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Attn.: Mr. Thomas Sild

Planning Officer

Camden Council

Thomas.sild@camden.gov.uk

**RE: Planning Application 2019/2964/P, 4b Hampstead Hill Gardens.**

Dear Mr. Sild**:**

I am writing to you as a longstanding resident of Hampstead Hill Gardens to express my very strong opposition to the proposed plans to radically redevelop 4b Hampstead Hill Gardens (2019/2964/P).

I have lived on this road for almost 20 years and sincerely believe that the proposed plans are incompatible with Camden Planning policies, with the Hampstead Neighbourhood Plan and with the Hampstead Conservation Area Statement.

I urge you to reject this application for the following reasons:

* The modern design is inappropriate for the setting in which the property sits and a number of the proposed materials do not meet the standards of style or craftsmanship that would suit this site and this area;
* The design of the roof in particular is jarring and clashes physically and aesthetically with 4a to which it is attached, as well as with neighbouring properties;
* The “tower block” structure is not in keeping with the existing roofline and visibly detracts from neighbouring buildings;
* The proposed design clashes directly with Grade II listed buildings on the road, the views of/from which are protected;
* The height of the proposed structure would block sunlight for several neighbouring gardens and properties;
* The bulky, massing structure reduces the amenity of the road, creating an overhang sensation along the public walkways;
* The proposed basement extends to virtually the entire length of the property – and well outside the footprint of the structure – and directly contravenes Camden’s policies on basement construction;
* The extended basement structure would reduce critical green space for local residents, reducing habitat for local flora and fauna, while also impairing rainwater drainage;
* The extended basement would create a large, solid subterranean concrete block, damming underground water migration and causing flooding, damp and subsidence to nearby properties;
* The streetscape is defined by a cluster of Grade II listed homes designed by the Victorian architects Batterbury & Huxley. The proposed structure would severely compromise the streetscape and clash very directly with the existing profile of homes;
* The Basement Impact Assessment was flawed, in particular in that the bore hole samples were taken during a week when there was no rain. The lack of representative sampling undermines the conclusions of -- and in fact the very purpose of -- the BIA;
* The Applicant failed to properly consult on this Application: He discussed his plans in very general terms with local residents 4 months ago but failed to reflect any feedback in his application. In particular, the Applicant refused to conduct a pre app review with Camden Planning despite strong counsel to do so;
* The amount of construction being proposed doubles the habitable space on the property and adds two additional storeys, including a basement. This cannot be considered “conservation” but is rather a new development in its own right and should be rejected as it fails on many bases to adhere to the Hampstead Conservation Area Statement;
* The amenity of the road that is so highly valued by local residents would be seriously compromised by this plan: The lightscape would be diminished; the skyscape would be altered; the streetscape would be compromised. Views would be blocked and privacy impaired. There would most certainly be harm to local residents from this plan;
* The proposal would exacerbate subsidence to local properties, a number of which suffered greatly from the last basement construction project. The Applicant’s proposed remediation measures are unconvincing and the certain harm to near neighbours should alone be the basis for rejecting this Application;
* There is no policy justification for overriding Camden and Hampstead planning policies as the Applicant is not creating new housing stock for the community. This plan turns a 3 / 4 bedroom home into a 4 bedroom home – but for the same family only larger spaces. This does not satisfy Camden’s policy objectives;
* The site was never intended for such intensive overbuilding: This was historically open green space with a tennis court; then a small home with a garage; then two homes; and now what was the garage is intended to become a much larger home, dwarfing the original structure next door and completely infilling precious open urban space. This is overdevelopment;
* There is a restrictive covenant on the property at 4a, the original dominant structure, which has created an easement for light and air that should not be violated.

The application is for a modern, extremely large structure in a small space in a Conservation Area. This is simply too much development for the space intended, using a design which is overbearing and inappropriate given the setting. The damage to neighbouring homes, the harm to the streetscape and the compromising of this Conservation Area should not be allowed.

Please do all that you can to protect the heritage of this area and of Hampstead and decisively reject this application.

Kind regards.

Todd J. Berman.