
From: Efstathios Michael [REDACTED]
Sent: 23 December 2020 18:02
To: Planning
Cc: jennierawnsley@aol.com
Subject: Application Number: 2020/5214/P - For the attention of Ben Farrant

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Dear Mr Farrant,

We own 18 Frognal Gardens and write to object to the proposed development at 18A Frognal Gardens. There are a number of issues with the proposed development:

1. First, and most obviously, the proposed development is significantly larger than the existing semi-detached house on the site. As a result it would, if built, tower above the other houses on the road frontage on the north side of Frognal Gardens. It is notable that the Design Review Panel recognised the problem in relation to this, but appeared to speculate that in due course the house at 18B Frognal Gardens (to which 18A is attached) may be re-developed to match it, stating, *“the new building could eventually, or theoretically, form one half of a semi-detached pair of houses with a house on this site”*. There are, however, several issues with this:
 - a. The fact that 18A will be incongruously large in the context of its semi-detached neighbour is not cured by speculating that at some point in the future 18B will itself be enlarged. No application has been made in relation to 18B and so it is not appropriate to assume for the purposes of this application that it is anything other than the building it currently is. Indeed, any planning application could be justified if an assumption is made that the surrounding area would be changed to match the proposed development. But that is the wrong way around - the question is in fact whether the development is appropriate in the context of the existing neighbourhood. It plainly is not here.
 - b. In addition, the future potential redevelopment of 18B to a similar height to 18A does not resolve the issue at all - it will make it worse. In particular, they would both then dwarf the neighbouring houses to the west of them, and those across the road.
2. Second, it is particularly telling that in trying to justify the demolition of the existing property, the application describes the relationship between 18A and 18B Frognal Gardens in the following terms: *“The overall effect is that the buildings form an awkward, unbalanced composition that lacks composure, richness and quality”*. That is notwithstanding the fact that, as the application acknowledges, 18A and 18B currently use the same brick, and that the elevational treatment is only *“subtly different”*. Remarkably, however, given that starting point, the application attempts to suggest that the new composition will be more balanced and otherwise enhanced if one half of it is materially increased in height, and clad in a completely different way to its neighbour. That is simply not a credible suggestion.
3. Third, the title to 18A is encumbered by a number of restrictive covenants. On the face of it the proposed development does not comply with those covenants. For example, the proposed development exceeds the maximum height of building specified in the covenants; goes beyond the area in which building is permitted by the covenants; and does not comply with the requirement that the front elevation must be in brickwork and shall not differ in architectural appearance and materials from that of 18B. We note that the applicants’ position in relation to the previous (almost identical) proposed development was that the covenants are private matters which are not relevant to the planning decision. What that misses, however, is that covenants of

this nature are themselves good indicators of what is to be considered as being in keeping with the neighbourhood. Indeed, it is no coincidence that the covenants themselves mirror very closely the objections which are being made by local residents - i.e. that the proposed development is too large, and is of a fundamentally different finish and character to the adjoining house (and beyond).

4. Fourth, there will be significant loss of amenity for the houses in the vicinity, including our house, given (particularly) the proposed increase in height of 18A. This will mean a material increase in the overlooking of other properties and a significant loss of privacy. From our perspective, the increase in height of the proposed development will mean a loss of privacy into bedrooms in our house, and that our garden will be overlooked.
5. Fifth, for the reasons set out above, permission should not be granted. However, in the event that permission is granted, it will be appropriate to require a Construction Management Plan. The Camden Local Plan provides that *“Measures required to reduce the impact of demolition, excavation and construction works must be outlined in a Construction Management Plan”*. The circumstances in which a Construction Management Plan may be considered include for *“basement developments; developments with poor or limited access on site; ... developments that are accessed via narrow residential streets; ... and; developments that could cause significant disturbance due to their location or the anticipated length of the demolition, excavation or construction period”*, all of which will be present here. For example, the development consists of the demolition of one half of a pair of semi-detached houses; involves the excavation of a basement; the initial basement impact assessment predicted damage to neighbouring houses of between 1 and 2 on the Burland scale; and it is difficult to see that the construction (and subsequent maintenance) up to the eastern boundary could take place without access to the driveway of our property at 18 Frognal Gardens (permission for which has neither been sought nor granted).

As you will be aware, the responses to the original planning application in relation to this site (2019/5438/P) were overwhelmingly (and consistently) negative. There have been only minor tweaks made to that original proposal, such that the responses to the current proposal are also overwhelmingly negative. In short, the proposed development is substantially too big and will dwarf the neighbouring houses; will create an incongruous split down the middle of a pair of semi-detached houses; and is in a style and finish that finds no match anywhere in the street or the neighbourhood.

Yours sincerely,

Efstathios Michael & Jennie Rawnsley