

Application No:	Consultees Name:	Received:	Comment:	Response:
2020/3249/P	Diarmuid O'Hegarty on behalf of CRASH	27/08/2020 14:20:28	OBJ	<p>CRASH (the Combined Residents' Associations of South Hampstead) has reviewed the above-referenced application for planning approval for the demolition of an existing conservatory and the erection of a replacement extension, and wishes to make the following comments:</p> <p>Loss of Amenity and Loss of Heritage. When the Maryon Wilson family began to develop its landholdings on the lower slopes of Hampstead, it envisaged for the eastern section of the area we now know as South Hampstead a series of "squares" (or in the case of Canfield/Fairhazel/Compayne a "triangle") with a mixture of terraced houses and mansion blocks. The residents of the houses would have their own individual gardens at front and at rear, while the tenants of flats in the mansion blocks would have use of central communal gardens. At least one of the original "squares" was lost to bombing during the Second World War and most of the others have been compromised by later development. In dozens of cases the small rear gardens of the terraced houses have been lost to the building of rear extensions. The Canfield/Fairhazel/Compayne "triangle" is unique in having retained the original concept, with no loss of gardens due to the erection of rear extensions. All the residents of the "triangle" enjoy and appreciate the open leafy character provided by the combination of small private gardens and a larger communal area. Granting permission for this first rear extension would destroy the original Victorian concept.</p> <p>Section 11 of the Application Form requires an answer to the following question: "Are there any trees or hedges on land adjacent to the proposed development site that could influence the development, or might be important as part of the local landscape character? The Applicant (named simply as O'Keefe) has answered NO. The aerial photograph shown on the title page of the Agent's Planning Statement quite clearly shows a mature and very large tree just beyond the boundary wall, in the neighbouring garden. Other mature trees and newly-planted specimens are also close to the development site.</p> <p>Section 2.6 of the Agent's Planning Statement notes "There appears to be a few examples of existing rear developments". This comment is incorrect. Apart from the Applicant's own conservatory, which it intends to demolish, there is one other conservatory in a private rear garden. The bases of two small Victorian/Edwardian conservatories which were demolished over twenty years ago are still in situ. These bases are not rear extensions. The Agent made this same assertion of other existing rear extensions in its initial consultation exercise some months ago, and was informed by CRASH, at that time, that this statement was not correct.</p> <p>Section 3.1 of the Agent's Planning Statement notes that a similar proposal was submitted in 2015 and the application was – for very good reasons – refused. At the time, the Camden planning officer noted that under then-current regulations even the existing conservatory would be refused planning approval.</p> <p>Section 4.4 of the Agent's Planning Statement comments that "the green roof will allow upper storey occupants who look down...to continue to see an open green space." One advantage of the existing glass-roofed conservatory is that the glass roof can only be used as a roof. CRASH has seen numerous examples where the roofs of rear extensions become, over time, converted – often without planning approval - into roof terraces for the upper flats. The "open green space" becomes an area littered with railings, tables, chairs, parasols and other detritus with consequent overlooking, noise pollution and loss of amenity for neighbours.</p> <p>Section 5.1 of the Agent's Planning Statement confirms that the occupants of adjoining properties (Flats 4 & 5 at 9 Compayne Gardens and 11 Compayne Gardens) were consulted about the proposed work. CRASH has been informed that some, possibly all, the residents at No 11 were not consulted.</p> <p>Section 5.3 of the Agent's Planning Statement seeks to dismiss the well-founded concerns that the proposed development will set a precedent for other similar extensions. This dismissal is negated by the Agents's earlier use in 2.6 of "a few other examples of existing rear development" in support of its own proposals. CRASH reviews hundreds of planning applications each year where it sees property owners and their agents arguing</p>

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for extensions and alterations on the grounds that similar changes in neighbouring properties have set a precedent which may be followed in their development. As stated earlier, there are no permanent rear extensions in the Canfield/Fairhazel/Compayne "triangle". Glass conservatories are by their nature semi-permanent structures, rarely surviving for more than one or two generations (as illustrated by the demolition of the two late 19th /early 20th century conservatories opposite). The first approval of a solid, brick-built, rear extension would set a precedent that would inevitably lead to similar developments and the destruction of the unique character of the Canfield/Fairhazel/Compayne "triangle".

Section 6.4.2 of the Agent's Planning Statement notes that the 2015 application (refused) contends that the proposed extension would be visible from the shared private gardens at the rear. The Agent now argues that views of the proposed new extension will "mostly" be concealed by a high boundary wall. The "triangle" development was constructed on a sloping site, meaning that the Compayne Gardens houses are 2 story (plus attic) on the front elevation but 3 storey (plus attic) on the rear elevation. As a consequence, the principal rooms of these houses were designed to be – and still are – at first floor level on the garden side. It is patently obvious that the principal rooms of neighbouring properties look down upon the site, and views are not concealed behind the high boundary wall. Where neighbouring properties have been converted into flats almost all apartments with south facing windows will have views of the proposed extension.

Section 6.4.2 of the Agent's Planning Statement also uses a series of photographs to illustrate views from the communal gardens. These photographs show the proximity of large mature trees to the site of the development (as already noted in our comment on the Applicant's answer to the question on trees in Section 11 of the Application Form).

Section 6.4.6 of the Agent's Planning Statement mentions the South Hampstead Conservation Area Character Appraisal & Management Strategy. That document places an obligation on the Council to preserve and/or enhance the special character of the SHCA. The replacement of a semi-permanent garden feature (the conservatory) by a permanent extension to the host building does nothing to preserve or enhance the historic, and special, character of the SHCA. The greatest damage – should the application be approved – will be the precedent it sets, with the inevitable proliferation of similar schemes that will surely follow. The unique character of the Canfield/Fairhazel/Compayne "triangle" will be lost.

CRASH objects to the proposal detailed in the application and urges the Council to refuse planning approval.

Diarmuid O'Hegarty
 Committee Member
 CRASH
 (the Combined Residents' Associations of South Hampstead)

 Total: 11