

Planning and Borough Development
London Borough of Camden
c/o Judd Street
London
WC1H 9JE

13 April 2021

Our ref: NTH/CHST/U13857

Dear Sirs,

82 Fitzjohn's Avenue, London, NW3 6NP
Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended)

We write on behalf of our client, Mr Ross, to submit a householder application for planning permission in respect of refurbishment and rationalisation works at 82 Fitzjohn's Avenue. In full, planning permission is sought for:

"Refurbishment, rationalisation and extensions at 82 Fitzjohn's Avenue, in addition to landscaping and associated works".

This submission follows preceding pre-application advice (ref: 2020/5362/PRE and 2021/1053/PRE) formally received on 4th February 2021 and 16th March 2021 respectively.

The Site

The site, comprising a residential home, is situated to the rear of 84 Fitzjohn's Avenue. Fitzjohn's Primary School lies to the north, the Royal Mail Sorting Office to the east and Spring Walk to the south of the site.

The site is located within the Fitzjohn's and Netherhall Conservation Area and within the Hampstead Neighbourhood Plan Area.

Planning History

Planning permission (ref: 1160) was granted on 9th December 1965 for the erection of a single storey extension at the rear of the ground floor.

In 1971 and 1972, planning permission was granted for ground and first floor extensions to improve the staff accommodation at 82 Fitzjohn's Avenue, which was the Principal's residence for Saint Godric's College (ref: 11184 and 14256 respectively).

The site has been subject to a number of planning applications over the years but the most relevant in respect of the current proposal relates to Planning permission that was granted on 4th October 2019 (ref: 2019/4229/P) for the erection of a two-storey side, front and rear extensions, a replacement pool house and associated works.

Pre-Application Advice

Pre-Application I

Pre-application request (ref: 2020/5362/PRE) was submitted to London Borough of Camden in November 2020. The submission confirmed that since the 2019 permission, the site had been sold, resulting in the new owners of the property aspiring to undertake refurbishment and rationalisation works to improve the existing layout of the dwelling following historic adaptations of the property.

In full, the proposals sought the extension of the east-west wing including the erection of a central gable and changes to windows; erection of new chimneys; lowering of existing pool, erection of new orangery-style enclosure and installation of associated plant; demolition of existing single storey breezeblock extension and erection of new two storey extension to north-south wing; and associated landscaping works.

Advice received in respect of request 2020/5362/PRE concluded that:

- The principal of the extension was considered to be acceptable given the previous consent, and the proposed design and fenestration were in keeping with the original architectural design of the house;
- There was no objection to the loss of the existing extension as it was considered to be of low architectural quality and unsympathetic materials;
- The proposed two-storey extension was considered acceptable as part of the 2019 approval, and as such, there is no objection to the principle of a similar extension. It was however recommended that the height of the extension be reduced slightly to ensure that the extension remains subordinate to the original building;
- The existing gable end to the south end of the wing would be retained. The removal of the modern extension was considered a positive feature of the previously approved proposals and it was recommended that consideration is given to how this element could be improved;
- The proposed larger two storey extension in combination with the bulky gable was considered to result in excessive massing to this corner, and it was recommended that the proposals were scaled back;
- An infill extension was proposed to the front elevation of the wing. There was no in-principle objection to this, but officers questioned whether it should be reduced in height slightly; and
- The proposals involved the demolition of the existing pool house, the excavation and lowering of the existing swimming pool and the erection of new orangery-style enclosure. There was no objection to this element of the works.

Pre-Application II

Revised proposals were submitted to London Borough of Camden on 18th February 2021 (ref: 2021/1053/PRE). The proposals responded directly to concerns raised by Officers during pre-application I, providing clarification of details, and included an Outline Heritage Assessment, prepared by Stephen Levrant Heritage Architecture and a Sustainability Strategy prepared by SRE.

Pre-application advice received from Officers focused solely on heritage, design and energy considerations, as follows:

- Detailed information was provided by the project team regarding the history of the property and its construction, demonstrating that despite initial appearances, there are few remaining elements of any particular quality. Officers confirmed that the initial request to provide additional detail was to determine whether the proposals would result in the loss of high-quality architecture and materials. Officers were satisfied that this would not be the case;
- It was confirmed that the existing roof tiles will be re-used which was welcomed by Officers, and the new extensions will be painted brickwork to match existing, which was supported;
- The small front infill extension to the north-south wing includes the removal of railings which reduce the bulk of the extension. Officers considered the changes to be acceptable and that the revisions addressed previous concerns raised;
- The revised proposals removed the gable end, as suggested by Officers, which was welcomed. It was noted that the two storey extension hadn't been reduced in height however was stepped away from the southern end of the building. In combination with the changes to the southern gable end, the proposals were considered by Officers to be acceptable;
- A 3D sketch of the roof form to the north south wing was requested as part of a future application;
- Energy and sustainability credentials of the scheme were presented and welcomed by Officers;
- It was noted by Officers that the south elevation of the east-west wing contains a large amount of glazing, which could result in overheating. Thermal modelling was requested by Officers to demonstrate that any risk of overheating has been mitigated.

Following receipt of further pre-application advice, the consultant team have progressed with design development. The new proposals reflect comments raised by Officers.

Proposals

The proposals seek to improve the functionality of the dwelling whilst incorporating sustainable design and energy efficiency measures resulting in a family dwelling fit for contemporary uses. Accordingly, the description of development is as follows:

“Refurbishment, rationalisation and extensions at 82 Fitzjohn’s Avenue, in addition to landscaping and associated works”.

The submitted drawings and accompanying reports provide a detailed description of the proposals. The below is intended as a summary only:

Main Building:

- Proposed raised ridge to existing gable and proposed rear gable;
- Existing rear extension removed and replaced with 2 storey extension set back from the southern boundary at the rear;
- Proposed new oriel window to front gable;
- Proposed new chimneys;
- Reconstruction of windows;
- Removal of flat roof area to previous ‘garage extension’ at second floor level;
- Height of existing southern extension at ground floor level raised;
- Hidden roof terrace between front and rear pitched roofs;
- Proposed dormer window to rear ‘garage extension’; and

- Proposed projecting hipped roof dormer widow to rear extension.

Northern Wing:

- Height of ridge raised;
- Extension to northern boundary at ground floor level with 2 roof lights;
- Oriel window to end gable;
- Central gable to southern elevation;
- Glazing on first floor to match existing traditional style;
- Arcade glazing at ground floor level;
- Transept behind central gable with obscure glazing to northern elevation; and
- New chimneys.

Orangery:

- Removal of existing pool house and extension to north-eastern boundary;
- Wild flower green roof over orangery;
- Provision of 3 new roof lights;
- Footprint of orangery reduced;
- Bay window to rear garden;
- Pool and associated plant lowered to bring pool access to ground floor level.

Site:

- Relocation of driveway to increase garden;
- Secondary access from Spring Walk provided;
- Replacement of rear garden shed with open fronted pavilion style area;
- Replacement of existing garage in slightly altered location to allow access to driveway; and
- Garden store to be provided behind garage.

Planning Policy Framework

In accordance with Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 ("the Act") the proposals must be assessed against the "Development Plan" and other material considerations. In this case, the local development plan comprises the National Planning Policy Framework (2019), the London Plan (2021) and Camden's Local Plan (2017).

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that proposals be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Assessment

Design and Conservation

Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 ("the Listed Buildings Act") requires that special attention be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a Conservation Area when considering applications relating to land or buildings within that Area.

Policy D4 of the London Plan requires development to incorporate exemplary standards of high-quality and sustainable urban design. Policy D1 of the Camden Local Plan seeks to secure high quality design in development, which respects the local context and character, and preserves or enhances the historic environment and heritage assets. The Policy goes on to require the use of high-quality materials which complement the local character and contribute positively to the street frontage.

Policy D2 of the Camden Local Plan (2017) requires that development within conservation areas preserves or, where possible, enhances the character or appearance of the area.

Policy DH1 of the Hampstead Neighbourhood Plan expects development proposals to demonstrate how they respond and contribute positively to the distinctiveness and history of the area and should respect and enhance the character and local context of the relevant character area. Policy DH2 states that new development should take advantage of opportunities to enhance the Conservation Area by protecting and, where appropriate, restoring original architectural features, including walls, windows, doors, etc., that would make a positive contribution to the Conservation Area.

The proposals have been developed to consider and address the surrounding historic environment in association with the existing building. The proposed refurbishment works to 82 Fitzjohn's Avenue continue to seek to reinstate a number of original features to the modernised elements of the dwelling whilst paying attention to the scale and appearance of the existing building, improving the overall aesthetic.

The proposals have been sensitively designed with Stephen Levant Heritage Architecture and are in keeping with the character of the surrounding area, in accordance with Policy D1 of Camden's Local Plan and Policy DH 1 and DH2 of the Hampstead Neighbourhood Plan.

Amenity

Policy A1 of the Local Plan and Policy DH1 of the Hampstead Neighbourhood Plan seek to protect the amenity of Camden's residents by ensuring the impact of development is fully considered and would not harm the amenity of neighbouring residents. This includes privacy, outlook, noise, daylight and sunlight.

The site is located adjacent to Fitzjohn's Primary School to the north, the Royal Mail Sorting Office to the east and Spring Walk immediately to the south.

The nearest residential properties lie to the south of the site on Thurlow Road, the other side of Spring Walk. Both Spring Walk and the rear gardens of these properties separate the development from these properties.

There are not considered to be any overlooking issues to adjacent residential properties. The proposed windows have been considered and sensitively located in order to minimise any overlooking, in accordance with Policy A1 of the Camden Local Plan and Policy DH1 of the Hampstead Neighbourhood Plan.

Energy and Sustainability

Policies CC1, CC3, CC4, CC5 and CPG6 of the Local Plan provide detailed guidance as to how all developments are expected to reduce their carbon dioxide emissions by following steps in the energy hierarchy (be lean, be clean, be green) in order to reduce energy consumption.

All proposals comprising fabric removal should be fully justified in terms of the optimisation of resources and energy use, in comparison with the existing building.

A Whole Life Carbon Assessment, Energy and Sustainability Statement and Thermal Comfort Analysis, prepared by SRE are submitted in support of this application. As set out within the accompanying reports, the proposed development demonstrates compliance with the Energy Hierarchy, showing a >35% CO2 emissions reduction over a Building Regulations Compliant design, with a >10% emissions reduction being achieved through fabric efficiency measures and a >20% CO2 emissions offset from on-site renewable energy, exceeding local policy requirements.

The Whole Life Carbon Assessment sets out the embodied and operational carbon emissions for the proposed development, showing that the proposals will have a cradle to grave emission of 1108.72 tonnes CO2e, which is less than that associated with the retained and extended refurbished scenario.

The results provided within the aforementioned reports demonstrate that the proposals not only comply with energy and sustainability requirements, but improve and exceed upon levels sought. A full analysis is provided within the supporting documents prepared by SRE.

Trees

Policy A3 of the Local Plan seeks to protect trees and vegetation. Part (k) of Policy A3 seeks to protect any retained trees during construction.

An Arboricultural Statement has been submitted alongside this pre-application request. The approved permission secured the removal of three trees on site, including T7, T8 and T9.

The revised proposal includes the removal of six trees (T4, T7, T8, T9, T28, Ts29) in their entirety, in addition to the northern most of Ts18. The trees will be replaced by new native trees with a greater life expectancy.

The proposals currently retain the eastern boundary trees (Ts 24 -27) however, shading by the trees is exposing the soil to erosion. It is therefore considered that a method for retaining soil and introducing new planting may be necessary. The trees in question are category C Sycamores and Poplars.

The removal of low-quality trees and the replacement with native trees is considered to be an improvement. As such the proposals are considered to comply with Policy A3 of the Local Plan. A full Arboricultural Method Statement and appendices is submitted with the application.

Basement Development

Policy A5 of the Local Plan relates to basement development. The Local Plan defines basement development as a floor of a building which is partly or entirely below ground level. The proposals include the lowering of the existing pool and associated plant.

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 lowering of the pool will not alter the existing conditions in respect of amenity, character and architecture or the significance of heritage assets. The proposals will be fully assessed to ensure structural integrity. The resulting impact of the lowering of the pool is therefore considered to be negligible.

In accordance with London Borough of Camden's requirements, a Basement Impact Assessment and Ground Investigation and Basement Impact Assessment Report are submitted in support of this planning application.

Application Documentation

Please find enclosed the following documents submitted in support of this planning application:

- A copy of this cover letter;
- Site location plan, prepared by Charlton Brown Architecture & Interiors;
- Existing, approved and proposed plans, elevations and sections, prepared by Charlton Brown Architecture & Interiors;
- Design and Access Statement, prepared by Charlton Brown Architecture & Interiors;
- Heritage Assessment, prepared by Stephen Levant Heritage Architecture;
- Photographic Record, prepared by Stephen Levant Heritage Architecture;
- Whole Life Carbon Assessment, prepared by SRE;
- Energy and Sustainability Statement, prepared by SRE;
- Thermal Comfort Analysis, prepared by SRE;
- Arboricultural Assessment, prepared by Tree Works;
- Basement Impact Assessment, prepared by Harrison Shortt Structural Engineers Ltd; and
- Ground Investigation and Basement Impact Assessment, prepared by Harrison Shortt Structural Engineers Ltd.

We trust that the information submitted is sufficient to validate this application request and we look forward to discussing the proposals.

The requisite application fee of £206 has been paid via BACS. Please do not hesitate to contact Neil Henderson or Chloe Staddon of this office should you have any questions.

Yours faithfully

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