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Development Management
Haringey Council
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Re: Construction of 6 dwellings, community wildlife garden, and demolition of existing structures, Rear of 132 Station Road, HGY/2020/1841.

I object to the above planning application for the construction of 6 dwellings, community wildlife garden and demolition of existing structures, as follows:

Development on a Backland Garden Site

The site comprises the garden land area bounded by the rear gardens at Park Avenue, Barratt Avenue and Station Road N22. It includes built features: a Victorian Coach House, now 140 Station Road (in use as a music studio), and a boundary wall of The Grange, that is probably the oldest built feature in the Conservation Area. The site has been a garden area for at least 150 years. The existing structures on the site, such as the garage, garden shed and greenhouses, were ancillary to, and solely for domestic use. As noted by the Inspector to a previous Planning Appeal relating to the site in 2018 (APP/Y5420/W/18/3196614), the historic form and layout remain clearly legible.

The garden is in the Wood Green Conservation Area and makes a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area, forming an open, green, backland space and offering relief from the densely arranged terraced houses around it. It supports the green chain linking Wood Green Common to the old railway line behind Barratt Avenue, contributing to biodiversity: birds ranging from wrens and robins to finches and parakeets, animals including foraging bats, foxes and squirrels, insects such as dragonflies, garden and woodland butterflies, plants and trees, wild and domestic.

The site is bounded by and overlooked by a substantial number of private residences. It is quiet and tranquil, providing a degree of openness within the tight grain of the terraces. The existing planting softens the site's appearance, and provides a buffer between the buildings, promoting an ambience of privacy and seclusion. In the view of the Planning Inspector (APP/Y5420/W/18/3196614), all these attributes contribute positively to the significance of the CA.

The development would entail the complete clearance of the garden land and historic Coach House. Some 65% of the entire site (and nearly 100% of the site that is not required for access) will be excavated to at least 3.5m to 4.0m depth, right up to neighbours' boundaries. All of the many trees, some large and mature, on the site will be destroyed. The biodiversity will be lost. The Coach House, which predates the surrounding terraces, themselves from the 1890s, is described in the Conservation Appraisal (2008) for CA10 as 'a small attractive Victorian outbuilding constructed from yellow stock brick with a prominent shaped gable'. It will be demolished, with the subsequent loss of an attractive building, a positive feature, visible from Station Road, in the CA. The employment use of the studio will also be lost with no replacement. The ancient boundary wall is unlikely to survive the passage of heavy spoil removal vehicles.

The development proposes to introduce a single, overwhelming structure into the CA, destroying the openness of the coherent space formed by the site and adjacent gardens. The development is uncompromising, hard edged and dominating, out of character and ignorant of context in the CA.

The aspect from first floor rooms of Station Road will be of visually hard materials, the site dominated by an extensive spreading building, the undulating form of the roof accentuating the

overall scale; the roof almost 50m long and 9m wide could easily be such as found in an industrial park. This roof is completely at odds with the existing context and the scale of buildings in the CA. It is not subservient to the existing pattern of development - indeed, it is in opposition to it.

The deep paved courtyards, excavated into the London Clay, are incapable of being gardenised or have trees planted within them. The aspect towards the site from dwellings in Station Road will be harsh, aggressive and highly prominent.

The aspect from Barratt Avenue will be greatly degraded; empty, all trees removed, all vertical elements and screening across the site taken away. The 50m roof length of the new building is right up against neighbours' fences on Barratt Avenue.

The proposal does not show what artificial lighting is needed throughout the site. Rooflights are provided for the dwellings, penetrating the roof. It is clear that lighting of the proposed pathways in the site, the elevated walkways, and paths to and from the site entrances will be required. The inclusion of path and access lighting in the site, and light pollution from the open terraces and courtyards, will be a great intrusion fundamentally changing the character of the site, introducing light into a 'dark' space with loss of amenity and further negative impact on biodiversity.

The materials proposed are not as the existing houses and coach house, which are brick with slate roofs. The proposed finishes are of white brick and light render with metal windows, emphasising difference from, and at odds with the Conservation Area materials.

The small community garden cannot mitigate the harm that would be caused by the proposal. The community garden itself is for the most part hard surface, and is limited to shrubbery and small trees. This cannot replace the significant specimens and biodiversity that would be lost to the CA, or mitigate the serious harm to the heritage asset.

At present all rainwater that falls on the entire site is retained by the site. The proposed meadow planted roof offers very limited attenuation of surface rain water, particularly in winter when saturated and incapable of absorbing water. The slope of the roof further inhibits water retention. The site is substantially hard surface, incapable of absorbing rainwater. Discharging to the public drain is not sustainable design or environmentally sensitive. This scheme is not 'green'.

Residents in the proposed dwellings will have access via secure key/code gates at the east and west ends of the main area. A third secure gate at the Barratt Avenue entrance will be for new and neighbouring residents. A secure bollard at the Station Road entrance will provide keycode access for vehicles. Clearly, this is a gated community and against Council policy. Vehicles would be reversing into the heavy traffic on Station Road; turning within the site is not possible, so there are safety concerns.

This proposal is not compatible with Haringey Strategic Policy SP11, respecting local character and context, and SP13, open space and biodiversity which includes private open space. The proposal is not compliant with Haringey Development Management Policy DM1 in respect of the character of development and the Development Charter, DM7 backland development, and DM9 management of the historic environment.

The proposal is for development of garden land, creating an overdeveloped and overcrowded gated site. It would have no street frontage which is also against Council policy. It would degrade the Conservation Area, causing substantial harm. I urge that the application be rejected.

Yours sincerely

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