



## HAMPSTEAD NEIGHBOURHOOD FORUM

3 February 2020

Josh Lawlor  
Planning Solutions Team  
Camden Council

Re: 2019/0350/P, Flat 1, 114 Fitzjohn's Avenue

Dear Mr Lawlor,

We note that the applicant has lodged an appeal regarding a proposal to amalgamate two self-contained dwellings at 114 Fitzjohn's Avenue. Camden had rejected the application as contrary to Hampstead Neighbourhood Plan policy HC1 (Housing Mix) and Camden Local Plan policy H7 (Large and small homes).

The proposal would combine two substantial dwellings into one. Flat 1 currently has three bedrooms, three bathrooms and an 'alcove', as well as a reception room and kitchen. Flat 2 currently has two bedrooms and two bathrooms, as well as a reception room and kitchen. The proposed unified dwelling would have four bedrooms, four bathrooms and an office, as well as two reception rooms and a kitchen. (One kitchen and the 'alcove' would both be replaced by a connecting staircase).

The Hampstead Neighbourhood Plan, which was formally adopted in 2018 after receiving overwhelming support in a referendum, noted that housing stock in Hampstead was now beyond the means of most people and that the number of flats was decreasing. Relative to the rest of the Borough, Hampstead is poorly served for smaller, lower-cost units.

Accordingly, the Forum, in framing the Plan, was concerned to ensure an appropriate mix of housing in Hampstead. This was intended to avert damage 'cohesiveness and diversity' in the community. Policy HC1 (2) of the Hampstead Neighbourhood Plan specifically states that the Plan does not support conversion proposals that would result in the loss of 'small self-contained dwellings, either studio or 1 or 2 bedrooms'.

This proposal would result in precisely such a loss and would, in fact, create a very large dwelling.

Similarly, the proposal is contrary to Policy H7 (Large and Small Homes) of the Camden Local Plan. According to the definitions in the Plan, Flat 1 is a 'large home', having three bedrooms, and Flat 2 is a 'small home', having two bedrooms. The Plan states that the Council aims for 'a range of homes of different sizes that will contribute to creation of mixed, inclusive and sustainable communities and reduce mismatches between housing needs and existing supply.' The policy states that all housing development, including conversion of existing homes, should include a mix of large and small homes.

This proposal would eliminate a 'small home' and make a 'large home' much larger.

A letter in the document file refers to 'exceptional circumstances.' Policy HC1 (2) of the Hampstead Neighbourhood Plan does allow for exceptional circumstances and gives the example of older accommodation which 'may not meet contemporary and future needs for living space.' This is an

example of a different nature from the family needs cited by the applicant. While the interpretation of such circumstances is at Camden's discretion, we would note that Flat 1 is a large dwelling and that the proposal would add a net one bedroom to Flat 1, while removing the 'alcove'. But at the same time, it would eliminate the existing two-bedroom Flat 2 as a self-contained dwelling.

We recommend that the appeal be dismissed.

Sincerely,

Janine Griffis  
Chair, Hampstead Neighbourhood Forum