

<b>Application No:</b>	<b>Consultees Name:</b>	<b>Received:</b>	<b>Comment:</b>	<b>Response:</b>
2021/1564/P	Jasbinder Bains	22/06/2021 13:19:00	OBJ	Dear Ms. Fieldsend:

I write to strongly object to the planning application for the garages at 14 Hampstead Hill Gardens, NW3 2PL (2021/1564/P).

I would like to put on record the reasons for my objections, as well as reiterate my witnessing during the past 18 months that there are no methods to stop aggressive development in order to preserve a conservation area.

My objections are based on:

1. Streetscape: the streetscape on this road, and in particular at the specific point in the road where the site is located, would be severely compromised by this proposal. The proposed redesign of the building is not in keeping aesthetically with its surroundings. If allowed, it would detrimentally impact the character and continuity of the existing streetscape, one which is defined by two pairs of identical semi-detached townhouses with commensurate spacing either side and between. These four properties collectively and effectively bookend this side of Hampstead Hill Gardens with a uniformity that is instantly recognisable both by what it there and what is not there. The four properties share a consistency of height, roofline, and a design aesthetic which would be seriously compromised by this plan. the roof line would become a jagged edge, and the loss of space between 14 and 12 Hampstead Hill gardens would radically compromise the ability to appreciate the considered spacing of these four properties which would be quite inappropriate and against the style of the properties which form the immediate road's character. The Principal Planning Officer claimed the gap between properties 'provides a generous gap in the streetscene, however this isn't identified within the Conservation Area or Neighbourhood Plan to be of significance.' The absence of such identification is not commensurate with it being insignificant. The question has not been asked - it is now being asked and this will not be the only objection I believe that will say exactly the opposite to such a bureaucratic assertion.

2. Massing: the Applicant's proposal results in substantial massing of the site, in particular against the street and public footpath for those passing and for near neighbours. This would be out of context on this road. The garage's current low, consistent height creates a palpable sense of openness which would be destroyed as the light and views would be blocked by the substantial increase in height and density of the proposal. The Applicant's own pictorial representations of the proposed design illustrate the massing effect on the immediate area in front of the building as well as in the rear gardens of 12, 14 and 16 Hampstead Hill Gardens.

Overdevelopment: the site of the existing garages was designed so that the surroundings houses and the public can benefit from an open a view of the gardens and what was a mature horse chestnut tree, rather than dwellings jammed together. The proposed plan would convert what are garages into a much larger family home and further enveloping the gardens of 12, 14 and 16 Hampstead Hill Gardens. This is precisely the type of overdevelopment which the Hampstead Neighbourhood Plan and the Conservation Area Statement were designed to prevent. The massing of the building near the highway and against the property lines; the increase in height of the structure which blocks views and compromises the sky-scape; the loss of sunlight to neighbouring gardens of 12, 14 and 16 Hampstead Hill Gardens and homes; the creation of another extended basement well beyond the footprint of the existing building are all key indicators that collectively establish that this is a case of overdeveloping a site and it should not be approved. Hampstead Hill Gardens is a designated biodiversity corridor, and the development to-date at this site has not included any measures to protect and enhance the biodiversity value of the site. Quite the opposite.

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3. Blocking of Views: the sudden increase in the height of the Applicant's proposal would dramatically alter the views to and from surroundings buildings.

Skyscape: the proposed plans would damage the skyscape for virtually all near neighbours, both from the front of the building and in neighbouring gardens. The proposed plans would materially and detrimentally alter the perspectives each of the Applicant's several neighbours currently enjoy and would damage their ability to enjoy evening sun, morning light and the beauty of the Hampstead skyscape throughout the day.

4. Light: the plans should be rejected if for no other reason than the damage the proposal would do to the lightscape of neighbouring properties, specifically affecting 12, 14 and 16 Hampstead Hill Gardens. The height of the structure creates a sundial effect, casting a block of shade more or less continuously across nearby homes and gardens throughout the day as the sun traverses the sky. One entire side of each of 12 and 14 Hampstead Hill Gardens would lose light entirely, where they currently face into the space the garages occupy.

5. Heritage: the proposal would result in the destruction of a subordinate and inoffensive structure which, while it could benefit from updating, has nevertheless through the passage of time become a critical part of the character of the road. The structure's design is now firmly a part of the streetscape. Local residents have grown accustomed to the size and shape of the garages and, for locals, it would be a tremendous loss to this community to allow such an aggressive design to consume the open space.

6. Design: the Applicant's proposed design is bulky, overbearing, has a commercial aesthetic and is inconsistent with the character and architecture of neighbouring properties. Some materials used are out of keeping with nearby homes. This incompatibility would be particularly severe in the case of 12 Hampstead Hill Gardens, which is entirely different in design, style, materials and shape from that which the Applicant proposes. The proposed design would clash outright with the setting and is alien to the consistent style of local properties and makes no contextual sense. Perhaps as importantly, the proposed design is completely out of character and out of context with respect to the larger part of the structure to which it is attached. The Applicant's proposal bears virtually no resemblance to 20, 18, 16 or 14 Hampstead Hill Gardens, and would rather create a jarring, irrational vision entirely lacking any relationship to where it is and to what it is attached. Contrary to the application, this road is not characterised by a number of modern infills - this development would be one of very few. and this should be flagged as received wisdom only. Sitting directly opposite 23a, an existing modern two storey build, this proposal would effectively cut the character of the road in two.

7. Overlooking (front and back): the proposal results in a loss of privacy for nearby homes by building too high and with direct views into nearby properties, particularly 12, 14 and 16 Hampstead Hill Gardens at the rear.

8. Overshadowing (at the sides): by virtue of its increased height, the new tower structure will substantially increase the incidence of overshadowing, in particular affecting neighbouring gardens at 12, 14 and 16 Hampstead Hill Gardens. The privacy of several gardens will be almost entirely compromised with virtually every corner of adjacent and facing properties now overshadowed. These gardens are all used continuously as integral inside/outside spaces: Allowing an adjacent neighbour to build a structure which would as a matter of certainty overshadow those private spaces is unacceptable. The application is clear that it is not BRE compliant.

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9. Amenity: the bulk, the size and the scope of this design would materially compromise the amenity of surrounding properties, reducing light, obstructing views, exacerbating noise and vibration and harming the heritage of the site itself as well as the streetscape. Local residents have every right to seek to preserve the amenity value of their properties and roads and this proposal would present a threat to that quality of life. There is no doubt that the amenity of the road and near properties would be reduced and it is our considered view that the level of amenity reduction is simply not acceptable in the context of what is being proposed. Flooding: the Applicant's surface flow and flooding assessment does not take account of the basement built without authorisation at 14 Hampstead Hill Gardens or the excavation of the rear of the site by 1.5m, equivalent to circa 100+ skips of soil.

It is essential that this proposal be considered alongside the unauthorised development of 14 Hampstead Hill Gardens that has proceeded during the past 18 months, and which has blighted the lives of neighbours. Despite claims that the development is of a 'forever home', the efforts by other developers on this road to personally and actively engage the local community is in marked contrast to the approach adopted on this occasion. Everything that has been completed at 14 Hampstead Hill Gardens has been in preparation for the Applicant's proposal.

Residential use is a priority for Camden, yet this property for a single family dwelling is on the site of garages whose adjoining property has been changed, without prior authorisation, in use from four flats to two.

Net, net, Camden is conflating 'residential use' with 'developer profit maximisation'. The basement impact assessment, the lack of one at 14 Hampstead Hill Gardens, the unbelievable garden excavation now referred to by Camden as 'landscaping', the felling of trees, the inevitable reasons/excuses for not planting the required replacement because of this proposal, the inclusion of air conditioning in this Applicant's proposal, the unauthorised installation of an air conditioning unit that remains in place to this day, the unauthorised off street parking now masquerading as 'access' for this development, the list goes on. The residents have no choice but to put their trust in Camden. Camden continues to appear to trust this developer.

I urge you to reject this application in its entirety.

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