

Eco-mansion fails to impress neighbours

Council approves controversial green Hampstead home

Marc Mullen

CONTROVERSIAL plans for an eco-mansion in Hampstead have been given the green light by Camden Council.

Mattias Westman wants to demolish and rebuild the Ellerdale Road house he bought in May 2005 for £2million.

The new home will have a revolutionary glass tower which will act as a ventilation system for the whole house and an environmentally friendly rainwater recycling system.

It has been designed by award-winning Camden Town-based architect Richard Mitzman.

Mr Mitzman said: "The design is very green and the councillors were very keen on our environmental statement. It is a sustainable building.

"We are very pleased the plans have been passed, as we were refused at the last planning meeting in March just before the elections, when councillors overturned the officers' recommendation to give us the go-ahead."

Originally from Sweden, Mr Westman is a banker specialising in Russian investments and he will pay a further £1.2million to rebuild his house.

The new nine-bedroom man-



An illustration of the planned Ellerdale Road house.

sion will be 75 per cent bigger than the existing house.

Neighbours complained that the new design is not in keeping with the architecture of the street, and that views would be restricted by the increased height of the building.

In March councillors rejected the plans because of the detrimental effect of glazing on the front elevation.

But officers described the existing building as being "of no architectural or historic interest".

Gordon Maclean, chairman of the town sub-committee of the

Heath and Hampstead Society, said: "We are very disappointed this has been passed. This was a quite poor design.

"It is modern I suppose, but in fact it is quite crude and almost amateurish in how it was put together.

"It is dreadful architecture. I am very sorry to hear it was passed but I am not surprised, although I had hoped for something better from the new committee."

Mr Mitzman, a former dentist, received a Royal Institute of British Architects award in 2004 for his design for a dental surgery



Architect Richard Mitzman.

in Chelmsford. Mr Westman's house will have wooden flooring from sustainable forests in Sweden and 300mm thick concrete walls which will act as energy-saving heat sinks.

It will not have solar panels or wind turbines.

Mr Mitzman said: "The house has been designed for maximum energy efficiency. Solar panels don't do much and nor will wind turbines.

"Solar panels are very reflective and people don't like to look at them.

"Wind turbines only have limited usefulness. I know David Cameron wants one, but that's a political thing."

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