

Mrs Lowenstein
4 Frognal Gardens
London NW3 6UX

16.06.2022

Dear Mr Campbell,

**Re: Application no. 2022/221785/P
Flat A 4 Frognal Gardens London NW36UX**

I write to make the following observations re the above application. I trust that my comments will be duly noted.

1)

The proposed extension above is much bigger than other extensions in the street, and looks inappropriately large relative to the size of the host property. It would be greatly improved by a reduction in size, perhaps by altering the dimensions of some of the reorganised spaces within. Looking at the development from the front for example, Camden Conservation's stated preference is for clear space to be left between houses, so as to glimpse trees or gardens beyond. This will not be the case here when the extension is completed. Indeed, the views out of number 4's back windows including mine, which at present are exclusively of trees, gardens, glimpses of the overgrown green of a historic graveyard, will now suddenly display a roof - the only roof visible in the entire stretch of green. Sedums are to be planted on this roof, although I do not have much faith in their survival.

2)

At the rear, why can the extension not be limited to the line of the existing retaining wall? According to the plan at the moment, it is to be pushed back and out further than that of number 6 next door? Thus reducing the size of the garden and necessitating the strange unnatural looking slope shown in the plans, presumably still covered in Astroturf?

Artificial grass does not absorb rainfall as natural vegetation would, so the risk of the basement flat being flooded by rain running off the garden via a pronounced slope in the wrong direction, is very real. The foundations of the whole house could then suffer. Replacement with soil and low maintenance planting would help slow down rain run off, but creating a slope in the first place seems misguided. I understand that the size of the room looking out onto the patio will be affected if the retaining wall remains as it is, but not substantially.

3)

I have concerns about the replacement trees. The rear of the property adjoins Holly Walk, and it is often suggested that there is a historical connection to this tree in this particular area, and is therefore part of its character.

The value of trees is recognised by the Conservation Area designation. Furthermore, holly trees are native evergreen trees with wild life benefits, while the two proposed fruit trees are neither native nor of any wildlife value. I would therefore suggest very strongly, that one of them is replaced by *Ilex aquifolium* - (Common

Holly) which can be purchased as a standard of at least 8 cm girth and at least 2 or more metres in height correctly planted by an arboricultural expert, so as to make the same impact as the existing tree. It will grow to 5-10 metres in height and if well and properly planted, will grow fast in the next two to five years.

The second tree could be a crab apple or a Sorbus acupana (Rowan) both of which have blossom that is bee friendly, and will provide colour and food for birds in autumn.

4)

I note that a black composite timber material is to be used in the construction of parts of the extension, and wonder what is appropriate about this in a significant Conservation Area? Timber panel material will be used elsewhere in the development, but not visibly. The new walls would be less noticeable if they were built of the same coloured brick as the house. And any wood used in this context and also for anything else like fencing, should fit into the background and not be so glaringly obvious.

In conclusion, as a resident of 4 Frognaal Gardens myself, I very strongly recommend that the owner ensures that conditions for the construction are set before the work begins; and that the council is encouraged to ensure that these are met. Noise from construction is usually time limited, and this is especially important here, as other people will be living in the building while construction work is proceeding. Waste material from the excavations should also be managed properly, so that it does not cause inconvenience to residents from dust.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs M.A. Lowenstein

Camden Planning Department