

Comments for Planning Application 18/02909/FULL1

Application Summary

Application Number: 18/02909/FULL1

Address: Trees Coniston Road Bromley BR1 4JB

Proposal: Demolition of existing dwelling and detached garage and erection of a three storey terrace of 5 no. dwellings (2 x 4 bedrooms and 3 x 3 bedrooms) with associated car parking, landscaping, cycle and refuse storage.

Case Officer: Russell Penn

Customer Details

Name: Mr Marcus Oliver

Address: 137 Coniston Road Bromley

Comment Details

Commenter Type: Neighbour

Stance: Customer objects to the Planning Application

Comment Reasons:

- Objection

Comment: An objection to the planned demolition of Trees, Coniston Road

My confidence in Richton Properties got off to a rocky start when I read in their Design and Access Statement: 'the existing property on site is of no particular architectural merit'. How wrong! For a start the house was built in 1938 and not, as stated 'is about 1950s architecture', an illustrated article on the design was actually published in Builder magazine in 1927. Of no particular merit? Well how come the architect was none other than Hubert Lidbetter FRIBA, who designed Friends House, Euston Road, the national headquarters of the Society of Friends, or Quakers, now designated Grade II listed - a rare honour indeed for any architect?

The fact is that the original owner and relative of Mr Tony Dicker, current owner, was Mr Robert Williams. Robert was the librarian at the Royal Institute of British Architects, and clearly knowledgeable about house design which was why he approached one of the RIBA members to design him a house. So hardly likely to build and pay for a new house 'of no particular architectural merit'. Incidentally 'Trees' sustained shrapnel damage to the roof in the course of World War II, surely another badge of honour?

Unbelievably, further down the statement (para 6.4), Richton Property says: 'The existing building on site is of no particular architectural merit and is something of an anomaly in the street scene!' How disparaging to Robert Williams and to their client Mr Tony Dicker!

Before addressing the shortcomings of the five-house application I'd like to ask whether any thought went into modernizing 'Trees' in a sympathetic manner, basically enlarging it and making it into an attractive family-sized home for single occupancy? There are several existing examples of sustainable detached family homes in the neighbourhood: Braybourne Cottage, Oaklands Road,

Oakdene, Oaklands Road, Yew Tree Lodge, Elstree Hill. By taking this route the owner/developer could have preserved the distinctive arts and craft style and the widely popular sylvan nature of the 'Trees' garden.

But no, Richton Properties are hungry for multi million pound profits. Hence the five-house application. From our perspective (just across the road at '137') the proposal is a gross over development of the site. For a start there is an extra storey to that of the original house. This will obscure the stunning sunsets which we have enjoyed for over 40 years. Also lost forever will be the twinkling red lights on the Crystal Palace radio masts. This may seem slight or peripheral but truly sunsets and major radio masts give a sense of place. If they go, then where is the place? Much is made by Richton about 'high standards' of materials and design in the application but why is it that there is no readiness to match what Wimpey did with the terrace opposite in 1972 and provide a metaled half width road? They went further and indemnified all purchasers against the cost of the council eventually deciding to adopt the road, as they did attempt to do in 1986. Reference to road traffic volumes is understated throughout the Richton statement. A further 10 car parking places can only exacerbate the deteriorating situation. The unmade road becomes hard and very potholed in winter and extremely dusty and dangerous in the summer. There is appreciably more traffic using this stretch of Coniston Road. Young men cannot resist spinning wheels on the loose gravel and showering parked cars and front gardens with flying stones. If Richton really want to engage with the local community they should come up with a matched metal strip of road opposite the new five houses and some form of traffic calming at the beginning of the unmade stretch and Hawkeshead Close.

The Quaife Woodlands arboricultural report is on the partisan side. There is absolutely no reason why the Oak (T27) and the White Beam (T28) should be felled except that they stand in the path of the five-house design. The retaining wall mentioned as a weakness could surely be strengthened. An Oak tree is such a rare joy that every effort should be made to preserve it. A general observation on the orientation chosen for the development would be that the back gardens - the only gardens - will get very little sunlight in afternoons. I can foresee much recourse by individual owners over the years ahead to tree surgeons and vigorous branch chopping to admit some light!

We object most strongly to this planning application.

Marcus and Susan Oliver

137 Coniston Road

Bromley BR1 4JA