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Campaigners' victory over developer as 'outstanding' Hampstead house spared demolition

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A bid to turn a house, once known as 'Danehurst', in Redington Road, Hampstead, into flats has been rejected after a campaign by concerned residents. Picture: REDFROG

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The house at 28 Redington Road, once known as “Danehurst” and built in 1907, has been vacant since September 2015 after Catholic missionaries from the Columban Fathers moved out.

An application to knock down the site was lodged on January 3 by developers Linton Group, with a one-bed flat, five two-bed flats, one three-bed flat and one four-bed flat, with roof accommodation and a double basement with seven parking spaces planned.

But the plan attracted objections about the underground floors and threats to a heritage building, with Camden planners refusing to rule on the scheme without more details on the basement plans.

In April, the developer took the application straight to appeal bypassing the local authority.

The hearing in September was attended by 20 residents objecting to the scheme.

Last week a planning inspector threw out the application expressing concerns over the potential loss of a historic building.

Harlan Zimmerman, who led the campaign, said: “This is a massive victory. Usually developers overpower people at appeal.”

Chair of the Redington Froggnal Association, Ruper Terry, described Danehurst as an ‘outstanding example’ of the Arts and Crafts movement: “It is identified as making a positive contribution to the Redington Froggnal conservation area.”

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He added: "These accreditations, however, were insufficient to deter developers from seeking the building's demolition, purely to replace it with a much larger pastiche and parking for 15 cars which would have caused "substantial harm" to the area."

Heath&Hampstead Society planning chairman David Castle said: "We were very pleased to help obtain this significant decision to refuse the application to destroy an interesting house which had long been named as contributing to the conservation area.

"Fortunately, also saved is the large garden, with trees which have 'veteran' features, and which is part of an important ecological corridor.

"It is good to see the Inspector did not challenge Camden`s policy in the new Local Plan not to allow parking in any new developments (except for parking spaces for the disabled).

"Mr Zimmerman is to be congratulated for fighting such a successful campaign," he added.

A Linton Group spokeswoman said: "We are disappointed our proposal has been rejected. The proposal had been carefully considered and was designed to make a positive contribution to the conservation area and wider community."

She said the firm was now reviewing the scheme and would reveal its plans 'in due course'.

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