2022/2398/P 12 Pilgrim’s Lane

*Removal of existing two storey part including garage on northern side (next to no. 14) and replacement with a single storey garage extension, extending to rear and including a garage. Erection of lower ground/basement and ground floor extensions, extending to side and rear. Erection of two storey side extension (on southern side). Erection of roof extension to front two storey part and installation of three dormer windows at front and three dormer windows at rear.*

**Site and Surroundings**

The existing building is not locally listed, but it is identified as a positive contributor in the Hampstead Conservation Area Statement. The Heritage Statement accompanying the applications states: “There are listed buildings nearby at 7 & 9 Pilgrims Lane, a short distance to the west, and located on the opposite side of the street. Due a combination of the nature of these listed buildings, the townscape in which they are experienced, and the nature of the proposals, the proposed development could not reasonably be said to be capable of affecting their significance.” I agree with this assessment in the sense that the application site is part of the setting of the listed buildings, but the nature of the proposals is not such to have a noteworthy impact on the significance of the listed buildings.

**Impact of Proposal on Character and Appearance of the Conservation Area**

The existing building is a positive contributor to the character and appearance of the conservation area. The Hampstead Conservation Area Statement notes:

SIDE EXTENSIONS *H42 Planning permission may be required for the erection of side extensions. Modest single storey side extensions to single family dwellings may be exempt from permission under the General Permitted Development Order 1995 depending on the proposed volume and height and location. It is advisable to consult the Planning Service to confirm if this is the case.*

*H43 Normally the infilling of gaps between buildings will be resisted where an important gap is compromised or the symmetry of the composition of a building would be impaired. Where side extensions would not result in the loss of an important gap they should be single storey and set back from the front building line.*

Due to the proposed location of the side extension there is some infilling of the space between Number 12 and Number 10. However, the proportion of the gap being infilled is extremely limited due to the size of the proposed extension and the size of the existing space. I do not consider that the side extension would seriously compromise the appreciation of the garden setting of Number 12. In addition to this, the application also seeks to introduce a gap between Number 12 and Number 14.

I am aware that objections have been received in respect of the demolition of the existing two storey extension, particularly in relation to the impact on Number 14. However, assessing this part of the proposals in heritage terms alone, there is no reason why the 1970s extension can be said to enhance the positive contribution of the existing building, indeed it is fairly obtrusive. Reintroducing some of the original gap between Number 12 and Number 14 is beneficial to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

I do not agree with the Heritage Statement’s contention that Number 12 is “is a modified early 20th century house of vaguely traditional design, but of lacklustre quality” but I do agree that the otherwise positive contribution made by Number 12 is “compromised by the [existing] large side extension.”

The general guidance on side extensions within the Conservation Area is that they should be set back from the building line and not exceed single storey. The proposed side extension would be set back from the building line, but it would in effect be of two storeys. However, it would be a storey less than the main house, and the first floor would be treated as a roof, in a similar manner to the third floor of the main house. The chimney on the affected elevation would be rebuilt in replica. The publically visible areas of the side extension are treated in the same architectural language as the main house, which creates a more sympathetic arrangement than might otherwise be the case with a side extension exceeding one storey. While a single storey extension would obviously be more subservient, I do not consider the scale or form of the proposed side extension to overwhelm the main house or harm its positive contribution.

It is proposed to introduce traditional dormers into the roof slopes of the main house. The Hampstead Conservation Area Statement does not give any specific directions on the introduction of dormers to unlisted buildings. However, it is clear that overly large or aesthetically contrasting dormers could cause harm to a positive contributor. In this instance the dormers are rationally aligned with the rhythm of the main elevation and are of a very typically 1930s design. While not especially enhancing the positive contribution made by the host building they do not harm its contribution either and therefore can be said to be neutral, i.e. to essentially preserve the character and appearance of the area.

The works to the rear, other than the side extension, have no public visibility and largely occur within a sunken garden. Their impact on the character and appearance of the conservation is therefore very limited, especially as this is a virtually detached house which is not part of a coherent group, such as a terrace or semi-detached pair.

**Conclusion**

Approve with usual conditions.

David McKinstry

Conservation Officer

01.09.22