

Samuel Uff

To: Elisabetta Tonazzi
Subject: HGY/2022/2731_44-46, Hampstead Lane, London, N6 4LL

From: Elisabetta Tonazzi
Sent: Thursday, March 30, 2023 5:11 PM
To: Samuel Uff <Samuel.Uff@haringey.gov.uk>
Subject: HGY/2022/2731_44-46, Hampstead Lane, London, N6 4LL

Hi Sam,

the development site includes two adjacent plots respectively located at Nos 44 and 46 Hampstead Lane, on the corner with Courteney Avenue and on the southern boundary of the leafy and suburban Bishop's part of Highgate Conservation Area that was historically the Bishop's Wood, and later developed by the Ecclesiastical Commissioners from c.1900 to 1930 into a suburban area of large, detached houses set in mature gardens and surrounded by the ancient woodland.

The original character of the Bishop's area has substantially changed over the last decades due to the replacement of several original buildings with new houses of various scale, style and design quality which have complemented to varying degrees of success the original character of the area.

This development site is surrounded by large green spaces such as the extensive Kenwood house parkland on the opposite side of the road within the London Borough of Camden and the generous playing fields of Highgate School flanking the development site along Courtenay Avenue.

The Bishop's area is still a high quality residential and largely landscaped development characterised by suburban villas of various age and style well set into their generous plots, with a prevailing original arts and crafts character in the area and in some cases designed by renowned architect CHB Quennel and his associates. The layout and spaciousness of the area, the significant gaps between houses that allow the enjoyment of incidental views into their generous gardens are key component of the special character of the Conservation Area.

Hampstead Lane is characterised as an historic ridge road with varying directions and gradient as a winding country lane flanked by a variety of houses with the development site prominently located in its western section that is characterised by large houses in substantial plots, large trees, and large green spaces.

Properties at Nos 44 and 46 are original yet much altered and unrefined late 1930s Arts and Crafts style houses erected by little known developers and of modest intrinsic architectural interest, low heritage value that provide a neutral contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. The application provides a comprehensive and detailed description of the historic evolution of the site that is corroborated by extensive archival evidence of the outline conformity of these houses to the prevailing original character without possessing any special architectural quality as demonstrated in the thorough assessment of the special interest and significance of these houses in the context of the Conservation Area.

The development site is prominently located along Hampstead Lane and Courtenay Avenue and forms integral part of the visual experience of this part of the Highgate Conservation Area. The siting, the proportions of existing and emerging buildings, together with their generous front and rear gardens, are the key, established, positive features of the Conservation Area to consider when assessing the proposed change on site and in the area. The development site is also largely screened by the dense and mature vegetation in views from any heritage asset within or around Kenwood Park whose leafy boundary along Hampstead Lane marks the inward-looking nature of the Kenwood estate despite its physical proximity to the Bishop's part of the Highgate Conservation Area.

The proposed scheme is for demolition of the houses at Nos 44-46 Hampstead Lane and erection of two linked three storey buildings with pitched roofs, basement level and further subterranean car park level; the above ground their storey buildings will be linked by a glazed structure visible along Hampstead lane. This new care home is to be erected on the unified sites at Nos 44-46 that are characterised by a down sloping topography to the rear of the sites along Courteney Avenue, where the proposed residential basement level will be fully exposed in the proposed rear elevation as shown in the submitted views along Courtenay Avenue. The loss of the neutral contributing buildings would cause no harm to the significance of the Conservation Area; however, the new development represents a change in terms of scale, architectural language and built presence on this corner of the conservation

area. This neutrally contributing site can absorb a degree of change and change needs to conserve and complement the established features of the conservation area, hence the architectural expression of the proposed care home acknowledges and reinterprets the established, positive architectural features that define the prevailing built character of the area.

The proposal has been informed by a thorough understanding of the potential for re-development offered by the site and by the constraints imposed by the conservation area context.

The scale and proportions of the new development are indeed consistent with the progressive increase in built scale of this area, and very desirably retain the front and rear gardens with their amenity value as key features of the site and its area.

The proposed plan form is inspired by two houses connected by means of a link; this concept has been successfully inserted and developed within a generous site that still allows to express in a revisited, contemporary fashion the established relationship between buildings and their gardens.

The new scheme is elegantly contemporary yet complementary to the prevailing Arts and Crafts original character of the area and succeeds to express in an imaginative way the suburban, domestic character of the area through fluid, well-articulated masses, heights, traditional roof forms and materials. The new buildings are indeed characterised by red brick, an articulated and steeply pitched roofscape, an interesting and varied pattern of fenestration and semi dormers, a leafy boundary treatment, a well-integrated landscape scheme and a gently down-sloping rear elevation that connects with the rear garden.

The proposed care home, despite its scale, will blend in with the surrounding development in views along Hampstead Lane by virtue of its architectural expression and its affinity with the area character, landscape, and topography; the retention of the front garden and green boundary treatment, together with the mature trees along Hampstead Lane would substantially complement and mitigate the presence of the new development on that corner of the Conservation Area. The height of the proposed development will not be significantly taller than the surrounding buildings and the new development will be located along the spacious Hampstead lane on the opposite side of the leafy and well screened northern boundary of the Kenwood House estate where the new development will have no impact on the significance of Kenwood House and its contributing setting.

The generous rear garden, the established spatial and visual gap with No 1 Courtenay avenue and the carefully designed frontage along Courtenay Avenue will largely retain the established spatial relationship between buildings and between buildings and gardens where the rear elevation of the new Care Home will be experienced as part of the established residential environment along Courtenay Avenue in views from the playing fields of Highgate School. The harmoniously integrated architectural and landscape design, especially at the rear of the site, respect and take cues from the spatial and landscaped qualities that underpin and still legibly tie together this part of the Conservation Area

The site layout and plan form of the proposed scheme, the articulation of mass and height, the architectural expression, boundary treatment and landscape design altogether positively respond to the Conservation Area context, preserve the generous, now unified, rear garden feature, retain the established distance from property at No 1 Courtenay Avenue and the landscaped character of adjacent sites, and substantially help the new development to settle into its evolving heritage setting.

The proposed scheme will not impact any important feature of any heritage asset, will instead add architectural and landscape quality to the site and will cause no harm to the Conservation Area or to its heritage assets, will conserve its significance and it is therefore supported from the conservation standpoint.

Kind Regards,

Elisabetta Tonazzi ARB RIBA Conservation Architect
Principal Conservation Officer
Placemaking and Housing | Haringey Council

Mobile: 07976978497

E-mail: elisabetta.tonazzi@haringey.gov.uk

Alexandra House 10 Station Road, Wood Green, N22 7TR

www.haringey.gov.uk



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