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Planning - Development Control
Camden Council
Camden Town Hall
London WC1H 8ND

Date: 27 July 2019

Dear Sir/Madam

I am herewith applying for planning approval to replace the 3 traditional timber sash windows on the front (North) elevation of my flat no 2 in block number 24-25 Rousden St. NW1 0ST with new energy efficient double-glazed sash windows of similar style and appearance in high quality upvc. with 'white woodgrain' finish, Georgian glazing bars and traditional features.

The proposed windows are in keeping with the style of the existing windows and respectful of character of the area and street.

The windows are still the original softwood (cheap) windows of the 1980's block in traditional brick construction, built by a speculative housebuilders with limited architectural interest.

The block is in the Camden Broadway Conservation Area opposite no 17 Rousden St and no 15 Greenwood Almshouses. I quote the relevant paragraphs on the Camden Broadway Conservation area appraisal document (p. ..):

Rousden street appraisal :

The north side of the street has been much altered but contains the grade II listed Greenwood Almshouses, built in the 1820s as twelve dwellings in a terrace of four three-storey stucco houses. in a distinctive Victorian Gothick style and have square-headed sash windows with chamfered reveals Attached to the west of the almshouses, no. 17 (Camden Court) is a 1950s building of little architectural merit which has horizontal rectangular window openings that are at odds with the vertical emphasis characteristic of the early 19th century buildings in the area. To the east is a terrace of eight flat-roofed two-storey houses (2-9) dating to the 1950s which replaced a 19th century terrace cleared following bomb damage. Although one storey shorter than the prevailing character, this short stretch of terrace is unassuming, and retains much consistency in appearance having been little altered.

The south side is more consistent in appearance, having a more or less uniform parapet height and recessed window openings aligned at first and second floor that create a strong horizontal line along the length of the street. No. 24/25 is a late 20th century infill with references to the style of the rest of the terrace, although is the only building on the south side not to have a stucco ground floor. Although undoubtedly more successfully in keeping with the appearance of the street than no. 17 opposite, the central square-headed doorway and red brick soldier courses above the windows are perhaps somewhat crude.

.....”

Block 24-25 , though overall sympathetic to the scale and Georgian window elements of the street , is typical of the speculative buildings of the 1980's. Though making reference to the adjacent Georgian terrace , the windows are not historic, and need to be updated in terms of performance to comply with current Building Reg's, sustainability considerations and thermal/accoustic comfort standards.

There are also economic considerations (for normal working people) and needing to keep maintenance costs low.. The windows are in a poor state (see attached photo), decorations don't last, they are beyond economic repair and need replacement . The option to replace with decent timber double glazed is unaffordable (eg Anglian quoted over £11k) whilst the high spec. upvc are £7k . I am therefore seeking planning approval and making the case that they are 'an improvement' and respectful/in keeping with the local context.

The key messages in Camden's Planning Guidance on - 'Altering and extending your home' are:

- *Extensions and alterations to houses or flats should be of high quality and always take into account the character and design of the property and its effect on its surroundings and the amenity of neighbours.*
- *Windows, doors and materials should be of a high quality and complement the existing building. Low quality materials including uPVC will be resisted for use on the outside of a property.*

The proposed window replacement follows the above, and is an improvement and comply with the above, for the following reasons:

Character: The windows are in keeping with the character of the '80s building. The current dilapidated appearance is unsightly.

Aesthetics: The windows are respectful to the architectural heritage, in keeping with the style of the existing windows and character of the mixed area. They actually look very similar to the equivalent timber double-glazed in appearance (re thickness of profile glazing bars, 'decorative horns' etc).

Sustainability and Energy conservation: The proposed manufacturer /installer Anglian recycles the upvc windows.

The proposed windows are highly energy efficient and a rating of A, and comply with Building regulations PART L, and relevant planning policies re energy conservation.

Safety and security:They are secure (SBD) rated in compliance with Camden Planning Guidance policies about improving safety in the environment, providing active frontage directly on the street whilst protecting the inhabitants from break-ins.

As I had to move out of the flat and area when my family expanded many years ago, I have only just realised – and am surprised to find - that the flat is in a conservation area (it was quite rundown when I bought). Whilst I support the Council's efforts to preserve heritage and keep standards, however unlike other conservation areas this is one that embraces 'diversity', it is not an upmarket area with expensive properties and relevant incomes to support them, and the blanket restrictions on upvc windows seems unfair.

I have attached a lot of relevant documentation to support my case about the quality of the proposed new windows.

I hope you will consider my case with an open mind. If there is anything further you wish to clarify (eg evidence of the quotes received) please let me know (see contacts above).

I look forward to hearing from you.

Best Regards

Eleni Tsoskounoglou

Owner Flat 2 , 24-25 Rousden St.