



HAMPSTEAD NEIGHBOURHOOD FORUM

8 July 2020

Kristina Smith
Planning Solutions Team
Camden Council

Re: 2020/1828/P, Land adjacent to Jack Straw's Castle

Dear Kristina,

The development of these two new townhouses, by virtue of their bulk and proximity to Metropolitan Open Land, would be contrary to Hampstead Neighbourhood Plan (HNP) Policies NE1, DH1 and DH2. The Plan passed public referendum in June 2018 with 91% approval and was adopted by Camden Council in April of that year. It is worth noting that the Plan was not yet made during consideration of previous proposals.

We also believe the proposal to be contrary to the Camden Local Plan Policy A2.

HNP Policy NE1 states that development that causes harm to important local green spaces, which includes Hampstead Heath, will not be permitted except in very special circumstances. Developers for any proposal within or immediately adjacent to a local open green space should demonstrate how the space will be protected from the impact of the proposed development and its construction and how the landscaping, amenity and biodiversity of the area will be preserved or enhanced.

The proposed site for the development has been open space for the last seventy years, providing a visual and actual buffer between the Heath and Jack Straw's Castle. Encroaching upon this space would degrade the setting of both the listed property and Heath itself by filling in the 'gap' between built and unbuilt environment with a three-storey above ground development.

HNP Policy DH1 states that development proposal that fail to respect and enhance the character of the area and the way it functions will not be supported. DH2 asserts that proposals must seek to protect and/or enhance buildings which make a positive contribution to the conservation area.

Camden Local Plan A2 resists development which would be detrimental to the setting of designated open spaces and gives 'strong protection' to maintaining the openness and character of Metropolitan Open Land. The proposed new development would sit on the boundary between currently open space and the Heath, infringing on the openness of the Heath and disrupting a currently open view coming from the north.

Policy A2 pledges that the Council will work with partners to preserve and enhance Hampstead Heath by taking into account the impact on views to and from the Heath.

Another point worth noting is that the 2015 appeal decision concerning Athlone House stated: 'A key concern of both The Corporation of the City of London and Camden Borough Council is the threat to the Heath from development on its fringes that could erode its atmosphere and the quality of its landscape setting'.ⁱ

For these reasons, we urge Camden to refuse this application.

Sincerely,

Janine Griffis
Planning lead, Hampstead Neighbourhood Forum

ⁱ CJ Ball, Inspector. Appeal Ref: APP/X5210/A/14/2220872