable. However, in its current state, we must recommend its rejection

Signed:
David Blagbrough
Chair
Camden Square CAAC

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