

Camden Square Conservation Area Advisory Committee

65 Agar Grove
London
NW1 9UE

Date: 23 March 2020

Planning application Reference: 2020/0511/P

Proposal: Erection of part single-part three storey rear extension and conversion of single family dwelling to 4x self-contained flats, with associated bins and cycling storage.

Summary: We strongly **object** to this proposal. It will neither preserve nor enhance the conservation area: the technical information is inadequate, the bulk inappropriate and the internal layout is not viable. The proposal cannot be built as drawn

Comments:

1. The proposal is technically inadequate
 - 1.1. Inadequate contextual information is given, and only in block plan form. Applications are required to include contextual information.
2. The bulk of the proposal is inappropriate in relation to neighbouring buildings
 - 2.1. The proposed extension overwhelms the original house and appears to relate poorly to adjacent properties.
3. The proposed large three-storey extension detracts from the rhythm of neighbouring houses, insensitively neutralising the distinctive rhythm of the angled rear bays.
4. Attention has been given to satisfying regulations for bin and cycle storage, but none to landscaping. In the absence of site photos, the loss of any vegetation cannot be ascertained
5. The internal layout is not viable and in common with many planning applications appearing to make the most of limited internal space, numerous aspects of this proposal cannot be built as drawn
 - 5.1. The cited room sizes do not appear to meet established standards and need to be checked.
 - 5.2. The most obvious omission from the drawings is any means of supporting the east meeting of the rear bay with the main rear wall, and of the four storeys of the rear wall above. Columns or piers would be needed which would reduce room sizes.

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- 5.3. The roof thicknesses are too thin to satisfy building regulations.
6. We could cite other inadequacies, but since this application appears likely to follow the usual course of overdevelopment proposals by gradually shrinking to be acceptable, we consider it not worthwhile doing so at this point in time
7. The bulk of this application would seriously harm the Conservation Area. The design appears to be motivated mainly by the desire to achieve the greatest possible number of units. The applicant's designers have clearly done research to attempt to justify the size of their proposal, but there are clear differences with the two references they were able to cite:
- 7.1. 116 Agar Grove, approved in 1986 under different guidance, has a slightly shorter and significantly narrower ground floor extension which, while not very sensitive or likely to be acceptable today, does acknowledge the building's angled rear bay. Its upper floors project less than half the distance of this proposal. The current proposal for 65 Agar Grove is both too wide - insensitively extending right up to the reveal of the main rear windows - and too long.
- 7.2. 51-53 Agar Grove adjacent to St Paul's Crescent is a special case - a completely new structure approved in recent years to replace a pair of Victorian houses, which the owner allowed to collapse while doing unapproved works. Still, its extensions are over 10% shorter than those of this proposal and there is no original rear bay to consider. Also the adjacent Victorian houses have slightly longer original-looking square rear bays, so the contrast is less extreme.
8. It is our strong view that this proposal should be rejected. In the unlikely event that this or a future proposal is approved, we would urge that enforcement action be taken should the dimensions not be achieved in the actual construction.

Signed. 

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Chair
Camden Square CAAC

Secretary: 