Friday 7th February 2020

19.5115

Mr Ben Farrant

Planning Department

London Borough of Camden

5 Pancras Square

London

WC1H 9JE

Dear Ben

Re: Response to consultee comments for proposals at 13c Gardnor Road, application ref: 2019/6281/P

I write in response to the public comments received on the above planning application. This letter lets out a response to such comments and provides further justification on the acceptability of the proposed development.

*Impact to neighbouring properties*

In response to the comments made by Mr. T Keaney, we would like to offer the following statement to clarify and correct a few erroneous comments.

Firstly, in terms of visual privacy and overlooking, the comments do not consider the fact that the proposed dormer windows are obscurely glazed to 1.7 m above FFL and the proposed block window is entirely obscured, as such there will be no opportunity for overlooking from the rear of 13c Gardnor Road towards 56 Flask Walk. This includes any overlooking into the living room, bedrooms, patio gardens and dining room. The future residents themselves would not wish for their own privacy to be impacted which is why the dormers have been designed to ensure privacy and security is protected both ways.

In terms of artificial light, obscure glazing fades the release of any light leaving windows, therefore there would not be disruptive light spillage into the rear property. It is also important to note that the dormer windows are for bedroom use only, where there will be limited light use. The rear roof lights would be sloped toward the sky meaning any light would be directed upwards and away from the neighbouring properties.

As discussed within the planning statement, there would be no adverse impact in terms of limiting the light levels experienced by 56 Flask Walk. The impact of daylight and sunlight were key considerations within the design process and the proposals were finalised with confidence that daylight/ sunlight levels would not be adversely limited to neighbouring properties. The roof extension presents only a small increase in height (which matches height existing at 13b Gardnor Road) which will not adversely reduce the quality of daylight/ sunlight levels experienced to the rear.  Due to the angle of the roof (as shown within drawing PA 102) and the distance between the roof ridge and the dormers, it is also considered that the dormer extensions will be hidden behind the roof and will not be able to block any daylight/sunlight already received by the property.

It is also important to note, that contrary to the comments made by the Hampstead Heath Society, there are no windows of adjacent properties (No.13b and No.13 Gardnor road) which will have view or be impacted by the alterations. No. 13b does not have any windows to the rear, and there are no windows on the open side elevation on No.14 Gardnor Road. As such, there cannot be any impact upon daylight/ sunlight levels experienced by these properties.

Mr. T Keaney highlights concern over construction disruption. Although not technically a planning matter, this comment is taken on board. The applicants are keen to ensure construction disruption is kept to a minimum and would be open to working with the Council to ensure this is the case. It is also imperative to note that the applicants are not simply using the property as an investment, the works are required to make what is currently a constrained site into accommodation suitable for their family to live in as a permanent home.

The applicants sought advice from an architect and planning consultant to ensure the proposed works were designed to be of high quality and to ensure there would be no adverse impact to neighbouring properties. As discussed within this letter and the planning statement, the protection of neighbouring amenity were vital considerations and influenced the design from the very initial stages. As such, the proposals submitted are sympathetic and will not have any adverse impact upon privacy or daylight/sunlight levels.

The design of the proposals is high quality and overall the amendments are minor in consideration for the fact that the proposals create family sized accommodation and a higher quantum of liveable space. The amendments seek to optimise the site in line with the objectives of the Camden Local Plan (which strongly indicates a need for family sized housing) whilst maintaining the cottage character of the property.

*Character of Conservation Area*

It is acknowledged that the Hampstead Neighbourhood Forum have also lodged a response in relation to the character of the Conservation Area.

As the proposed dormers and skylights would be to the rear of the property, there would be no effect on the character and qualities of the street scene along Gardnor Road. There would be no view from the public realm, the dormers would only be visible from a limited number of private vantage points.

It is also important to highlight that the roof scape of 13a, b and c has already been disturbed by existing roof lights. As such, the roof scape cannot be reasonably described as largely unimpaired or unbroken. The additions proposed would not be breaking a uniform character. It is therefore concluded that the rear roof lights and dormers would not have a harmful impact upon the character or appearance of the host building or local area. The character of the Conservation Area would be preserved.

In regards to the front skylights, these would be flush within the roof pane and as such would not be able to be seen from street level. As in the case with the rear dormers, it is only from limited private vantage points that the additions would be able to be seen. As previously noted, there are numerous examples of properties within Gardnor Close and the immediate Conservation Area which have had roof lights and front dormers installed to the front of consistent terraced properties. It cannot reasonably be summarised in the case of these proposals that there would be an impact upon the character of the property or Conservation Area for such reasons.

It is further acknowledged that there are comments in relation to the increase in the roof ridge line. To clarify, the roof ridge line is only being increased to match that of 13b Gardnor Road. The increase is minor and has been carefully designed to ensure the existing tiles and bricks will be used where possible. The proposal also sympathetically incorporates the same brick detailing as existing. For such reasons, the increase does in no way detract from the character or appearance of the property or the surrounding area.

The Hampstead Conservation Area Statement mentions the contribution 13a,b and c makes to the Conservation Area. There is however no mention of the stepped down feature within the description. For this reason and for reason that the proposals will still incorporate the same style and features, it is not considered that the increase in roof ridge would have any adverse impact upon the Conservation Area or the character of the property.

It should also be noted that the pattern and grain of the neighbouring area is not uniform and forms a non-uniform and disjointed character. This is due to the high density nature of the area and also the numerous housing alterations, through extensions, roof alterations and additions which now contribute to this character.

Arguably, the surrounding area is visually complicated and ‘busy’. The alterations proposed in this case are therefore not out of character nor will create any adverse visual impact.

Overall, the proposals would result in the creation of family sized accommodation, which better utilises the site and provides a better quality living environment for the future occupiers. This has all been achieved with sympathetic and only minor changes to the property. None of the alterations proposed would result in adverse impact to the amenity of neighbouring property nor the character of the Conservation Area.

Should you require any further information to assess the application, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

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