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# MARCHES PLANNING

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## OBJECTION TO PLANNING APPLICATION REF. 2020/2156/P

On behalf of our client 18 Lambolle Place Management Ltd.

Our client is the freehold owner of 18 Lambolle Place, including the freehold of 18E Lambolle Place,

They object to this proposed development on the following grounds:

- 1) The proposed first floor extension is unsympathetic to and would have an adverse impact on the Belize Park Conservation Area
- 2) The construction works required for the proposed development would interrupt the business of the hairdressing salon on the ground floor for an unspecified period
- 3) The construction works are likely to block a fire escape serving several properties
- 4) The additional storey will be overbearing on and result in a loss of daylight to neighbouring properties

These matters are set out in more detail below:

### 1) Impact on the Conservation Area

The proposed development would constitute a second storey extension above a first floor flat to the rear of 18 Lambolle Place. The existing building was a sauna before being converted into a flat and its original use is reflected in the timber construction, flat roof and lack of windows.

The flat is accessed by a narrow metal staircase to the right of no. 18 Lambolle Place, which also serves 18C and 18D Lambolle Place.

The applicant's Design & Access Statement acknowledges that the proposed development is within the Belsize Park Conservation Area and asserts, implausibly, that the "massing and materials" have been designed with the Conservation Area in mind.

To the contrary, the proposed development would insert an incongruous timber-clad construction into the space between two historic buildings, each of which is an exemplar of the character of this part of the Conservation Area.

The additional storey would be damaging to the historic pattern of development on this part of Lambolle Place and would disturb the symmetry between the two adjoining buildings. It would appear in views from Lambolle Place as a flimsy and discordant link between the two structures.

The front elevation would be visible to those accessing the rear properties to 18 Lambolle Place, disturbing the skyline from this aspect and the rear elevation would have a similar adverse impact on Lancaster Mews.

The proposed timber cladding to the elevations has no precedent in the Conservation area, where the buildings are of substantial brick construction. Some buildings have painted brick or are stuccoed and banded to simulate ashlar.

The upward extension would overshadow the windows and rooflights of neighbouring properties resulting in a loss of amenity and would cast shadow over and interrupt the skyline views from Lancaster Mews and properties to the rear of no. 18 Lambolle Place.

The proposed development would demonstrate many of the harmful characteristics identified in the Belsize Park Conservation Area Statement as having caused harm in recent decades. These include:

- *Inappropriate materials*
- *Inappropriate scale/bulk/height/massing*
- *Inappropriate relationship to street and neighbouring properties*
- *Impact on privacy of neighbouring properties*
- *Alterations and extensions to existing buildings*

The proposed development fails to reflect any of the historic features of this part of the Conservation Area, described in the Conservation Area Statement as follows:

*These streets form a small area of typical mews development, with much in common with the mews in Belsize Village, housing a variety of commercial and residential uses. Lancaster and Eton Garages are narrow streets fronted by terraces abutting the pavement. Each of the terraces has a distinct character. However, all are small scale being two-storey with pitched roofs. They have upstands at*

*roof level, shared chimneys, large openings at ground level and small, vertically proportioned, first floor windows. The gables facing Lancaster Grove have distinctive brickwork arches.*

*Eton Garages' frontage to Lambolle Place has slightly recessed arches, several of which remain blind as originally built. This street is predominately yellow brick with red brick detailing and slate roofs. A couple of the properties have white painted brickwork. Lancaster Garages have a stucco frontage (on Lambolle Place) and a parapet at roof level banded to look like ashlar. Nos. 1 to 8 Lambolle Place are set back behind frontage walls and garages. Some of the garage doors are in a poor state of repair. The terrace is of white painted brickwork with a pitched red tiled roof and has bay windows at first floor level."*

The proposals are thus in conflict with the following Conservation Area guidelines:

*BE16 The choice of materials in new work will be most important and will be the subject of control by the Council.*

*BE19 New development should be seen as an opportunity to enhance the Conservation Area. All development should respect existing features such as building lines, roof lines, elevational design, and, where appropriate, architectural characteristics, detailing, profile and materials of adjoining buildings.*

*BE23 Extensions should be in harmony with the original form and character of the house and the historic pattern of extensions within the terrace or group of buildings. The acceptability of larger extensions depends on the particular site and circumstances.*

*BE24 The infilling of yards and rear spaces between buildings will generally be unacceptable.*

*BE26 Planning permission is required for extensions and alterations at roof level. Roof extensions and alterations, which change the shape and form of the roof, can have a harmful impact on the Conservation Area and are unlikely to be acceptable where:*

- It would be detrimental to the form and character of the existing building*
- The property forms part of a group or terrace which remains largely, but not completely unimpaired*
- The property forms part of a symmetrical composition, the balance of which would be upset*
- The roof is prominent, particularly in long views*

*BE37 There are many semi-detached and detached villas in the Conservation Area and side extensions would only be acceptable where they do not upset the character and relationship between the properties, particularly where significant and well-preserved gaps between buildings provide views through to rear mature gardens. Normally the infilling of gaps will be resisted where an important gap is compromised or the symmetry of the composition of a building would be impaired. Where side extensions would not result in the loss of an important gap they should be single storey and set back from the front building line.*

The proposed development would also fail to comply with policies D1 and D2 of the Camden Local Plan 2017.

## 2) Interruption to hairdressing salon business

As explained above, no. 18E was originally built as a sauna and does not form part of the structure of the surrounding buildings. It is of flimsy construction and would not support the proposed additional storey.

Our client is concerned about the scope of construction work required to create appropriate structural support for an additional storey to the building and the extent to which these works would interfere with 18 Lambolle Place and the other adjoining property, 19 Lambolle Place.

Part of the Salon is underneath no. 18E. The sauna was accessed by an internal staircase, which was removed when the structure was converted into a flat.

Our client believes that the proposed development would entail substantial construction works affecting the internal areas of the salon, forcing at least an interruption to the business and possibly the closure of the salon for a significant period.

The flat is above the toilets, laundry room and kitchen to the salon, without which the business cannot operate.

The applicant has not approached our client to explain what works are required.

## 3) Blocking of Fire Escape

Our client is also concerned that the works necessary to make the building capable of supporting an additional storey may block the access and fire escape shared by the salon and 81 Belsize Park Gardens, which accesses onto Lancaster Mews.

No. 81 Belsize Park Gardens is the subject of a current planning application for conversion from a gym to a nursery, a use that would require unimpeded access to the fire escape.

#### 4) Overshadowing

The development would result in a loss of light to windows to the site and rear of no. 18 Lambolle Place, thus impairing the amenity of the occupants in conflict with Policy A1 of the Local Plan.

#### 5) Ownership

Marches Planning would ask the planning authority to note that the notices that should have been served on our client as owners of the freehold under Article 14 of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 were never properly served.

The applicant is the leaseholder of 18E Lambolle Place and was required to serve these notices at least 21 days before applying for planning permission.

Instead, she wrote to our client on 7th July 2020, seven weeks after the planning application was submitted, although the letter was backdated to 7th June 2020. The letter did not contain the requisite information about the Local Planning Authority to which objections should be addressed and thus notices were not properly served.

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