

14 Provost Road, London NW3 4ST

Ref: 2020/3405/P and 2020/3388/L

The subject of this application is a Grade 11 Listed building noted for its character and appearance in a conservation area. It harmonises well with its neighbours. What is proposed will undermine this neighbourliness and have a harmful impact not only on the historic fabric of the listed building but also on the appearance of the conservation area, diminishing that very character and appearance that rendered it attractive in the first place.

The buildings on Provost Road are primarily listed for their group value. Their symmetry lies in the architecture of the semi detached Victorian villas; the roof line with modest dormers that exist in the street scene and the gaps between the buildings which allow glimpses through to the rear. The proposals will not enhance these qualities nor the character and appearance of the conservation area which is noted also for its mature trees and open garden areas.

I object to the proposals for the following reasons

1. The proposed replacement dormers are oversized; will undermine the integrity of the roof and will have a harmful impact on the street scene.

In common with the majority of dormers on Provost Road, the existing dormers at No 14 are modest in profile and sit well with their close neighbours at No 13, 10* and 11* (*recently approved) without projecting harmfully into the street scene - allowing visual priority to the slope of the roof.

At almost twice the size, the proposed dormers are substantially larger in terms of their span across the roof and depth, lying much further down the roof slope. This will make them an altogether more prominent and heavier presence on the roof and in the street scene with a harmful visual impact on the character and appearance of the conservation area. *[It should be noted that Nos 10 and 11 Provost Road raised similar issues and recent Council decisions resulted in a more acceptable outcome].*

The size of the dormers together with the multiplicity of other roof lights also compromises the integrity of the roof where, on most buildings on Provost Road, the slope and solidity of the roof is an important part of the character of the building.

2. The proposals will cause harm to the special interest of the historic building.

It is not helpful that the plans do not clearly set out the extent of intervention into the original fabric of the listed building. The previous owner lived in the house for more than 50 years and many of the original features, and much of the fabric and plan form remains. It would appear that despite 'pulling back' from the extensive loss of historic fabric and plan form originally proposed, significant loss of historic fabric is still proposed at all levels.

Only one fireplace and chimney breast remains in the building; an extensive area of the rear exterior wall is to be removed and opened up into the proposed extension and, alongside, replaced with a large 'glazed pivot door' to the associated covered area; replacement windows are proposed throughout the building; a new 'frameless' plain glass window is proposed in the rear elevation on the principal floor together with a glass screen between the main entrance hall and sitting room. Roof lights penetrate from the roof into the first floor and enlarged dormers replace much of the roof structure and plan form. Extensive loss of historic fabric is proposed which is unacceptable and will cause harm to the special interest of the building. In place of historic fabric glazed walls, screens and pivot door are proposed, at odds with the internal and external early Victorian character of the

listed building. As evidenced in other recent proposals for updating property on Provost Road for 'modern living' - such extensive removal of historic fabric is not necessary.

3. The proposed outbuilding and extension will have a harmful impact on the listed building and its setting and would not preserve or enhance the character or appearance of a conservation area.

In August 2017, an appeal against the Council's refusal of consent for proposed changes to 2 Provost Road was dismissed. This included a similarly extensive outbuilding proposed in the rear garden.

The Inspector recognised that the villas on Provost Road 'have shallow front gardens with generous rear gardens' and 'the planting and trees within these gardens, nearby houses' and around the St Saviours church 'give a mature and verdant character and appearance to the conservation area'. **'This and the mostly open nature of the gardens is part of the significance of the conservation area and make an important contribution towards the attractive setting of the listed villas.'**

The proposed outbuilding (garden office) and associated structure (pergola) at No. 14 Provost Road is located at the southern end of the garden across its whole width. The extension to the house and associated structure is also proposed across the whole width of the house. Together these buildings and structures will much reduce the size of the rear garden and affect the setting of the listed building and its listed neighbours. The extent and design of the garden outbuilding/structure will be conspicuous and visible from surrounding properties eroding the open garden setting and the character and appearance of the conservation area.

Conclusion

The proposals for 14 Provost Road are contrary to the guidance in

- The Eton Conservation Area Appraisal: Alterations and Extensions to Existing Buildings;
- Key policies contained in Camden's Local Plan 2017: design policies D1 a) and b) and Heritage policies D2 e) g) h) j) and k);
- Camden's New Design Guidance July 2020. In particular key messages contained in para 2.11, Design Excellence; the Heritage Chapter 3; Chapter 4 Landscape and Public Realm (including rear gardens paras 4.38 – 4.41) and Para 5.13-14 requiring alterations to retain the integrity of the roof form;
- NPPF 2019 para 193 which places emphasis on the historic asset's conservation in circumstances where no public benefit arises to offset the harm caused;

and should be rejected.

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