

Sophia Chihab-eddine
Flat 17, Burgess Park Mansions, Fortune Green Road

Executive Summary:

We are not in favour of the applicant's request and would like Camden council to consider our position for the following reasons:

1. Neighbours have not been consulted on the project as requested by the council
2. The projects is prominent and is suggesting an increase of existing indoor area above 15% which appears to be excessive given the size of the plot and the age of the building
3. The issue of privacy and overlooking is a great matter of concern. The standard privacy distance between habitable rooms in Camden (and generally) is c. 18m. The distances in the scheme are below c. 16m (especially at the north part of the site given its triangular shape)
A significant reservation is the terrace/balcony areas above lower ground level at ground, first and third floor levels. These areas although proposed to be screened by a 1.8m fence/planting would allow views into habitable rooms of BPM at inter-visibility distances of c. 16m . These terrace balconies do not appear essential to meet amenity and space standards and would cause great harm to BPM residents.
4. The change of use does not seem relevant to the location and not beneficial to the local community, causing noise disturbances to neighbours
5. The site works face many challenges and difficulties and may cause high health and safety risks to the residents given the location of the site (on a red route) and no access to the site from the back, and none of these challenges have been addressed properly in the supporting documents

We recommend that the applicant considers the following:

1. Refurbish the existing to high standards and renounces to the over-development of the site with further extensions and adding external terraces given the impact and harm caused to neighbour properties and the age of the building. A conversion of the existing loft space can be envisaged to use the existing space.
2. A change of use that benefits the local community
3. Maintaining the retail area and offers high quality retail premises to local businesses

Details:

1- Neighbours consultation:

The applicant has been advised in the pre-approval process to run a consultation with the neighbours. Unfortunately, it has not been the case. We have been notified with a letter over Christmas break, but that cannot qualify as a consultation. Should the applicant have consulted us, we could have suggested different uses for the applicant to consider that could work financially for the applicant and at the same time have a positive impact on the community.

2- Over-development of the site:

The suggested design, size and height of the extensions raise great concerns.

The application requests a total extension of c. 200 sqm representing c. a 15% increase in existing areas. Considering external terraces, this percentage is considerably higher. This sounds prominent given the plot size and the age of the building.

Also, the applicant cannot compare its roof shape to 1-6 BPM which is a corner building. A double pitched roof for 551-557 Finchley road would look very different to adjacent properties.

Lastly, the number of external terraces suggested is unjustifiable and inappropriate creating unacceptable overlooking and privacy impact to BPM residents. These areas although proposed to be screened by a 1.8m fence/planting would allow views into habitable rooms of BPM at inter-visibility distances of c. 16m . These terrace balconies do not appear essential to meet amenity and space standards and would cause great harm to BPM residents.

3- Overlooking and Privacy:

A report on overlooking and privacy impact has not been submitted as part of the application.

The existing extension on the site does not allow any overlooking as the roof of the extension is not for use as a terrace.

The erection of a new full width extension spreading across all properties and the use of the first floor infill extension as external terraces would have a material impact on the privacy and overlooking on Burgess Park Mansions residents.

Given the triangular shape of the site, the distance between the suggested full width rear extension and BPM buildings on the extremity of the site will be very limited and below the standard privacy distance between habitable rooms in Camden (and generally) of c. 18m.

Plants screens cannot be a viable solution protecting privacy through the whole year (winter and autumn...).

4- Change of use and future business model:

The applicant submitted a Dutch & Dutch report highlighting the non-viability of retail and office use at the location. However, there were no reports or information supporting the apart-hotel business viability in the area.

In order to assume that an apart hotel is suitable at the mentioned location, a market study would be welcomed showing the potential "Business" demand for such location and Occupancy ratios / RevPars expected based on comps with similar locations (not in a central location or business hub / not in a touristic area / with considerable distance from nearest tube or train station to list a few parameters).

Please note that apart-hotel businesses can easily be operated as PRS with renewable 3 months stays or alternatively as student housing given the proximity to ESCP school, which both should fall into a different change of use application. We suggest that some measures are taken to prevent this contortion of use.

Also, D&D report mentions 57+ members for the coworking space. The area allocated to the coworking space represents a ratio of c. 3sqm/member at peak time, while average ratios for such occupancy are estimated to be 8-10sqm/user.

Finally, the suggested use is not beneficial to the community. Fortune green road has an active yet limited retail and services scene and there is need for more. The nearest retail offering is on west end lane, and that suggests use of buses or cars for fortune green road / Hampstead / Hendon way and Hcroft residents. The site location on Finchley road has an amazing catchment area and is currently not active from a retail perspective as there is no attractive / adequate offering for

businesses to survive. (D&D comps are not relevant to the micro-location and are located in a part of Finchley road where there is an over-supply of medium/low quality retail premises.)

5- Daylight:

Although the results of the report are below the BRE guidance (20%), one cannot consider the impact to be non-material. 7-10 BPM would have up to -10% daylight distribution for certain rooms (knowing that it is probably mainly morning and late evening, when working residents spend more time at their home). This is considered to be a material impact if the Impact is calculated on the hours where the residents are in their flat. The roof extension should be reconsidered and a conversion of the existing space with no extension is recommended.

6- Parking Space:

The application is parking free. Parking in Weech road and fortune green road are for residents only CA-P Monday to Friday 8AM to 6PM. That would allow the apart-hotel clients to park in resident's allocated parking space at night time and weekends (generally busiest time for parking in the area). Given that parking space is already limited for the residents, measures should be undertaken (parking for residents only at all time) to avoid the above happening causing an adverse impact for residents

7- Building site:

The development site is located on the red route. The applicant answered almost all questions related the construction management plan by " this will be confirmed once the principal contractor has been appointed". For a development project of such scale, this is not an acceptable answer. There are high health and safety / nuisance risks for residents (bus stop closure / crossing closure / storage of building materials on the rear of the building site / waste management ...). It is unclear how the applicant will manage such challenges.

Fahd Elkadiri

Flat 17 Burgess Park Mansions, Fortune Green Road NW61DP

We are not in favour of the applicant's request for the following reasons:

1. Neighbours have not been consulted on the project as requested by the council, and got instead a mail in the middle of the Christmas break (to reduce Burgess Park Mansions ("BPM") residents' ability to give educated/detailed feedbacks)
2. The projects dramatically changes the current layout and is suggesting an increase of existing indoor area above 15% which appears to be excessive given the size of the plot and the age of the building
3. There are privacy issues with the current planning as the standard privacy distance between habitable rooms in Camden (and generally) is c. 18m versus the distances presented in the planning of c. 16m (especially at the Northern part of the site given its triangular shape)
In addition, the new terrace/balcony areas above lower ground level at ground, first and third floor levels. These areas although proposed to be screened by a 1.8m fence/planting would allow views into habitable rooms of BPM at inter-visibility distances of c. 16m . These terrace balconies do not appear essential to meet amenity and space standards and would cause great harm to BPM residents in term of privacy.
4. The change of use does not seem relevant to the location and not beneficial to the local community, causing potential noise disturbance issues to neighbours in the future
5. The site works face many challenges and difficulties and may cause high health and safety risks to the residents given the location of the site (on a red route) and no access to the site from the back, and none of these challenges have been addressed properly in the supporting documents
6. Parking space will be an issue as the building is facing Finchley Road (with bus lane), therefore, pushing potential residents to use Fortune Green Road's parking space etc.

We recommend that the applicant considers the following:

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