

13 Lauder Road EH9 2EN

Planning Application 18/04707/FUL

OBJECTION from Grange Association

14 September 2018

The Grange Association has reviewed application 18/04707/FUL and lodges this objection, taking into account the setting within the Grange Conservation Area of 13 Lauder Road and the neighbouring properties, and the current work to implement earlier approved proposals 17/06051/FUL and 18/04583/TCO.

Background

We lodged a comment (e-mail: Peter Pitkin to Messrs Hinshelwood and Milne, 08/06/2018) concerning the proposal to remove the imposing lime tree at the front boundary under 18/02583/TCO, requesting that a TPO be considered. That application was subsequently withdrawn and replaced on 22 August by 18/04583/TCO. We lodged a further comment on the revised application (e-mail Peter Pitkin to Graham Hinshelwood 24/08/2018), contesting the applicants' new assertion that the front wall was in any serious or immediate danger from the tree and suggested that you might have applied a Tree Preservation Order given the tree's significant contribution to the pleasing streetscape of Lauder Road. Our objection was overlooked and the TCO application was granted with a "Not make a TPO" decision on Friday 24 August 2018. The lime tree has already been removed and we are greatly saddened by this loss of amenity to the street.

It is now evident that the motive for removal of the tree was to facilitate this current proposal for a new double garage and driveway. This application 18/04707/FUL was submitted on Monday 27 August complete with architects' drawings.

We understand that the current application must be assessed on its merits alone and the history of the approval of 18/04583/TCO is not relevant to the assessment. That history does however colour our perception of the manner in which the Council's planning department, and other stakeholders, are being treated by the applicants in terms of openness about their wider plans and intentions.

Objections

a) Scale

We object to the scale of the proposed new garage. The proposals approved under 17/06051/FUL are already consuming a significant area of the site. With these new proposals, only about 670m² of soft landscaping would remain of a total site area of 1350m² (i.e. 50%). The non-statutory Householder Guidance (March 2018) states in relation to villas (page 10): "Maximum site coverage of all buildings, garages, parking and access driveways should not exceed 40% of the site area". The current proposals breach this requirement. The Grange Conservation Area Character Appraisal (GCACA) notes (page 15): "*The separation of dwellings creates a characteristic rhythm and solid-void repetition between precisely-sited structures of similar scale and massing. The spacious gardens provide an important setting for the buildings and mature trees within.*" The current proposals would close the gap to the neighbouring property to the south to just 1m and destroy the

characteristic rhythm and spacing of the properties and damage the setting within the garden. The proposals are therefore incompatible with Policy Env. 6 of the Edinburgh Local Development Plan:

“Development within a conservation area or affecting its setting will be permitted which:

a) preserves or enhances the special character or appearance of the conservation area and is consistent with the relevant conservation area character appraisal”

b) Form of gates

We object to the proposed design of the new gates. It is not clear from the elevations submitted how solid the new gates will be. However they appear to be wholly opaque and so would not facilitate the ‘glimpse views’ of gardens noted in the Grange Conservation Area Character Assessment (GCACA): *“Variations in boundary type, design and material, the visual permeability of railings, gates and planting, and regular punctuation with pedestrian gates reduces the ‘barrier’ effect by allowing glimpse views”* (page 23). The existing pedestrian entrance is an imposing stone arch with a wrought iron gate, wholly consistent with the GCACA and offering a good example of the character described therein. We request that the applicant be asked to leave the pedestrian gate unchanged.

Likewise, we object to the proposed new gates to the driveway. They are unnecessarily wide at 3.8m, requiring the destruction of a substantial length of the original boundary wall. The new gates could be used to provide the ‘glimpse views’ identified in the GCACA but the current proposals appear to incorporate opaque gates. This would create the ‘barrier effect’ identified as a risk in the GCACA. We note that there are examples in Lauder Road where such barrier effects have been created in recent years and we are anxious that there should be no more to damage the character of the area. There are conversely good examples of automated gates recently approved and installed in the area which use gates of transparent steel railings which would be preferable here. We request that any new driveway and its entrance be no wider than 3m and that the gates enable glimpse views into the property.

Roadway access and parking

We note that the application includes a new dropped kerb for the new driveway. We request that any granting of permission be accompanied by a requirement to remove the dropped kerb at the existing vehicle entrance. We also note that the roadway outside the property has parking bays in the S1 controlled parking zone. These will need to be realigned and respecified in a TRO to accommodate the revised driveway access.