

Date: **28<sup>th</sup> October 2019**  
Your ref:  
Our ref: 2019/4383/PRE  
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Dear Tille Verhaeghe,

**Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended)**  
**Re: 117 Canfield Gardens, NW6 3DY**

Thank you for your enquiry received on the 28<sup>th</sup> August 2019, regarding the proposed ground and basement rear extension to the existing ground floor flat, following the demolition of an existing single storey extension. The basement floor would require excavation of the garden and would be 1.45m below the existing garden level. The basement floor would provide two bedrooms with lightwells. The ground floor would provide a kitchen and a 'conservatory', with a raised terrace in front of the existing bay window.

The property falls within the South Hampstead Conservation Area.

The submitted drawings are difficult to make sense of and appear to include extraneous annotations (for example, the drawings show structural elements such as braces and structural columns). You would need to provide clearer drawings for any future planning application so that the proposed development is easily understood by officers and those consulted on the application.

**Design and impact on Conservation Area**

The South Hampstead Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Strategy provides specific guidance on rear extensions. There are many attractive, historic rear elevations in the conservation area, visible from neighbouring gardens. Alterations and extensions to the rear elevations of buildings in the conservation area should respect the historic pattern of development, and preserve the character and historic features of existing buildings. Development will be resisted where it is considered there would be a negative impact on the character and appearance of the conservation area.

The bay window contributes to the character of the rear elevation. The proposed extension would crash into the bay window obscuring part of this

window. In addition, the proposed raised terrace in front of the bay obscures the lower part of the bay window. The extension should therefore be pulled away from the bay to allow sufficient breathing space for this feature. There should be a clear view of the bay window and the raised terrace in front of the bay should be omitted.

The existing extension projects approximately 5.9m into the rear garden and this projection appears to be broadly in line with nearby extensions. The proposed extension would project 8.36m into the rear garden. The depth of the extension is considered excessive and would not respect the historic pattern of development at the rear of the properties on Canfield Gardens.

The two storey rear extension at 113 Canfield Gardens appears to project 5.3m into the rear garden. Planning permission was granted 29/04/2005 for a 2 storey rear extension at this property (planning ref: 2005/0737/P). It is noted that the officer's delegated report stated that "the proposed 2-storey extension was revised to reduce its depth from 5.3m to 3.5m" and "Although it would be 2-storey high, the revised depth (3.5m) would reduce the bulk and result in a subservient addition to the main building". The extension at 113 Canfield Gardens does not appear to have been built in accordance with the plans approved under 2005/0737/P.

The proposed extension should respect the established building line and should project no further into the rear garden than the existing extension.

There are a number of 2 storey rear extensions on surrounding properties on the south side of Canfield Gardens. The planning history indicates a two storey extension was approved at 111 Canfield Gardens in 1987 (planning ref: 8601834). This was before the Conservation Area was designated in August 1988. The 2 storey extension approved at 107 Canfield Gardens is also historic and was approved in 2001 (ref: PWX0102017).

The 2 storey extension approved at 113 Canfield Gardens (ref: 2005/0737/P) is more recent and was approved 29/04/2005. The approved drawings show the extension was lower than the roof of the bay window and as noted above the extension was revised to have a depth of 3.5m.



It is noted that the existing extension is 3.5m high while the proposed extension would be 4.62m high. A modest increase in the height of the extension may be acceptable. However an extension which projects 5.9m and is 4.62m high would not have a subservient appearance. The extension should be smaller in scale, less dominant and more sympathetic to the host building. The roof of the extension should remain below the eaves of the bay window.

Lightwells are proposed on either side of the extension. The lightwell adjacent to the existing bay should be discreet and should not harm the appearance of this important architectural feature. A railing or balustrade would not be acceptable in this location and a grille is suggested.

The green roof is welcomed both for its biodiversity benefits and its contribution to sustainable urban drainage. However you should ensure that a green roof can be incorporated in accordance with the advice regarding the height of the extension (above). If you provide sufficient details of the green roof with the application, a pre-commencement condition will not be required. The details expected are as follows:

- i. a detailed scheme of maintenance;
- ii. sections at a scale of 1:20 with manufacturers details demonstrating the construction and materials used;
- iii. full details of planting species and density

The written submission states a shading system would be included. You have advised that this would be a combination of internal and external shading. As no specific details or drawings of the external shading have been provided, officers are unable to comment further on this aspect of the development. You are nevertheless advised that external shading would only be acceptable if it was sympathetic to the host property.

The proposed living space appears to be poorly laid out with a fragmented layout because of the many changes in levels. In addition, the outlook from the proposed lower ground floor bedrooms would be poor. One of the bedrooms would have a very deep lightwell with no outlook. The window of the other bedroom would look towards the boundary wall and screening with 115 Canfield Gardens.

Local Plan Policy A5 on basements states that the Council will not permit basement schemes which include habitable rooms and other sensitive uses in areas prone to flooding. The area is in a local flood risk zone (Goldhurst). Further detail in relation to this issue is provided in the basement section below.

### **Amenity**

The extension would be set 3.5m away from the side boundary with 115 Canfield Gardens. Given this separation, the extension would be unlikely to harm this property in terms of daylight or sunlight.

The existing extension is approximately 1m from the side boundary with 119 Canfield Gardens. The proposed extension would project approximately 2.5m further into the garden and would be 1.1m higher than the existing extension (4.6m high). The increased height and depth of the extension could harm the daylight and sunlight reaching the ground floor of 119 Canfield Gardens.

The Council expects development to avoid harmful effects on the amenity of existing and future occupiers and nearby properties or, where this is not possible, to take appropriate measures to minimise potential negative impacts. A daylight and sunlight report should be submitted with any future application. The report needs to be prepared in line with the methods described in the Building Research Establishment's (BRE) "Site layout planning for daylight and sunlight: A guide to good practice" 2011.

The development includes a raised terrace (approx. 1.1m high) to the side of the extension. A terrace of this height close to the side boundary with 115 Canfield Gardens could result in harmful overlooking into the garden and windows of this property. The drawings show screening to the side of the terrace (trellis, stone wall or translucent glass). This screening would not be acceptable as it would obscure part of the bay window. The raised terrace with screening should therefore be omitted.

You should investigate mitigation to minimize light spill from the proposed skylight and those parts of the glazed extension which face neighbouring properties. You should also consider the impact of artificial lighting on biodiversity.

### **Basement excavation**

The proposal includes a lower ground floor which would be partially below ground level (1.45m) at the rear of the property. Basements are defined as a floor of a building which is partly or entirely below ground level. A lower ground floor with a floor level partly below the ground level will therefore be considered basement development (Camden Local Plan paragraph 6.110).

The following basement constraints have been identified: lost river; local flood risk zone (Goldhurst); subterranean groundwater flow; surface water flow and flooding; and slope stability. Local Plan Policy A5 on basements states that the Council will not permit basement schemes which include habitable rooms and other sensitive uses in areas prone to flooding. No parts of the borough are currently identified by the Environment Agency as being prone to flooding from waterways. The key flood risk to Camden is from surface water flooding. This arises following periods of intense rainfall when the volume and intensity of a rainfall event exceeds the capacity of the drainage system, resulting in localised flooding. The application site is in a local flood risk zone (Goldhurst). Therefore a development-specific flood risk assessment (FRA) will be required. The site specific FRA should identify how the development would be designed to cope with flooding and how the risk would be mitigated without increasing the risk elsewhere. Recommendations in the FRA would be secured by planning condition.

The Council will only permit basement development where it is demonstrated to its satisfaction that the proposal would not cause harm to:

- a. neighbouring properties;
- b. the structural, ground, or water conditions of the area;
- c. the character and amenity of the area;
- d. the architectural character of the building; and
- e. the significance of heritage assets

The proposed basement would be required to comply with the following requirements:

- f. not comprise of more than one storey;
- g. not be built under an existing basement;
- h. not exceed 50% of each garden within the property;
- i. be less than 1.5 times the footprint of the host building in area;
- j. extend into the garden no further than 50% of the depth of the host building measured from the principal rear elevation;
- k. not extend into or underneath the garden further than 50% of the depth of the garden;
- l. be set back from neighbouring property boundaries where it extends beyond the footprint of the host building; and
- m. avoid the loss of garden space or trees of townscape or amenity value.

The proposed basement would abut the side boundary with 115 Canfield Gardens. This would be contrary to Policy A5 'part L'. The lower ground floor partially below ground level should be set back from the neighbouring side boundaries.

The Council will require evidence of the impact of basement schemes in the form of a Basement Impact Assessment to be carried out by appropriately qualified professionals. Given the identified basement constraints (see above), it is likely a full BIA will be required (i.e. one that goes beyond the screening stage).

The BIA will include the following stages:

- Stage 1 - Screening;
- Stage 2 - Scoping;
- Stage 3 - Site investigation and study;
- Stage 4 - Impact assessment

Each of these stages is explained in full in chapter 4 of [Camden Planning Guidance](#) CPG Basements. Please also refer to Chapter 6 of the Camden Geological, Hydrogeological and Hydrological Study, which is available on the Camden Council website.

The BIA will comprise a factual report and an interpretative report. This is explained in more detail in Section 7 of the Camden Geological, Hydrogeological and Hydrological Study ([hydrological and geological study](#)). The interpretative report will have three sections:

- detailed site geology;

- the geotechnical properties of the ground; and
- an engineering interpretation of the implications of the ground conditions for the development of the site.

Appendix G3 of the study sets this out in more detail from which it should be noted that it must contain details of the retaining wall design for the basement excavation.

The engineering interpretation will require calculations of predicted ground movements and structural impact to be provided. Examples of these calculations are given in appendix D of the Camden Geological, Hydrogeological and Hydrological Study. The sides of excavation always move to some extent no matter how they are supported. The movement will typically be both horizontal and vertical and will be influenced by the engineering properties of the ground, groundwater level and flow, the efficiency of the various support system employed during the underpinning and the efficiency or stiffness of any support frames used.

Applicants must demonstrate in the Basement Impact Assessment that the basement scheme has a risk of damage to neighbouring properties no higher than Burland Scale 1 'very slight'.

The cumulative effect of the incremental development of basements in close proximity, particularly when these are large, can potentially create a significant impact. Therefore Basement Impact Assessments must identify neighbouring basements and make the assessment considering all nearby basements. Both existing and planned (with planning permission) underground development must be included in this assessment. To ensure cumulative impacts are considered Basement Impact Assessments must respond to the issues raised in paragraph 168 to 174 of the Camden Geological, Hydrogeological and Hydrological Study.

We will expect a 'non-technical summary' of the evidence that applicants have gathered against each stage of the BIA. This should be presented in a format which can be fully understood by those with no technical knowledge.

At each stage in the process the person(s) undertaking the BIA process on your behalf should hold qualifications relevant to the matters being considered. We will only accept the qualifications set out in paragraph 4.7 of CPG Basements.

In order to provide us with greater certainty over the potential impacts of proposed basement development, we will also expect an independent verification of the BIA, funded by the applicant. The audit fee ranges from £997.50 to £3045 depending on which category the basement excavation falls within. Once you have submitted an application further details of the independent verification process will be provided.

Camden has produced a '[BIA pro forma](#)' and a help note on '[Defining the Scope of Engineering input to preparing BIAs](#)' in order to help applicants who

are preparing planning applications for basement development. You should submit a BIA pro forma with any future application.

## **Trees**

You have advised that there are two apple trees close to the proposed development and that the proposed excavation would not touch the trees' root structure. Nevertheless, as there are trees within the application site and on adjacent sites, you would need to provide a Tree survey / arboricultural assessment to support any future application. The Council will resist the loss of trees of significant amenity, historic, cultural or ecological value including proposals which may threaten the continued wellbeing of such trees.

## **Conclusion**

The proposed extension would not be subservient to the host property. The extension should be smaller in scale, less dominant and more sympathetic to the host building. The extension should be pulled away from the bay window with a clear view of this feature maintained. The proposed extension should respect the established building line and should project no further into the rear garden than the existing extension. A modest increase in the height of the extension may be acceptable. However, the roof of the extension should remain below the eaves of the roof of the bay window.

The increased height and depth of the extension could harm the daylight and sunlight reaching the ground floor of 119 Canfield Gardens. A daylight and sunlight report should be submitted to demonstrate an acceptable impact on this property.

The application site is in a local flood risk zone (Goldhurst). Therefore a development-specific flood risk assessment (FRA) will be required. In line with Local Plan Policy A5 on basements, the Council will not allow habitable rooms in areas at risk of flooding.

**Please note that the information contained in this letter represents an officer's opinion and is without prejudice to further consideration of this matter by the Development Control section or to the Council's formal decision.**

Planning application forms can be completed online through the National Planning Portal [www.planningportal.gov.uk](http://www.planningportal.gov.uk).

For a valid application, I would advise you to submit the following:

- Completed form – [planning permission](#)
- An Ordnance Survey based location plan at 1:1250 scale clearly denoting the application site in red.
- **Elevations, floor / roof plans, sections** labelled 'existing' and 'proposed' (with a scale bar on the drawing)
- The completed Ownership Certificate (this is part of the application form)

- The appropriate fee (£206)
- Photographs are helpful to provide site context
- Design and Access Statement
- Tree survey / arboricultural assessment
- Daylight and Sunlight assessment
- Basement Impact Assessment including BIA pro forma
- Development specific Flood Risk Assessment

I trust this information is of assistance. Should you have any further queries please do not hesitate to contact me by telephone on 020 7974 5262.

It is important to us to find out what our customers think about the service we provide. To help, we would be very grateful if you could take a few moments to complete our [pre application enquiry survey](#). We will use the information you give us to monitor and improve our services.

Yours sincerely

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