

1 Arlington Cottages, Chiswick, Sutton Lane North, Chiswick W4 4HB

01094/H1/P3

Comments from the West Chiswick and Gunnersbury Society

1. The West Chiswick and Gunnersbury Society objects to the proposals and requests that the application be refused. Our objections relate to the erection of a new house within the rear garden of the Listed Building. We have no objection to the proposed demolition of the existing side extension and outbuildings, subject to satisfactory proposals for remedial works to the listed building following the demolition works being in place. We note with concern, however, that the proposed extension would have a harmful impact upon the amenity of 2 Arlington Cottages

2. The proposal to construct a new house with access and parking within the garden of 1 Arlington Gardens is contrary to Local Plan Policies SC1 and SC5:

- SC1(q) “Maintaining a presumption against the development of self-contained residential units within the curtilage of existing dwellings where the proposal would be in conflict with other policies in this plan.” **WCGS:** The proposals conflict with several policies in the Local Plan – see below.
- Paragraph 5.5 which states “However, it (a contribution from small sites) does not require development of back gardens to achieve this.”
- **SC5 Our Approach** ...respect the principles of good neighbourliness.”
- Paragraph 5.17 Development proposals should not compromise the amenity of existing and future residents or the important character of the area, including the amenity and character of back garden spaces. Proposals will be considered in the context of planning policies, supplementary guidance and evidence including the Urban Context and Character Study. Assessed against these policies, proposals for inappropriate garden land development will be rejected.”

3. The Society’s objections relate to:

- Harm to the character and appearance of the Listed Building and its setting,
- harm to the amenity of 1 Arlington Cottages
- harm to the amenity of neighbouring properties
- harm to trees
- harm to the character and appearance of the Turnham Green Conservation Area

4. We also have concerns as to the proposed management of the demolition and construction work (see paragraphs 7 and 9 below).

5. Impact on Listed Building

The proposed house would be very close to No 1 Arlington Cottages; its closeness, scale and design would introduce a dominant and discordant element within the setting of the Listed Building. The reduction of the garden of 1 Arlington Gardens to 1/3rd of its current size would also compromise the historic setting of the listed building. With a ground-floor area of almost double that of the reduced ground floor of 1 Arlington Cottages (116 m² compared with 66.3 m²) the new building will not be subservient to the cottage. This insensitive imbalance will be emphasised by the relative size of the gardens (357 m² compared with

130m²). These negative impacts would be in conflict with NPPF, London Plan and Local Plan policies. Policy CC4 Heritage specifies that “We will identify, conserve and take opportunities to enhance the significance of the borough’s heritage assets as a positive means of supporting an area’s distinctive character and sense of history.”

6. Amenity of 1 Arlington Cottages

The issues raised above would also be to the detriment of the amenity and quality of life of existing and *future* residents of 1 Arlington Cottages as illustrated by the images provided on page 16 of the D & A document. In addition, the cottage would be reduced in size from 127.3 m² to 114.5 m² and eclipsed by its larger new neighbour; residents of the cottage would have a seriously diminished outlook with an uncomfortable sense of enclosure at the back and side of the property from fencing on the new boundary line. The boundary line runs very close to the cottage in order to provide a parking space for the new house. Residents would also suffer from loss of defensible space at the front (see paragraph 7).

7. Amenity of neighbouring properties

2 and 3 Arlington Cottages The proposed extension to Cottage 1 would extend into the rear garden along the boundary with the relatively small garden of Cottage 2, increasing the sense of enclosure of the latter.

Permitting **vehicle access** to the new house across the front garden of the cottages and installing an automatic car gate would alter the context and the attractive character of this area with its informal surface mix of grass, gravel and historic paving*. The front garden is currently undivided and, in effect, provides communal defensible space for the three cottages. Drawing No 3 shows that the distance from the boundary wall to the “boundary line” between cottages Nos 1 and 2 is only 2.61 m. The proposed vehicular access would run across the garden very close to the front door of cottage No 2. Regular access by vehicles would be likely to damage the surface and (by root compaction and/or damage to trunk or branches) the two trees (Nos 16 and 17) that are significant positive landscape features within the garden and the Conservation Area. The sweet gum (tree No 17) would be especially vulnerable as it sits on the boundary line 2.61 m from the boundary wall. Vehicles seeking to avoid the boundary wall when entering the garden are likely to drive very close to the tree. Installing an inward-opening, automatic car gate across the access on the front boundary (Drawing no 16) would exacerbate this difficulty and negatively alter the context and character by turning the cottages into a modern “gated community”.

*While the applicant states that this mixed surface would be retained, this may prove to be impractical if vehicle access is permitted. It is noted that the images on page 16 show a new solid paving driveway across the garden from the boundary wall to or beyond the boundary line between cottages Nos 1 and 2.

Properties in Arlington Gardens and Bishops Close We question whether providing obscure glazing to some of the windows in the new house would provide satisfactory mitigation for the loss of privacy and outlook which would be suffered by some of the properties in Arlington Gardens and Bishops Close. The D & A document shows distances between some windows of 13.8 metres and 16.5 metres.

8. Quality of accommodation of the new house

Requiring the windows of the master bedroom to be obscure-glazed (in order to mitigate outlook and privacy issues) will provide a poor quality of accommodation and is indicative of over-development. Siting bedrooms on the ground floor adjacent to the car parking space also demonstrates the compromised design.

9. Trees

The position of the sweet gum (tree 17) in the front garden is such that regular car access to the new house (see paragraph 7) and construction vehicle access to the site during building is very likely to damage this important tree. The Construction Management Plan proposes the use of vehicles 2.495 m wide; the distance between the boundary wall and the tree is 2.61 m.

While shown in drawing No 16, no reference is made in the text or in the Arboricultural Report to the several trees in the “shared area” on the corner of Sutton Lane North and Arlington Gardens and the need to protect them during demolition and construction work. The access path between the garden of 1 Arlington Gardens and the shared area is narrow and there are two mature trees alongside this path.

10. Conservation Area

While the cottages themselves are set back from the road glimpses of them and the trees in the front garden provide an attractive example of the more rural past of this part of Chiswick and a sense of history. As Listed Buildings they are an important component of the Conservation Area. Another important component is shown in Drawing 16 – the “shared area” leading to the cottages. This area is in a prominent position on the corner of Sutton Lane North and Arlington Gardens. It is a fragment of the formerly much larger Turnham Green. With its trees and informal planting it is an attractive feature which serves to extend the openness of Turnham Green into the adjacent residential area, which was originally named Arlington Park. Specific reference to it and its significance is made in the appraisal statement for the Conservation Area. “Hints of former space remain such as a fragment of Green next to Arlington Park (sic) Cottages.” This area thus has historic, communal and aesthetic significance and must be afforded protection from damage (see paragraph 9.Trees) and/or inappropriate development in conformity with Local Plan Policy CC4 Heritage, especially paragraph (o)

We consider that the proposal to locate an enclosure for the **refuse and recycling** for the new house, the three cottages and neighbouring houses near the entrance to the “shared area” to be totally inappropriate and unacceptable.

The proposed enclosure would be large and prominently positioned; the applicant indicates that the enclosure will contain 6 x 240 litre bins:3 for general waste, 2 for glass and plastic, 1 for paper. No reference is made as to how/by whom this refuse and recycling would be collected. Mixed glass and plastic recycling would not be compatible with Hounslow’s waste management system. No reference is made to food waste.

11.Conclusion

On balance, we believe strongly that the benefit of providing one new house of debatable quality is heavily outweighed by the cumulative harm that would be caused by the several negative impacts detailed above including harm to designated heritage assets, the conservation of which should be given great weight in accordance with the NPPF.

WCGS October 2018