



19 July 2024

Tel 07952 048742
Email karl@pearceplanning.co.uk

Development Management Support
Planning Service
Haringey Council

Pearce Planning Ltd
Woodspring House
17 Hill Road
Clevedon
BS21 7NE

BY EMAIL: planningsupport@haringey.gov.uk

Our Ref - KS/Haringey

Dear Sirs,

**APPLICATION REFERENCE HGY/2023/2653
CONSTRUCTION OF A NEW RESIDENTIAL BUILDING (USE CLASS C3), TOGETHER WITH
LANDSCAPING, CYCLE AND CAR PARKING, AND ASSOCIATED WORKS.**

Pursuant to the above noted application, Pearce Planning Ltd has been instructed by the occupiers of St. Matthews Court to submit representations on their behalf, objecting to this new proposal for a new block of flats within the existing site. These representations are submitted in the context of previous representations submitted in the context of application and appeal references HGY/2022/1796 and APP/Y5420/W/22/3308350, on the basis that the Planning Statement submitted with the current application states that the works currently proposed would be undertaken in conjunction with the upward extension works as consented by the above noted application/appeal references.

Design

Regarding the design rationale of the proposal, the Planning Statement includes the following statements:

"A further block can be provided on the site in a way that does not harm the amenities of existing residents in the blocks nor neighbouring residents. A logical siting of the block is employed, creating a staggered 'T shape' series of blocks and the architectural approach for the new block reflects whilst not completely copying the existing blocks."

"The proposals follow a design-led approach in order to optimise the capacity of this site and make best use of land."

We disagree with these statements and would take the view that the proposals represent an overly complex and contrived design. The proposed block would essentially be 'shoe-horned' into a gap on the site, necessitating an off-set to seek to minimise the negative impacts on the residential amenity of existing residents. Such design solutions do not represent positive design creativity as required by Policy DM7, rather they indicate that the design is not appropriate in the context of the site's constraints.

The comparison with the extent and depth of development at Nelson Mandela Close to the north is inappropriate in our view, as this development was set out in a comprehensive and consistent manner, with sufficient space provided between the respective blocks.

Daylight and Sunlight

The Daylight and Sunlight Assessment submitted with the application has been reviewed. It is clear that there will be a noticeable reduction in light to the north facing windows of Block D in particular, which are bedroom windows. Furthermore, the Assessment's accuracy is queried as it appears to show no impact whatsoever on the west facing living room windows in Block D. As the proposed block will be built directly in front of these windows, outlook from, and light received by these windows must surely be affected to some extent given that they would face directly onto a 4-storey tall brick wall.



It is our firm view that the development will have a perceptible and material overshadowing impact, to the detriment of existing residents.

Privacy, Overlooking and Overbearing

The block as a whole will in our view have a material overbearing impact on existing residents, by way of its proximity to Block D in particular, exacerbated by raising the building to incorporate an area of undercroft parking.

A key concern is the proximity of the proposed block to Block D and the proposed pathway that would be squeezed in between the two blocks. The pathway would direct residents to walk very closely to the side elevation of Block D and its west facing sitting room windows. This would likely lead to a perceived loss of privacy and need for residents to essentially screen the windows to prevent views from passers-by through the windows. In other similar developments, pathways can be provided in proximity to residential windows but this is normally accompanied by an area of semi-private defensive space adjacent to building frontages. At present, no defensible space is provided but equally residents are currently not required to walk closely to the western frontage of Block D, hence the 'threat' to privacy would not be likely to be highly perceived. This would greatly change with the proposed block and new pathway.

Furthermore, the proposed landscape enhancements do not respect the privacy or defensible space of existing residents. For example, the proposed 'open sunny seating' areas to the south of Block D would be located very close to the south facing sitting room windows. Such an arrangement might be acceptable if a defensible boundary were to be installed to provide a buffer for Block D, but this is not the case with the proposed scheme.

Taking the above points into account, it is our firm view that the proposed new block would not comply with Secure by Design principles.

A further privacy concern relates to the proposed external stair access into the proposed block. This stair access would be in close proximity to the north facing windows of Block D, which all serve bedrooms. Whilst this façade of Block D is readily visible from the car park, the proposed stair access would allow elevated views into these windows, to the detriment of the privacy of existing residents.

Lastly, there are concerns about overlooking and overbearing impact to dwellings at Nelson Mandela Court (NMC) to the north and fronting Creighton Avenue to the south. The proposed block will be circa 15.5m from the nearest dwelling along NMC. These dwellings are also set down at a lower level than the application site. As such, the proposed block at 4 no. stories will essentially appear as a 5 no. storey block from the nearest rear garden given the level change. This distance and disparity in ground level will result in the proposed block having an overbearing impact on the nearest dwellings at NMC. Overlooking of the gardens will also be a concern, given the number of windows and balconies proposed at the NW corner. These concerns are also raised in relation to the Creighton Avenue dwellings, given the balconies proposed at the SW corner of the block as well, coupled with the proposed felling of a mature tree to the south.

Open space and trees

Regarding the landscape space, the Planning Statement includes the following statement: *"The communal garden for all residents, existing and proposed, is to be re-landscaped under guidance from Ares and will provide a far more attractive and useable amenity space than currently exists to the benefit of all who live here."*

A key benefit of the configuration of the existing open space as described by residents of St. Matthew's Court is that the extent of open space is of benefit to residents with children for ball games etc. The proposed re-configuration of the open space would clearly be detrimental in this respect, as the extent of open grassed area would be significantly reduced and replaced with areas of hard standing. Whilst the potential benefits of the proposed landscape enhancements can be acknowledged in principle, overall the proposed scheme would result in a significant reduction in the extent of landscaped space available to existing residents, to the detriment of their amenity.



Regarding trees, it is unclear why one of the existing mature trees to the south of the proposed block must be removed. The application is not supported by a tree survey or an arboricultural implications assessment, so there is no assessment of the existing trees, nor an assessment of the root protection zones of the trees to be retained in the context of the footings of the proposed new building. A tree survey and AIA should be submitted to support this application.

Parking

The proposed uplift in on-site parking provision from 20 spaces to 26 no. spaces (incl 2 no. disabled bays) appears to be proportional provision and in line with relevant policies. That said, the spaces within the undercroft area look relatively difficult to access – we would thus suggest that evidence of vehicle tracking be provided to Council review.

Regarding the bike store, there are no elevations of this structure. Will it be covered?

In summary, it is our firm view that, for the reasons as set out above, the proposed application would not accord with the following planning policies and should thus be refused:

- LBH Policy DM7 (Development on Infill, Backland, and Garden Land Sites)
- LBH Local Plan Policy SP11 (Design)
- London Plan Policy D6 (Housing Quality and Standards)
- LBH Policy DM1 (Delivering High Quality Design)

Lastly, it goes without saying that residents of the site are duly concerned about the likely substantial impact that the construction works (both the approved upward single storey extension + current application proposals) would have on their residential amenity. The top floor of the building will surely be uninhabitable while construction is taking place, since the ceiling of the top floor flats is the bottom of roof space that is to be removed. Furthermore, it is unclear how the proposed block would be constructed, whilst still allowing residents access to the existing car park, which would surely be required as a contractor's compound for the duration of the construction works.

I trust all is clear with the above representations but please do let me know if there are any queries.

Yours sincerely

KARL SCHOLZ MRTPI
Associate

M +44 (0) 7952 048742

karl@pearceplanning.co.uk