
From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 24 June 2020 01:28
To: Planning
Subject: URGENT: 2020/1845/L and 2020/1280/P - 10 Primrose Hill Studios

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PLANNING APPLICATION RESPONSE: STRONG OBJECTION

Dear Sir/Madam,

Please note regarding the comments below, that my responses apply to both these planning applications:

<u>2020/1845/L</u>	10 Primrose Hill Studios Fitzroy Road London NW1 8TR	The formation of a basement level extension and the creation of a self-contained one-bedroomed flat, together with the installation of rear elevation windows and door.	REGISTERED	20-05-2020
<u>2020/1280/P</u>	10 Primrose Hill Studios Fitzroy Road London NW1 8TR	The formation of a basement level extension and the creation of a self-contained one-bedroomed flat, together with the installation of rear elevation windows and door.	REGISTERED	28-04-2020

Also, in addition to the comments below, please note my **strong objection** to the excavation of a basement and addition of a self contained flat, on the following grounds.

Omission of relevant facts in the planning application

The reports submitted to the Council regarding basements at Primrose Hill Studios are misleading. [REDACTED] and, with permission, made some changes to the existing basement in my property. The application for these proposed developments at number 10 make reference to basements at numbers 7 and 8. These two houses are higher than number 10 and were built with storage basements in the original construction of these historic buildings. When lowering slightly the floor level of these two properties that are at a higher level and had existing basements, problems were encountered. The excavations at number 10 would cause devastating problems with groundwater and subsidence. It is clear that such an excavation underneath number 10 would put the neighbouring properties at risk, and the Council has a duty to refuse this application.

In addition, the proposal states that vehicular parking is not relevant. This is a misleading statement.

Furthermore, there is inadequate discussion of the issues involved with the removal of the vast quantities of rubble and dust associated with such a reckless excavation as the one proposed. It would not be possible to remove such quantities of rubble and dust without causing major nuisance to neighbouring residents. At a time when many people are needing to take extra care of their health, and/or to stay home in order to

minimise risk of exposure to COVID-19 (whether or not the government restrictions are eased or reinforced) this poses an unacceptable health risk and loss of quality of life to neighbours.

Amenities

The addition of a further residential unit as proposed would put unacceptable pressures on local amenities, notably rubbish collection and parking. There is no provision for the collection or storage of waste, nor is there any opportunity to add such provision. The Council has a duty of care to existing residents and amenities.

Quality of life and supporting sustainable community

The Council has a vision to improve the quality of life in the borough and to create a strong, sustainable, safe, healthy, attractive community with excellent services and economic success. Granting permission for these ill-advised and insensitive plans to be realised would create considerable and material loss of amenity and wellbeing, and have a negative impact on the quality of life of the residents of Primrose Hill Studios, thus running counter to these important aims. The fact that the applicant has persuaded two neighbours to support her application on the basis that it will provide her daughter with a home (as her stated intent) does nothing whatsoever to alleviate the grave concerns that this utterly inappropriate application gives rise to.



Planning application comment

Dear Sir / Madam,

I oppose strongly the planning application **2020/1845/L** for the addition of a one bedroom self contained flat at **10 Primrose Hill Studios**.

As I am shielding, I did not see the public notice until today (when I went along the alley to empty the rubbish) and so I am writing to you by email now instead of prior to June 21 as was available online.

Please acknowledge receipt of my comments. Thank you.

Overview

I am writing to provide the material considerations underlying my strong objection to the proposed addition of a self contained one bedroom flat at 10 Primrose Hill Studios. The immediate and the cumulative effects of the proposed development would be out of keeping with the needs and character of the area, detrimental to the quality of life of local residents, and harmful to the amenity of neighbours.

I wish to mention that I find it regrettable that the applicant made no attempt to discuss the plans with neighbours, despite regular contact and in spite of knowing that I am shielding at home and therefore would not have seen the public notice. For the avoidance of doubt, I am on good terms with the applicant. I like her as a person and appreciate her as a neighbour. Nonetheless, I oppose strongly the addition of an extension to the property at 10 Primrose Hill Studios.

My comments on the inadvisability of the proposed development are detailed below.

Design and layout, external appearance and materials

Like all the Primrose Hill Studios, the property in question was designed and built as a live-in artist's studio. All the other Studios, as well as the Lodge house, continue to provide comfortable, characterful homes to Primrose Hill residents. The property is a listed building with great historical importance and interest. It is inappropriate to change the design or layout of the house. I believe strongly that the character of the house should be maintained by keeping the design and layout as they are, with some sensitive restoration if needed, as has been carried out by the owners and residents of neighbouring properties.

The Primrose Hill Studios are Grade II Listed Buildings. I would add that the applicant previously made an illegal change to the fenestration of the front door (the same thing was done very recently by the neighbour at number 11 also) by replacing the glazing with entirely inappropriate contemporary glass instead of the beautiful, characteristic coloured glass in the original doors. The original glazing is a feature of these historic properties, which has been carefully maintained and/or restored by other neighbours.

In my own case as the owner of one of the Primrose Hill Studios, I restored my front door and was able to source identical reproduction glass to exactly match the panels that has been damaged in the original front door glazing. This is available from a local glazier in Kentish Town at low cost and is perfect for proper restoration of the front door. The use of ugly contemporary glass that is not in keeping with the area and these special properties shows clearly that the applicant does not understand properly the need to respect the unique character of Primrose Hill Studios and our wider conservation area.

Granting permission for this development would cause harm to the property's special architectural and historic interest, as well as harming the setting of this historically important listed building. The Primrose Hill Studios are a unique and valuable part of our heritage and form an irreplaceable record of the artistic life on England. Having been designed and built as a live-in artists' community, the Studios have retained their unique character over several generations of residents and have a key role to play in our cultural heritage and national identity. This must be borne in mind when considering any proposed changes. The Primrose Hill Studios are a distinctive piece of living history that continue to function as they have always done – as a close-knit residential community.

On the basis that the best use for a historic building is usually the use for which the building was originally designed, I consider that 10 Primrose Hill Studios should if at all possible serve as a single residential unit for quiet and ideally artistic use by a single person, couple or family, as it was designed to be and has been throughout most of its history to date. It is not appropriate to cram in additional self contained accommodation, which may be driven by commercial interests rather than social, environmental or aesthetic considerations.

In addition, the property is within a conservation area. The Council has a duty to preserve or enhance the special character of the area. The applicant's proposal to intensify the already extremely dense proximity of residential units is out of keeping with the special character of Primrose Hill and in particular of the Primrose Hill Studios. It should also be borne in mind that changes such as this can erode the character of an area over time, even if the buildings remain relatively unaltered. The proposed development could be a case in point and cause harm to the character of the conservation area.

Noise nuisance

Sound travels freely through the Primrose Hill Studios and as listed buildings, it is not possible – nor currently necessary – to add sound insulation. The addition of another residential unit would add to the burden on this already crowded dwelling place. Current residents are quiet, discreet and aware of one another's needs within this close-knit residential community. If the additional unit were for commercial purposes such as short term lets - which cannot be guarded against whatever intentions are stated by the applicant - this could generate intolerable noise pollution. It is noteworthy that the applicant already uses her property for short term lets, leading to loss of privacy for the neighbours in this close-knit community.

Traffic and parking issues

The applicant proposes the addition of a door and windows at the back of the house. This might imply that the proposed changes would not increase car use within the overcrowded courtyard of Primrose Hill Studios. However, the applicant will not be in a position to control the transport and parking choices of any future resident of an additional residential unit within the Studios and the addition of a unit would add to an already strained traffic and parking system (under normal, non-lockdown conditions).

As an illustration of this concern, the applicant frequently has house guests staying and both the applicant and her guests regularly park in ways that impede foot access to the pavements (and thus the houses) in the courtyard area, or that make parking more difficult for full-time residents. There is significant complexity in the management transport and car parking issues for the Primrose Hill Studios and the addition of a further unit could exacerbate this.

Quality of life and supporting sustainable community

The Council has a duty to maintain the local housing stock. The applicant's proposal would lead to the loss of a potential family home and add to the number of smaller units unsuitable for families, which would be detrimental to the character of the neighbourhood.

Capacity of the sewage and drainage systems

The sewage system at Primrose Hill Studios is antiquated and inadequate to accommodate any additional capacity whatsoever. There have already been serious problems, with raw sewage overflow in the courtyard on more than one occasion. The existing sewage facilities are not suitable for the additional use required by an additional residential unit. The proposed development would cause inappropriate discharge and due to the listed building status in this conservation area, together with the fact that the sewage runs through the communal private property, it is not feasible to dig up the courtyard to create a new sewage system.

In order to protect the area's character, diversity and vitality, the existing residential community should be strengthened with a view to maintaining potential family homes rather than supporting the increasing and undue density of small units that is commercially driven and counter to the needs of the community as a whole.

To protect the character and function of the existing neighbourhood and town centres and to prevent any decline in their vitality and viability, this planning application should be declined.



