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**From:** Andrew Parkinson (Cllr)  
**Sent:** 24 February 2022 08:26  
**To:** Miriam Baptist  
**Cc:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** 282 Finchley Road - 2021/6220/P

Dear Miriam,

I'm writing to object to this application for retrospective planning permission.

As I sit on Members Briefing and Planning Committee, I have avoided getting too involved in any planning issues in my ward. This is the first time I've ever objected to a planning application. I am doing so now because this development is completely inappropriate and its approval would undermine confidence in the recently made neighbourhood plan.

Whilst this development is small-scale, and some local authorities might (wrongly) take the view that it's easier to let it go, rather than have to spend time defending it on appeal/taking enforcement action, I am confident that Camden will take a different stance and robustly defend its own policies and those of the local community. The problems with this development are very well summarised in a recent objection from Mr. Ian Henry, a neighbouring resident overlooked by the development. I also understand that an objection will be submitted on behalf of the Redington Froggnal Neighbourhood Forum, which I chair and which prepared the neighbourhood plan. I endorse the contents of both objections.

There are three fundamental problems with this application.

The first is the garden loss. The construction of the outbuilding has destroyed approximately one third of the garden. Policy A3(e) of Camden's Local Plan seeks to protect gardens, where possible. The supporting text explains at paragraph 6.37 that this will occur where development occupies an excessive part of the garden. The loss here is clearly excessive. This is reflected in the Redington Froggnal Neighbourhood Plan, which seeks to prevent significant reductions in the overall area of natural soft surface (see SD5(iii)). Again, this development plainly does not comply with that criterion.

The neighbourhood plan goes further than the Local Plan (as it is entitled to do, and to reflect the particular character of this area). It seeks to avoid any garden loss (SD1) given the impact this has on biodiversity and wildlife habitat; and requires trees to be retained and any loss compensated with a replacement tree (BG1(i)). As Mr. Henry explains, the construction of this office has resulted in tree loss, with no replacement proposed. I also understand that there has been hedge loss.

Second, the wood clad design with PVC windows is completely out of character. Policy SD5 of the neighbourhood plan, which deals specifically with outbuildings – says that they should (i) use either matching materials to the existing building, or using contrasting materials to help maintain the original composition of the building. This does neither and is an incongruous addition to the area (see photo on page 2 of Mr. Henry's letter). The NPPF says at paragraph 134 that "development that is not well designed should be refused". Applying the criteria at paragraph 130 of the NPPF it would be impossible to say that this new office is "well designed". Its height means that the development is not "sympathetic to local character" see paragraph 130(c) of the NPPF and also has an amenity impact on neighbouring occupiers through overlooking and light spill.

Third, the development results in harm to the conservation area. The recently published and updated Redington Froggnal Conservation Area Character Appraisal sets out a number of development principles including those to protect the Conservation Areas "Garden Suburb character". Those principles reflect the significance of the conservation area which includes its "landscape infrastructure". This development does not comply with the garden suburb principles set out in the CA appraisal, and therefore harms the significance of the Conservation Area. A garden suburb character is made up of a number of individual gardens. It can be lost over time through a succession of small-scale applications like this – a death by a thousand cuts.

Plainly, if any harm is identified (and the harms here are numerous and only briefly summarised above) that would be fatal to this application. It derives no support from any policies in either the Camden Local Plan or the neighbourhood plan. There are no public benefits whatsoever that could be weighed against the harm.

It should be refused (at the very least) on the grounds of (i) unacceptable garden loss (ii) not being “well designed” and (iii) less than substantial harm to the Conservation Area with no countervailing public benefits.

More generally, this is exactly the type of development that the recently made Redington Froggnal Neighbourhood Plan was designed to prevent. That plan, carefully crafted by the local community over many years, and resoundingly endorsed in a recent referendum has a number of policies that this application is clearly contrary to. The forum appreciates the time that Camden invested in that process, and in the recent training on its policies. This is a good opportunity for them to be applied in the way they were intended. Further, whilst the updated CA appraisal is not yet formally adopted, it will be by the time of the decision. It has popular support in the local community. This application is likely to be the first test of whether Camden applies it in practice.

I trust that the application will be refused, and that immediate enforcement action will then be taken.

Best wishes,

Andrew