

ADVICE from Primrose Hill Conservation Area Advisory Committee

15 November 2018

4 St Mark's Square NW1 7TN 2018/4555/P + 2018/5122/L (Retrospective)

Objection.

The Committee raised this unauthorised work to a Listed Building because of the special importance of front boundary walls in the conservation area. This importance is reflected in the Article 4 Direction of 1983 which removes permitted development rights to alter front boundary walls in the CA, including, specifically, this property.

The property is at a highly visible location in the conservation area, at the junction of St Mark's Square, Regent's Park Road and Princess Road: the boundary walls are prominent in a number of views across and along these streets.

The importance, and character, of boundary treatments, is specifically set out in policy guidance in the Primrose Hill Conservation Area Statement which is current SPG, at PH36 which specifically notes that boundaries in the CA are predominantly formed by brick walls or railings, and that proposals to erect new boundary structures or alter existing boundary structures 'should reflect the original boundary style'. The introduction of a timber fence in this case does not reflect the original boundary style, but is alien and intrusive in terms of materials.

The increase in height is also inappropriate. There is a balance in the conservation area between openness and seclusion, where front gardens are generally visible from the public realm – a characteristic fundamental to the sense of the area as 'green'. The PHCAAC has successfully sought to protect this balance in other cases in the CA. What may appear now as a modest loss can be taken as a precedent leading to cumulative harm to the character and appearance of the conservation area.

We note that the privacy of this house has been achieved by the planting. Security concerns could be addressed by less harmful means.

Richard Simpson FSA

Chair