

A. Hamilton
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London, NW6 1UG

Dear Planning Committee,

RE: 2019/5709/P

I write to object to the plans to convert the 12 garages behind 521 Finchley Road into 2 houses. While I support the use of brownfield sites for extra housing in Camden, I believe that the planned work will make the area unsafe for pedestrians and bikes.

I have included a diagram below to illustrate the issue. At present, the only access to 1E and 1F is a driveway running down from Parsifal Road past the garage area which will be redeveloped in this application. The space in front of the existing garages (yellow rectangle below) is a wide open area which is used as a walkway by pedestrians accessing 1E and 1F as well as those going to the back doors of 521 Finchley Road. The area is also used by children playing on bikes, and the wide space here makes this a safe activity. If any cars do approach, there is plenty of room to share the road with bikes and pedestrians.



There are two problems with how driveway will change in the proposed plans. First, in the proposal, the front garden of Unit B extends within 1m of the boundary of the property (red line). If the garden were built like this, it would not be physically possible for a car to drive from Parsifal Road to the proposed garages, because the car could not drive past the pinch point (see diagram). Note that part of the space outside 1E adjacent to the pinch point has steps and the rest is often full with parked cars.

With regard to my second point, I make the assumption that the developers might keep one corner of the front garden of Unit B as a roadway to let one car drive past the pinch point. However, this does not resolve the more important issue, which is the use of the driveway as a shared space. I believe that the narrow driveway left after the proposed building work cannot be safely shared between cars, bikes and pedestrians. In particular, the pinch-point is dangerous because when one car drives down from Parsifal Road (yellow car) and another leaves the garages (red car), they will meet at the pinch point, where the footprint of Unit B leaves no space to turn or pass. There is no line of sight for the cars to see each other because Unit B is in the way, and the yellow car will then

be forced to reverse uphill on the long narrow driveway and turn out backwards onto Parsifal Road. The driveway is a shared surface used by cars, bikes and pedestrians, including daily use by school children. It is therefore not safe for cars to reverse on this space. Allowing this seems contrary to all Camden's planning guidance to support pedestrians and bike users (some links are included below).

For this reason, I suggest that the current plans should be rejected. I would have no objection to a development with a smaller footprint which allows for cars to turn or pass each other at the pinch point and for pedestrians and bikes to have safe access to all the houses.

Thank you for your consideration

Antonia Hamilton

Some relevant sections of Camden Supplementary Planning guidance:

<https://www3.camden.gov.uk/planning/plan/spg/spg5vehiclesped.pdf>

5.7.12 It is essential in all developments to provide a safe environment for pedestrian movement at both the construction stage and in the completed scheme. All developments should be designed and constructed to meet the requirements of section 5.5 on Pedestrian Movement.

5.5.2 Where appropriate the Council will seek improvements for pedestrians and people with disabilities, particularly where access arrangements are changed, or where significant numbers of pedestrian trips are likely to be generated. In Conservation Areas, where appropriate, every effort should be made to retain or re-introduce the traditional surfaces such as natural stone or granite setts so long as pedestrians are not disadvantaged. The design of new pedestrian facilities must aim to fulfil the following objectives: **a** To maximise accessibility for all people, but especially those with disabilities, the elderly and children, **b** To minimise journey times for pedestrians, **c To reduce accident risk**, **d** To improve the street environment, **e** To improve personal security, **f To ensure that provision for vehicular movement does not adversely affect pedestrian movement**, **g** To expand the pedestrian network, **h** To minimise the possibility of pedestrian obstruction, eg pavement parking.

<http://camdocs.camden.gov.uk/HPRMWebDrawer/Record/7970141/file/document?inline>