

From: no-reply@camden.gov.uk
Sent: 23 January 2022 16:55
To: env.devcon@camden.gov.uk; udr@camden.gov.uk; Planning Planning
Subject: Conservation area advisory committee comments form
Attachments: 21739597.htm; 21739597.xml; PHCAAC advice Utopia Village
20215939P.pdf; 21739597.pdf

CONSERVATION AREA ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Advisory Committee: Primrose Hill
Application ref: 2021/5939/P
Address: Utopia Village 7 Chalcot Road London NW1 8LH Planning Officer: Ewan
Campbell Comments by: 06 Feb 2022
Proposal: Full planning permission for replacement, consolidation renewal of existing
heating/cooling/ventilation systems (resubmission of application
ref: 2020/2674/P)

Objection: Yes

Observations: please see attached file

DOCUMENTS ATTACHED

No details entered

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PHCAAC advice Utopia Village 2021/5939/P:
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ABOUT THIS FORM

Issued by: Contact Camden
5 Pancras Square
London N1C 4AG
Form reference: 21739597

PRIMROSE HILL CONSERVATION AREA ADVISORY COMMITTEE

12A Manley Street, London NW1 8LT

5 January 2022

Utopia Village 2021/5939/P

Strong objections

1. The Committee was grateful to the applicant for an opportunity to visit the site on 5 January 2022 when both locations for the new installation could be examined. We also acknowledge that the applicant has engaged with the Advisory Committee since the withdrawn 2020 application, although this engagement was limited and did not involve detailed discussions which might have achieved an agreed solution. The Advisory Committee discussed the proposals and agreed the following objections at our meeting on 5 January 2022.
2. The Advisory Committee noted that the 2021 application is stated to be for the proposed replacement of heating/cooling/ventilation plant by means of 2 separate roof-top installations.
3. One would be enclosed in a noise-reducing structure 5.65m long by 3.7m high. This would be located on the roof of the building which fronts on to Egbert Street, but which backs on to the rear of houses in Gloucester Avenue, from where the proposed structure, placed on the existing roof structure adjacent to the Gloucester Avenue properties, would be prominently visible. The proposed enclosure would also be visible from the public street in Fitzroy Road.
4. A second installation would be enclosed in a structure 4.11m by 2.29m by 2.95m high located substantially (some 2.31m under, 1.8m projecting) but not wholly under the stair structure facing the backs of houses in Fitzroy Road and the flank of houses in Egbert Street.
5. The main issues for the Advisory Committee are the impact of the proposals on the character and appearance of the conservation area, and the degree to which the proposals address Camden's local development plan and acknowledgment of the climate crisis. The Advisory Committee also supports local residents in their concern to protect residential amenity, especially the avoidance of noise pollution.

Proposed new heating/cooling/ventilation plant

6. Camden's Local Plan, Policy CC2 'Adapting to climate change', requires 'all development' (and not only those proposing 5 residential units or more) to adopt appropriate climate change adaptation measures, spelling out, in para. 8.39 'The Council will discourage the use of air conditioning and excessive mechanical plant.' At para. 8.42 'Active cooling (air conditioning) will only be permitted where dynamic thermal modelling demonstrates there is a clear need for it after all of the preferred measures are incorporated in line with the cooling hierarchy.'
7. We fully endorse Camden's policy CC2 and ask for it to be upheld. Conservation of our environment in its most basic sense is at risk from climate change: every one of us has a role to play in addressing climate change. We understand that the Council has now agreed that we are in a climate crisis: it is critically important that this is seen to be carried through in appropriate policy and implemented through effective development management.

8. While the applicant claims in their letter of 3 December 2021 that the proposed installation is more efficient than the existing, it does not demonstrate the clear need as required by Policy CC2.

9. At Local Plan 8.39 the Council also states 'In addition to increasing the demand for energy, air conditioning and plant equipment expel heat from a building making the local micro-climate hotter. Where the use of this equipment is considered acceptable by the Council, for example where sterile internal air is required, we will expect developments to provide an appropriate level of mitigation towards cooling the local environment.' No assessment of the impact on the local micro-climate has been made.

10. It is also not clear to us how far the proposed plant is only limited to replacing the previous in terms of capacity: the proposed plant and its impact needs full assessment as required under the Local Plan. The application fails to provide assessments required by the local development plan and cannot be accepted as meeting the local development plan requirements in respect of these issues.

Impact on the character and appearance of the conservation area

11. The proposed installations are sited on the flat roofs of a building which is part of the site originally developed in the nineteenth century as a piano factory. The original, fine, low-scale, brick building survives, and is recognized as making a positive contribution to the conservation area (*Primrose Hill Conservation Area Statement (2011)*, the current SPD, at p. 24). The building on which the present proposal seeks to build is adjacent to this heritage asset, and is recognized in the *PHCA Statement*, at p. 18, 'works at north end of Egbert Street', as making a negative contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area 'due to inappropriate qualities such as bulk, scale, height, materials, the way in which they address the street or application of architectural details'.

12. One consequence of this negative status is carried through in policy-guidance PH19 in the *PHCA Statement*, at p. 31 which includes the building, 'works at end of Egbert Street', as one where 'roof extensions and alterations which change the shape and form of the roof are unlikely to be acceptable'.

13. The building to which it is proposed to add the substantial new enclosures at roof level is already recognized as negative – detracting from the character and appearance of the conservation area. It does so because of its 'inappropriate qualities such as bulk, scale, height, materials'. The proposed addition to the roof to the north of a 3.7m high block 5.65m long would add significantly to the building's existing 'inappropriate qualities' of bulk, scale, and height. We note that the existing plant is very modest in scale: the proposed replacements are on a substantially different bulk and scale. The proposed additions would be prominently visible from the group of houses to the north, in Gloucester Avenue, and visible from the public street, to the west, in Fitzroy Road.

14. The addition to the west is less visible, but would still add to the negative qualities of the current building – the enclosure is only partially concealed by the stair and landing, a substantial section would project in a clumsy way worsening the negative character of the building.

15. While we accept that the present application is less harmful to the character and appearance of the conservation area this negative building would still become more negative. The proposals would harm and neither preserve nor enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area.

Noise levels

16. We strongly support local residents in their concerns to protect their residential amenity. It is key to the character of the conservation area that a mixture of uses and activities can co-exist side-by-side without harm to others.

17. The Advisory Committee notes the report from Max Fordham dated 7 August 2020 commissioned by local residents. The questions raised in this report still need to be addressed.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Richard Simpson". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line extending from the end of the name.

Richard Simpson FSA,
Chair PHCAAC.

Conservation Area Advisory Committee

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About this form

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