

From - Patrick & Catherine Gibbs, 75 Arlington Road, London NW1 7ES

Planning application 2020/5320/P

Objection - Yes

Timing - Comments were invited on this application by 7th February 2021. Although we have been present in Arlington Road continuously during the Covid-19 upheaval, often passing number 71, no notice of this application had come to our attention. We wonder whether others with a significant interest in this application may similarly know nothing about it. We apologise for the late submission of our observations below and ask that they be accepted for the committee's consideration. We submit them now, without delay, as soon as we have learned of the application.

Observations - The freeholders of 75 Arlington Road object to this application for the following reasons.

(1) ADDITIONAL STOREY TO OUTRIGGER.

71 and 75 Arlington Road form part of a short terrace of butterfly-parapet, valley-roofed houses, which sit within a longer terrace of houses with original rear mansards and chimney stacks. The rear elevations of this short terrace are flat at higher levels. The committee may feel that the addition of yet another storey to the closet wing of number 71, which is already anomalous in its height (extending to the first storey, whereas the other buildings in this terrace have closet wings only on their ground floors), is likely to degrade both the listed features of number 71 and the listed features of its fellows in the terrace.

(2) ERECTION OF SINGLE STOREY REAR EXTENSION AT LOWER GROUND FLOOR LEVEL...

The application uses the rear extension at number 73 as a precedent in justification of the length and volume of the proposed extension at number 71. The committee may feel that the rear extension at number 73 is in truth a weird anomaly, which it would be wiser to mitigate than to mimic. It must have been built in a different planning era, before the terrace was listed. When you visit the site you will see that the number 73 extension looks as though an ISO shipping container has been craned over the roofs of the terrace and dropped into one of the gardens. It is an entirely foreign object. To drop another such container, at a lower level, into the garden next door, and shine lights up out of its roof: would that not double the insult to the listed buildings? One way to test this component of the application might be to ask

(a) would planning permission be contemplated today for the 73 extension?

(b) could an extension of the sort applied for at number 71 be allowed for ALL the houses in this terrace without damage to the features of the terrace which inspired its listing in the first place?

(3) ...WITH ROOF TERRACE ABOVE.

The rear extension at number 73 must be a horrible eyesore for the inhabitants of number 71. It is entirely reasonable to want to mitigate its impact in some conservation sensitive way. Could planting and garden design not achieve that? The gardens of number 71 and its neighbours are a sizeable block of green, something of a wildlife oasis, and a significant part of the reasonable private enjoyment by each owner/occupant of their home. It is difficult to translate the present architect's drawings into an evaluation of how overlooked its neighbours would be, were the proposed roof terrace to be erected at number 71, or how the oasis wildlife would be impacted (for instance what effect the vertical lighting would have on the large number of bats which daily circle these gardens at dusk).