

Camden Square Conservation Area Advisory Committee

139-147 Camden Road
London, NW1

Date: 5 December 2022

Planning application Reference: 2022/4293/P

Proposal: Erection of 4 storey block of flats with ground floor bin and bicycle stores and front paving and planting

Summary: The overall bulk, detailed design, layout, materials, shading etc of the proposed development will have a detrimental impact on both the streetscape along Camden Road as well as the Camden Square Conservation Area. We strongly object to the application and urge that it be refused.

Comments:

1. Although the development does not lie within the Camden Square Conservation Area, its prominent position on the corner of Camden Road and Sandall Road will have a significant impact on the Conservation Area.
2. Whilst the drawings are largely adequate, some information is missing or poorly expressed
 - 2.1. No roofing material has been specified
 - 2.2. Some drawings are mis-labelled and elevations are named the wrong way round, e.g. "South West" should be "North East".
 - 2.3. The design and access statement is poorly edited
3. The bulk of the proposed development is inappropriate both in relation to neighbouring buildings and its location at the side of Cantelowes Gardens.
 - 3.1. As the whole development would be visible from Camden Road and Cantelowes Gardens and its length would be double that of the Victorian Villas opposite, it would create an overly oppressive mass
4. The scale and proportion of the proposed development are inappropriate and do not relate well to neighbouring buildings.
 - 4.1. The attempt to relate to the Victorian villas opposite by introducing a level of hierarchy between the floors has not been entirely successful
 - 4.1.1. The contrasting coloured bricks, slightly different window heights on the ground and the upper floors, as well as the

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slightly set back top floor fail to create a differentiation that is an adequate response to the expression of hierarchy shown in the buildings opposite.

- 4.1.2. Again, modulations in both side elevations in order to break the bulk of the overly long facades, are only partly successful.
- 4.2. The clumsy entrance canopy also does nothing to help break up the façade, but just adds unnecessary weight.
5. The spacing of the windows fails to create a coherent and convincing pattern along both long elevations as a response to the Victorian villas opposite.
6. The choice two different coloured bricks of materials fails to make a positive visual contribution or support historical precedent.
7. We have some concerns about whether the proposed materials are likely to be long-lasting and weather well
 - 7.1. In the absence of detailed drawings for the window and terrace recesses this is especially true of the brick façade
 - 7.2. Equally worrying is the lack of any information on the roof material
8. No daylight and sunlight study has been submitted to show the impact of the development on Cantelowes Gardens which is likely to be negatively affected, as the proposed building is positioned along its SW border and may significantly reduce sunlight hours to large areas of the park.
9. The decision to pave the front area with small planter boxes as border treatment, rather than install an attractive garden but a completely paved area has been chosen instead, with small planter boxes as border treatment, which does not enhance the area.
10. In terms of its internal viability, the proposed development fails to meet certain basic requirements of building regulations and planning guidelines
 - 10.1. The planning statement refers to the Camden Local Plan policy H6, and acknowledges that 90% of new-build self-contained homes in each development need to be accessible and adaptable in accordance with Building Regulations M4(2). This requires that it is possible to approach and gain step-free access to the dwelling, i.e. in a multi-storey building an appropriate lift should be provided. As this is not the case in this proposal, the majority of flats would not be compliant with this Part M4(2) requirement.
 - 10.2. The same policy, H6, also requires that 10% of new-build self-contained homes in each development are suitable for occupation by a

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wheelchair user or easily adapted for occupation by a wheelchair user in accordance with Building Regulation M4(3). In the absence of a passenger lift, the only flat at all possible to comply with this policy would be on the ground floor. Moreover, neither door widths, nor bathroom layout or corridor spaces seem to be adaptable to fulfil the M4(3) requirements.

- 10.3. The only staircase serving the upper levels is much steeper than a communal stair should be, as per building regulations part K.
11. It should be noted that this is the third proposal for the development of residential accommodation on the site in the last 11 years. The first, in 2011, proposed a 6 storey building and the second in 2012 proposed a 5 storey building. Despite the steady reduction in the number of storeys, issues around overall bulk, detailed design, layout, materials, shading etc remain and in its present form continue to have a detrimental impact on both the streetscape along Camden Road as well as the Camden Square Conservation Area. We strongly urge that the application be refused.



Signed:
David Blagbrough
Chair
Camden Square CAAC

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