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Development Management Support
Planning, Regeneration & Economy
London Borough of Haringey
Level 6, River Park House
225 High Road
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13 June 2014

Dear Sirs

PLANNING APPLICATION HGY/2014/1400

DEVELOPMENT COMPRISING THE ERECTION OF REAR DECKING WITH TIMBER /GLASS BANNISTER AT GROUND FLOOR LEVEL AND FORMATION OF A ROOF TERRACE AT NO.10 QUERNMORE ROAD LONDON N4

We are the owners of no 8 Quernmore Road which adjoins the above property. We write to object to the planning application that has been submitted for the proposed development, which in our view is inappropriate in this particular locality within the Stroud Green Conservation Area.

The principal grounds of objection to this development are that the proposed development would result in previously private areas of our property being overlooked, would result in unacceptable intrusion in the form of noise nuisance and general disturbance, would have a detrimental impact on the character and appearance of the surrounding area, would restrict our right to natural light to our property and would have a significant impact on the use and enjoyment of our property.

We enclose a plan of our home along with numbered photographs showing the impact of the proposed development.

Overlooking

The proposed development would result in previously private areas of our property being overlooked which will have a detrimental effect on the way in which our family live, work and enjoy our property.

<u>Overlooking directly into our home</u>

No 8 Quernmore Road in which we live, together with no 6 to which it is attached have an original extension at the rear of both properties. This current configuration means that users of the proposed roof terrace would be able to look directly through into our family's living quarters in particular our kitchen diner, reception room, shower room and bathroom. Photos 2, 3 and 4, taken from inside the kitchen and reception room show the extent to which users of the roof terrace and rear decking would look directly into these rooms. Photo 7 shows the view directly from the proposed terrace into the first floor bathroom and photo 6 shows the view into the raised ground floor shower room.

This naturally raises considerable concern for the privacy of our family and will have a significant impact on the way in which our family enjoy and use the accommodation within our property. Currently no other property overlooks directly into our home and this is something which we wish to preserve.

As a semi detached property a lot of our natural light is derived from the windows in the eastern side of our property from which we enjoy uninterrupted views over a large part of London. At present with the exception of the bathroom window which has frosted glass in the lower half of the window, none of the glass windows of the eastern elevation are fully frosted. There is no intention for the glass in these windows to be replaced by frosted glass and nor would it be appropriate to do so in such rooms as the kitchen diner or reception room.

Overlooking directly into the garden

Users of the proposed rear decking and roof terrace would also be able to overlook the garden of our property. At present views of our garden are relatively restricted and the proposed development would significantly change this, having a detrimental affect on our family's privacy and inhibit the use and enjoyment of our outdoor space. We are particularly concerned over the impact of the use of the rear decking due to its elevated height above existing ground levels. In practice this will mean that any person standing on the proposed decking would be at chest height in relation to the current boundary fencing between the two properties and would have a direct view into our garden. Photos 1 and 5 show how users of the rear decking would look directly over our garden.

The distance between the proposed development comprising the decking and the boundary of our property has not been included in the plans submitted with the application. The applicant has suggested in discussions with us that he is proposing to step back the decking from the boundary with our property to trellis the terrace and to plant mature plants at ground floor level in order to mitigate the visual impact of the proposed development of the decking. These details have not been included with the application and we suggest this information is sought from the applicant to enable the impact of the proposed decking to be properly considered. We are concerned that in order for such screening to be effective both in terms of mitigating any visual impact and acting as a natural barrier for noise, any planting or new fencing/trellis will have the consequential effect of substantially reducing the amount of natural light to both the lower ground floor and ground floor of our property which would be unacceptable.

Right to natural light

The proposed development by virtue of the height of the elevated decking and any associated screening would significantly change the character and use of the paved patio area between our property and the boundary with no 8 creating a dark enclosed corridor of space (as shown by photo 1). It would also block the natural light into the lower ground and first floor windows of our home which would have a particularly detrimental impact upon the way in which our family currently use the accommodation in this part of the property as shown by each of photos 1 to 7.

Noise and disturbance resulting from use of the proposed roof terrace and decking area

The proposal to form a roof terrace and construct the proposed decking area would create 2 new areas of open space at no 10, the use of which would cause disturbance to our family. By virtue of the elevated status of both these areas, any noise generated by the use of these areas will be amplified and as such is likely to cause considerable nuisance to our family living at no 8 and those families living in the properties nearby, most of which are families with young children. The impact of any noise is also likely to be increased due to the enclosed nature of the gardens of the properties fronting Quernmore Road (Nos 2-12) which effectively form a square (demonstrated by photo 9). The noise from inside the kitchen of no 10 can already be heard when their windows are open and so we fear that no relief from their use of an outdoor raised terrace will be possible.

Effect on the character and appearance of the Stroud Green Conservation area

As shown on the aerial view attached, the houses within the immediate locality were all designed by the same architect and have a degree of proportion and symmetry. None of the surrounding houses (except 12 Quernmore Road) have first floor level roof terraces and therefore any such proposal is out of character with the rest of the houses within the immediate locality within this part of the Stroud Green Conservation Area. The development proposal for no. 10, in our view, neither preserves or enhances the character of the Conservation Area and as such is in breach of Policy CSV5 in the Haringey Unitary Development Plan (saved policies - March 2013) and Policy SP12 of Haringey Local Plan: Strategic Policies 2013.

Roof terraces

We understand that the Council has a presumption like many other London Boroughs against the formation and use of roof terraces.

The Application Form notes that a roof terrace has already been installed at 12 Quernmore Road. The planning position on the erection of the roof terrace at no 12 is not clear as no planning permission for this development is revealed on any search of the planning register on the Council's website. Less weight therefore should be given, to the materiality of this roof terrace on consideration of the application for no 10.

The oblique reference within the application form to 6 other properties which have a roof terrace is misleading as these properties do not form part of the originally designed group of properties fronting Quernmore Road, Albany Road, Addington Road and Oakfield Road as shown within the attached aerial view. In addition, the photographs submitted by the applicant with the application form only show four roof terraces. Although the photographs are not referenced I believe these properties are:

- JS/1 – 12 Quernmore Road;
- JS/2 – 61 Oakfield Road;
- JS/3 – 57 Oakfield Road;
- JS/4 – 51 Oakfield Road; and
- JS/5 appears to be the view from the proposed terrace.

These roof terraces are predominantly at first floor level unlike the proposal for no 10 which is for a roof terrace at 2nd floor level, which would change the character and appearance of the residential area comprising primarily traditional Edwardian family homes.

In addition the planning status of these roof terraces is unclear from a review of the planning applications made for each of these properties. Therefore the weight to be attached by the Council to these developments will depend on the extent to which these developments are authorised or not.

We are concerned that the grant of any planning permission for a roof terrace at no 10 may encourage the development of other roof terraces, which by virtue of the nature of their use, the likely disturbance generated by that use and the impact such use has on other local residents should be resisted in what is currently a predominantly family area.

Recommendation

For all these reasons we would urge the Council to refuse this application for planning permission.

Site visit

We would like to request that the planning officer conducts a site visit before determining this application to enable the impact of this development to be considered not only from within the boundary of No 10 but, also from within the grounds of our property at no 8 Quernmore Road and to enable the wider impact the proposed development may have on the surrounding area to be assessed. Please contact Elizabeth on 0778 841 2616 to arrange a convenient appointment.

Yours sincerely

Elizabeth Robertson and Richard Pugh