

Delegated Report		Analysis sheet		Expiry Date:		01/06/2020	
		N/A / attached		Consultation Expiry Date:		03/05/2020	
Officer				Application Number(s)			
Obote Hope				2020/0956/P			
Application Address				Drawing Numbers			
Flat 2 68 Greencroft Gardens London NW6 3JQ				See Decision Notice			
PO 3/4		Area Team Signature		C&UD		Authorised Officer Signature	
Proposal(s)							
Erection of 2 studio outbuildings in the rear garden ancillary to the use of the existing flat (Class C3).							
Recommendation(s):		Grant permission					
Application Type:		Full Planning Permission					
Conditions or Reasons for Refusal:		Refer to Decision Notice					
Informatives:							
Consultations							
Adjoining Occupiers:		No. notified	00	No. of responses	00	No. of objections	00
				No. electronic	00		
Summary of consultation responses:		A site notice was displayed between 15/06/2018 and 09/07/2018 and; The application was advertised in the Ham and High between 21/06/2018 and 15/07/2018.					
CAAC/Local groups* comments: *Please Specify		N/A					

Site Description

The site is located on the northern side of Greencroft Gardens, a long residential street to the west of Finchley Road. The building on the site is a large semi-detached 3-storey property that dates from the late C19th.

The property is divided into flats and forms a semi-detached pair with no.70 Greencroft Gardens. The application relates to the rear ground floor flat. The site is located in Swiss Cottage Conservation Area and, whilst the building is not listed, no 68 is identified as a positive contributor to the South Hampstead Conservation Area.

Relevant History

68 Greencroft Gardens (application site)

2008/1938/P – Planning permission for erection of a ground floor and basement rear extension in connection with the existing ground floor flat. Granted on **29/07/2008**

2004/3659/P – Planning permission for the erection of single storey rear extension to ground floor flat (Class C3) – Granted **29/10/2004**

68 Greencroft Gardens

2015/0802/P – Planning permission for the erection of a timber framed garden building in rear garden. Granted on **29/05/2015**

114 Greencroft Gardens

2018/3492/P – Planning permission for erection of a single storey outbuilding and decking in rear garden for ancillary residential purposes. Granted on **27/03/2019**

Relevant policies

National Planning Policy Framework (2019)

London Plan (2016)

Draft London Plan 2019

Camden Local Plan (2017)

A1 Managing the impact of development

D1 Design

D2 Heritage

Camden Planning Guidance

CPG1 Design (2018)

CPG Amenity (2018)

CPG 6 Amenity (2018)

South Hampstead Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Strategy (2011)

Assessment

1. Proposal

1.1 This application, as revised, is for the erection of an outbuilding in the rear garden of the property in the form of 2 studios placed on a deck surrounding a centrally positioned existing bay tree in a planter. The overall deck platform will be 10.5m wide by 3.75m deep (39.5sqm in area); the 2 studios will be 4m and 4.5m wide and both 3.5m deep and 2.7m high. One studio would house a home gym (14sqm), the other a garden office with ancillary garden store and washroom (15.75sqm), totalling overall 29.75sqm of floorspace. The overall structure would extend the full width of the garden, set in about 0.5-1m from all boundary edges and be sited at the end of a long garden, about 16m from the existing rear extension of the property.

1.2 The buildings would be clad with Western Red Cedar to the front elevation, the left and right flanks would be clad in particleboard and finished with grey "weather shield paint", and a flat roof would be grey single-ply membrane. The rainwater goods pipe for the proposed washroom would be black uPVC with uPVC windows and doors.

1.3 It should be noted that the agent was offered an opportunity to revise the bulk and scale of the proposal and the revised details are listed below.

2. Revisions

2.1 The following revision was received during the course of the application:

- Redesign of the outbuilding so it now appears as 2 separate studios on a deck without any connection at rear as originally proposed;
- 0.3m reduction of the depth of the outbuilding;
- 0.4m reduction of the width;
- Slight redesign of elevations with narrower doors and red cedar cladding.

3.1 The main material considerations are:

- The effect of the development on the character and appearance of the South Hampstead Conservation Area;
- The impact of the outbuilding on the nearby trees; and
- Impact on the neighbouring amenities.

4.0 Design and appearance

4.1 Local Plan Policy D1 (Design) states that The Council will require that development respects local context and character; preserves or enhances the historic environment and heritage assets in accordance with Policy D2 (Heritage); comprises details and materials that are of high quality and complement the local character; promotes health; responds to natural features and preserves gardens and other open space; and, preserves strategic and local views.

4.2 Para. 6.37 states: "Gardens help shape their local area, provide a setting for buildings, provide visual interest and may support natural habitats. Therefore they can be an important element in the character and identity of an area (its 'sense of place'). We will resist development that occupies an excessive part of the garden, and the loss of garden space which contributes to the character of the townscape."

4.3 Para. 4.22 states: "The construction of garden buildings, including sheds, stand-alone green houses and other structures in rear gardens and other undeveloped areas, can often have a significant impact upon the amenity, biodiversity and character of an area. They may detract from the

generally soft and green nature of gardens and other open space, contributing to the loss of amenity for existing and future residents of the property.”

4.4 Para 4.23 states: “Large garden buildings may also affect the amenity value of neighbours’ gardens, and if used for purposes other than storage or gardening, may intensify the use of garden spaces.” Para 4.24 states: “Development in rear gardens should: ensure the siting, location, scale and design of the proposed development has a minimal visual impact on, and is visually subordinate to, the host garden; not detract from the open character and garden amenity of the neighbouring gardens and the wider surrounding area; use suitable soft landscaping to reduce the impact of the proposed development; ensure building heights will retain visibility over garden walls and fences; use materials which complement the host property and the overall character of the surrounding area. The construction method should minimise any impact on trees (also see Landscape design and trees chapter in this CPG), or adjacent structures; address any impacts of extensions and alterations upon water run-off.”

4.5 The proposed outbuilding is set at an appropriate distance from the main house and is in an appropriate location at the end of the garden. The principle of such an outbuilding here is acceptable. Its design and materials are considered acceptable and appropriate for this garden setting. Its height at 2.7m is typical of such structures. The existing garden area covers about 208.5sqm and the proposed outbuilding with decking (totalling 39.5sqm) would reduce this to 169sqm, equating to a 19% loss of garden area. This reduction below 20% is considered acceptable and a reasonable amount of amenity space would be retained. However the overall built space, excluding the decking, does have a significantly large footprint at 29.75sqm. Although it actually comprises 2 studios jointly located on the raised decking, it appears more as one large pavilion across the whole garden width, compared to the structure that currently exists on the neighbouring site (no.66) – the latter is an appropriately sized outbuilding with 15sqm floorspace, according to the submitted site plan. No other outbuildings and sheds are immediately apparent on aerial photos of the area.

4.6 As set out in the South Hampstead Conservation Area Statement, the urban grain of this part of the conservation area is defined by large houses in generous gardens. As set out in para.6.37 of the Local Plan, gardens can be an important element in the character and identity of an area. Whilst the principle of an outbuilding in this position may be acceptable, it should be designed at a scale which ensures minimal visual impact on the host garden.

4.7 The applicant made reference to a previous planning permission that was granted on 1.4.19 (ref 2018/3492/P) at no.114 Greencroft Gardens for an outbuilding at the end of its rear garden. This was 29.7sqm in size, plus an outside deck totalling 50sqm. The reduction of garden space from 188sqm to 138sqm, equating to 26% loss of amenity space (which was greater than that proposed with the current application), was considered acceptable. It is noted that, as no.114 is a terraced property, the garden is narrower than that involved here where the property is wider and semi-detached. Furthermore, it was considered that the outbuilding was a small subservient addition which was sited between two similar sized outbuildings of the neighbouring properties. However it is acknowledged that the actual size of the structure (regardless of the raised decking which has no real impact on openness) is the same as the current proposal, both being about 29.75sqm in floorspace and both with the same height and modern timber-clad design.

4.8 In the case of the current application, the gardens to the west of Fairhazel Gardens retain their open character with very few outbuildings and sheds apparent. These undeveloped rear gardens are central to the green open character and appearance of South Hampstead conservation area. Moreover, the South Hampstead Conservation Area Appraisal identified the increased intensity of residential use and the resulting trend for residential conversions have significantly increased the number of planning applications for large rear extensions. These developments have led to the cumulative loss of rear gardens to hard landscaping and other development which have resulted in a loss of amenity of residents and erosion of the leafy, open character of the conservation area.

4.9 Para 196 of the NPPF (2019) states that ‘Where a development proposal will lead to less than

substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use'.

4.10 It is considered that the proposed outbuilding, as a result of its overall bulk arising from a combination of its floorspace and width across the whole garden, would not create an unwelcome and overly dominant outbuilding within the garden area. Its footprint and scale would not detract from the openness of the garden which forms an important part of the setting of this building and surrounding properties within the conservation area. It is considered that the outbuilding, would sufficiently preserve the character and appearance of the conservation area.

4.11 Special attention has been paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the Conservation Area, under s.72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as amended by the Enterprise and Regulatory Reform Act.

5.0 Trees

5.1 The Local Plan (2017) requires that new developments respond to the natural assets of a site and its surroundings, such as slopes and height differences, trees and other vegetation. In addition, all new development should promote biodiversity, contribute to the amenity of an area and development that is likely to damage trees would not be supported. It is unclear how the existing bifurcated bay tree would be retained and protected, given that it is located within close proximity to the proposed outbuilding and is totally surrounded by the studios and their decking. Without further information on foundation design etc., a condition would be secured to this permission to demonstrate whether it is likely that the proposal would have a detrimental impact on the existing tree. Para 5.23 of the South Hampstead Conservation Area Statement stipulates that 'trees play an invaluable role in terms of the natural environment, air quality, adapting to and mitigating climate change and contributing to the quality and character of London's environment'. Moreover, trees contributes significantly to the biodiversity of the Area and play a highly significant role in improving the air quality of the Area.

6. Impact on Neighbours

6.1 Policy A1 of the Local Plan seeks to protect the quality of life of neighbouring occupiers. The factors to consider include: visual privacy and outlook; sunlight, daylight and overshadowing; artificial light levels; noise and vibration.

6.2 The proposal, given its residential nature, is unlikely to result in undue harm to neighbours in terms of noise impacts. The proposed outbuilding is set well within the grounds of the property and towards the end of the garden, away from neighbouring windows, and thus there would be no harm caused by loss of light, privacy or light pollution.

6.3 Overall, the proposal is considered to be acceptable in terms of its impact on privacy, outlook, sunlight, daylight, overshadowing, artificial light levels and noise, in accordance with Policy A1.

7. Recommendation:

Approve Planning Permission