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Our Area

- The Mill Hill Park Residents' Association covers the Mill Hill Park Conservation Area in Acton, W3.

Objectives

- We aim to improve amenities, preserve and protect the environment, and conserve buildings for their architectural and historical interest.
- To support our goals, we monitor and review Mill Hill Park Conservation Area planning applications. We also review planning applications for developments outside the Conservation Area which would, in our view, have a significant impact on the town centre or on our local area.

Guidelines

- We follow the guidelines set out in Ealing Council's Mill Hill Park Conservation Area Management Plan.
- We may also refer to local and regional planning policies.
- Using these policies and the criteria outlined below, we comment on or object to a planning application when we have concerns either about the proposal in its entirety or aspects of it.
- We may seek clarification from an applicant, when we feel we need more information, before submitting our comments.
- We carry out site visits as part of our review and decision-making process.

When We Do Comment

- Our primary objective is to prevent inappropriate developments, large or small, which would have an adverse impact on the Conservation Area, particularly on its architectural character, and on its setting.
- Of particular concern to us are inappropriate features which affect parts of buildings fronting the street, a 'threat' identified in the Conservation Area Management Plan, or which are highly visible from the street.
- Also of concern are proposals which could affect our amenities or have a detrimental impact on the physical environment. We will comment on applications which involve the felling of mature trees, or could lead to additional traffic in our area, loss of public pavement or pressure on residents' parking spaces.
- Where proposed developments involve an increase in residential accommodation, we check whether the plans include adequate provision for waste and recycling storage. Inadequate provision can lead to increased litter and fly-tipping on our streets.
- The rules set out above are not a finite list and there may be occasions when we make exceptions or decide to comment on other matters.

When We Don't Comment

- We do not submit objections to applications which do not affect the street scene or the architectural character of the Conservation Area. Nor do we comment on proposed developments located close to, but outside, the Conservation Area which, in our opinion, would have little effect on its setting.
- Some applicants obtain pre-application advice from Ealing Council's Planning Department before submitting their proposals. Where the applicant indicates that such advice has been sought and that the proposal meets the conditions for planning permission to be granted, we will not object to the proposed development but we may comment on minor details of the plans.

Guidance for Members

- To help our members submit relevant and informed comments, we have circulated information on how to object to a planning application, and the grounds on which planning permission may be refused. This information can also be found on our website.
- To illustrate our approach, we have provided examples of planning application we have commented on in the Appendix (see page 3).

Appendix Examples of Our Approach

Example 1: 79 Gunnersbury Lane



We objected, unsuccessfully, to a proposal to construct a three-storey building of nine flats on a site at the corner of Avenue Road and Gunnersbury Lane (the parking lot and existing bungalow at 79 Gunnersbury Lane).

The site adjoins the Conservation Area and is at a highly visible entry point to it. Most of the site would have been included in the Conservation Area when it was established, had it not been occupied by a parking lot at the time. The construction is yet to start but the development will face houses in Avenue Road and back onto the rear gardens of properties in Heathfield Road. We objected because we felt that the proposed development, in terms of its design and bulk, was unsuitable for the location and for the size of the site.

Example 2: 57 Mill Hill Road



We objected to an application to raise the roof of one of a row of ten identical 1860s Victorian houses in Mill Hill Road and to install a roof terrace, which would have been visible from the street.

The application was refused. Had the proposed development been approved, the symmetry of the row of houses, shown below, would have been destroyed.

Example 3: 116 Avenue Road

We objected to a planning application to demolish the warehouse buildings at the rear of 116 Avenue Road and replace them with a four-storey block of eight flats.

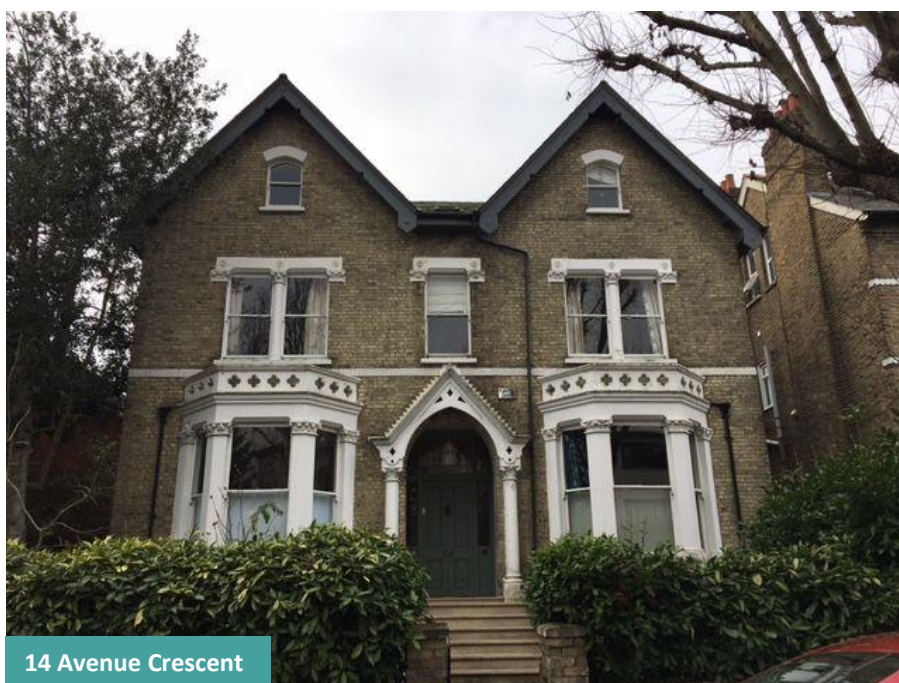
Although the property is just outside the Conservation Area, we felt that the poor design and the scale of the proposed development, in a backland site, would have a negative impact on the eastern end of Avenue Road. The application was subsequently withdrawn.

116 Avenue Road | Eastern boundary wall and an existing two-storey warehouse at the rear of the property.



Example 4: 14 Avenue Crescent

We objected to this application to convert the existing basement, currently used for storage, into a two-bedroom self-contained flat because of the inadequate and inaccurate information provided.



14 Avenue Crescent

The proposed development involves the demolition/excavation of part of the front garden. The applicant's agent stated that the property was not within a conservation area and failed to give sufficient information about waste storage, the materials to be used, or how the existing trees and hedges at the front of the property would be affected by the excavation, for example. Permission was granted with conditions which largely addressed the points we raised in our comments. The Mill Park Conservation Area Management Plan and the Mill Hill Park Conservation Area Appraisal were listed in the Decision Notice as relevant planning documents, along with other items which were brought to the applicant's attention.

Example 5: Former Mill Hill Pub, 61 Gunnersbury Lane

We commented on the application to redevelop the pub and extension into residential units to ensure the retention of the older, Victorian part of the building and to protect its heritage features. We did not cover in our comments issues relating to overlooking, loss of views and reduction in light affecting properties next to the site. We objected, successfully, to a subsequent proposal by the developer to extend the boundary of the property. The extension would have resulted in a loss of pavement space which had been in public use for many years.



Example 6: 18 Avenue Gardens

Although a large portion of the proposed redevelopment was outside the scope of our primary objective to preserve and enhance the Conservation Area, we still had concerns about the use of materials and the removal of a chimney. Both elements are seen as risks in the Conservation Area Management Plan.

We discussed the application with the owners in order to get more detail on the application and to clarify our position. We submitted comments, asking for white timber sash windows where visible from the street. As the chimney was a post-war addition, we left the decision whether to retain this feature to the expertise of the Planning Officer.



Example 7: Acton College Site (Mill Hill Road entrance)

We objected to an application by the College to install a large advertisement on the façade of a building facing Mill Hill Road, a few feet from the pavement, and residential property opposite. We felt the advertisement would have been an eyesore and out of keeping with the surrounding buildings, all of which are in the Conservation Area. The application was refused.



The College proposed placing the large advertisement on the façade of the building on the right.

Example 8: 115 Gunnersbury Lane

We did not object to a proposal to build a six-storey building, “The Collective”, on a car park site between O’Day Court on Gunnersbury Lane and the Acton Town Hotel Annexe. The Annexe adjoins the Conservation Area.

The proposed development was, in our opinion, set back far enough not to have an impact on the setting of Mill Hill Park. In making our decision, we took into account the existence of another six-storey block of flats, Gunnersbury Court, which is next to the site and adjoins the Conservation Area.

We also noted that the applicant had sought pre-application advice from the Planning Department. As a result of this advice, the applicant had modified the original plans, reducing the height of the building, for example, and had stated in the application form that the revised proposal met the conditions for planning permission to be granted. We did, however, seek an assurance that there would be adequate provision for waste and recycling storage for the number of residential units proposed.



115 Gunnersbury Lane | The view from Gunnersbury Lane showing O’Day Court in the foreground and the Acton Town Hotel Annexe at the rear. The Collective development site, indicated by the red arrow, lies between the two existing buildings.

Example 9: 8 Central Parade, Gunnersbury Lane

Although 8 Central Parade (opposite Acton Town Station) lies outside the Conservation Area, we objected to the change of use from a print shop to a takeaway/restaurant due to potential issues with noise, crime and litter in the area. Much of the litter dropped by passers-by in Mill Hill Park is from takeaway outlets. As a result, the takeaway element of the application was removed and the hours of use restricted.