

Application No: 2020/0874/P
Consultees Name:
Received: 17/04/2020 14:43:45
Comment: COMNOT

Response:

PLANNING APPLICATION NUMBER: 2020/0874/P for Lower Ground Floor Flat, 11 Elsworthy Terrace, LONDON, NW3 3DR

I am an upstairs neighbour of the proposed development at 11 Elsworthy Terrace NW3 3DR and I am objecting to the following aspects of the application and proposed development:

INADEQUATE INFORMATION

1. The drawings provided for this planning application are inadequate and do not allow proper assessment:

- a) The garden drawings do not show the overall size of the garden, nor the dimensions of the new outbuilding (length, depth or height).
- b) Furthermore, the drawings that have been provided say that they should not be used to scale from
- c) The submitted 'existing' plan layout for the basement flat is wrong. It shows a two bedroom flat with one bedroom wholly internal with no natural light from windows. In contrast, the registered lease plan indicates that the flat is a studio flat, although it had a retractable screen between the bedroom and the living area. This has a clear implication for overdevelopment – see below.
- d) It is also wrong to call the new structure a shed (as it is labelled in the plans) as it has a bedroom, bathroom, and, presumably, electricity, heating and soil drainage. A shed is usually understood to be a lightweight structure for garden tools.
- e) It is difficult not to come to the conclusion that some of these inadequacies may obfuscate the true nature and scale of the planned proposals i.e. the size of the so-called shed/outhouse and the degree to which this is larger than the existing shed.

PROPOSED 'SHED/OUTHOUSE'

SOURCE MATERIAL

2. Throughout this section, I rely on the following documents which should be referred to:

- a) Camden Local Area Plan 2017, especially but not exclusively paras. A1b on managing the impact of development and paras 6.3, 6.34, 6.36, 6.37 and 6.63 which give Camden's policy on protecting garden amenity for the host building and the wider environment.
- b) Camden Planning Guidance on Altering and Extending Your Home, March 2019, especially but not exclusively paras. 5.20 on gardens, and paras 5.21, 5.22 on sheds and other garden outbuildings
- c) Camden Elsworthy Road Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy, especially but not exclusively paras. 12.6 on outbuildings and 13.20 on the importance of rear elevations and the link to the rural aspect Primrose Hill.

OVERDEVELOPMENT

3. Despite the measurement difficulties described above, I have tried to estimate dimensions.

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4. The existing shed was a low-level octagonal structure about 2.5 metres in diameter.
5. In contrast, the proposed outbuilding spans the entire width of the garden and is a rectangle, roughly 6.2m wide x 4m deep. It is also considerably higher than the existing shed, although the exact height is difficult to estimate. Nor should one need to estimate as all dimensions should be given. Its scale and massing, however, are certainly considerable.
6. It would increase the habitable floorspace of the basement flat by 24.8sq m or 31%. It covers about 23% of the garden.
7. 23% is a lot for what the Design and Access statement describes as “a modest sized rear garden”. It would be detrimental to the outlook from the rear of the host building and for neighbouring buildings on either side. The Elsworthy Road Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy notes, at para. 12.6, that “Extensions should be subsidiary to the existing building and not detract from its character by becoming over-dominant.”
8. The Elsworthy Road Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy, which includes Elsworthy Terrace, notes that Camden has a duty to preserve and enhance the Conservation Area as a whole and emphasises that Elsworthy Terrace, although not listed, is a “positive contributor” to the character of this whole, together with the importance of its relationship to Primrose Hill Park and its own group of buildings and gardens. Para 13. of the Appraisal recognises the risk of negative impacts from rear extensions and harmful alterations.

NEGATIVE PRECEDENT

9. No other properties on this side of Elsworthy Terrace have structures similar to that proposed in their gardens and it is real concern that granting permission for No. 11, as well as having a negative individual impact, would almost certainly create a dangerous precedent for neighbouring properties wanting to do the same. This would have a disastrous negative impact on the views over gardens towards Primrose Hill.
10. It would also reduce garden green soft landscape and potentially affect drainage in the area if a whole terrace had such outbuildings.

DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS

11. Camden's stated policy is to demand “the highest standard of design”
12. It is very difficult to understand the design of the outbuilding from the details given. However, it spans from garden wall to garden wall and will dominate the bottom of the garden, appearing as a bulky ‘block house’ or large garage. It will certainly not comply with the requirements of paras 7.2 and 7.5 of the Camden Local Area Plan 2017.
13. Drawings we have seen, but which are not included in the submitted planning application, show 1 metre deep foundations, with cavity wall blockwork raised above and a fully insulated slab. From these drawings we estimate a substantial construction that appears to be at least 2.5 metres high (or more if minimum ceiling heights are respected) and projecting about 4 meters towards the host building, giving only 13.4 meters of separation between the host building and the front of the proposed outbuilding. In contrast, in the pre-planning

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comments, Camden Officers indicate that what was expected in the application was an outbuilding “of lightweight materials to complement the garden setting.” (quoted on page 4 of the Design and Access Statement)

14. There are also contradictions in the Design and Access statement description compared with the drawings, which show a single-storey flat roof structure. The Design and Access statement mentions a single-story structure, yet also talks, on page 5, of “modest eaves height” and that “windows on the outbuilding would be restricted to the ground floor”. This is not true as there is also a rooflight, but it also poses the question of whether two stories and, possibly, a pitched roof are envisaged in the future.

LIGHT POLLUTION

15. The nearness of the outbuilding and its largely glazed front elevation and fairly large skylight, raises a further concern of light pollution, especially for the raised ground floor flat and the first floor flat. This is made worse by the fact that several large trees have recently been felled in the garden. What was previously a dark outlook at night from all floors of the host building would be illuminated. Neighbouring properties would also be affected. The question of precedence also means that this first proposal at No.11 should be strongly resisted as it could eventually result in what would look like a row of garages at the bottom of the gardens.

CONCLUSION

16. The Elsworthy Road Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy, para. 13.20 final sentence concludes that “Any rear extension or harmful alterations in the locations cited [this includes Elsworthy Terrace] will be strongly discouraged.”

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2020/0874/P		19/04/2020 23:51:45	OBJ	<p>I wish to raise concerns re the planning application - 2020/0874/P, Garden Flat (lower ground floor), 11 Elsworthy Terrace NW3 3DR.</p> <p>We have lived on Elsworthy Terrace for many years.</p> <p>Our balcony overlooks the garden where the planning permission is being sought.</p> <p>In the recent past, this plot was an established garden with many mature trees, fruit trees, flowers and shrubs, a good habitat for wildlife. Over the last 2 years all bar one of these trees have been felled, some with planning permission.</p> <p>The proposed building, a living quarters (in effect a non-attached extension) across the garden is not in keeping with this conservation area. It will in no way preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the Elsworthy Road Conservation Area.</p> <p>This now fully exposed garden together with the proposed new additional premises will have a significant and detrimental impact on the garden views of all properties along the terrace that face due west.</p> <p>The proposed construction includes a large 3 pane sliding door on the front elevation facing across (what will be left of) the garden, towards the main property and also a fixed roof light. This glazing will be directly visible to all residents above ground floor level along the whole length of the terrace and hence the artificial lighting at night will lead to considerable light pollution impacting all who live on this side of the Terrace.</p> <p>We oppose this planning application on the grounds it would have a long-lasting detrimental effect and set bad precedent for future development within this unique conservation area.</p> <p>The proposal contravenes planning policies contained in the National Planning Policy Framework, the Camden Local Plan, Camden Planning Guidance and the Elsworthy Conservation Area appraisal and management strategy.</p> <p>Whilst we welcome new neighbours, we consider it an important local issue.</p>
