

152 Royal College Street – Planning Applications 2022/3133/P, 2023/0730/P & 2023/1033/P

Objection from Camden Cycling Campaign

This objection to the above planning applications is from the Camden Cycling Campaign. We are the local branch of the London Cycling Campaign and represent the interests of cyclists living or working in or travelling through the Borough of Camden.

We are very concerned about the increased danger to cyclists that will be caused by the proposed building on the corner of Baynes Street and Royal College Street, and on the impact of construction on the heavily used contraflow cycle lane on Royal College Street. Royal College Street is a key section of cycle route C6 between Kentish Town and Kings Cross, Blackfriars and beyond and carries up to 3600 cycle journeys per day.

Baynes Street Junction

The junction between Baynes Street and Royal College Street has been the location of a number of collisions between motor vehicles and cycles. Most of these involve motor vehicles turning right out of Baynes Street and cyclists heading south on the contraflow cycle lane on Royal College Street and the most common cause is that drivers pull out of Baynes Street without seeing cycles approaching from the right. This is exacerbated by the poor sight lines for motorists exiting Baynes Street. There have been 29 collisions here in the last 5 years according to police reports (and probably many more that have not been reported). By one metric it is the 3rd most dangerous junction in Camden.

The plans for the corner house (2023/1033/P) indicate that the building will extend to the property line on both streets. This will make the junction even more dangerous by further obstructing the sight-lines. The building should be set back to allow a good view up Royal College Street from Baynes Street.

Construction Impact

We are surprised that no draft CMP is included in any of the applications, particularly as the site is so constrained.

Baynes Street is very narrow and there is a combined pedestrian and cycle access to the canal towpath near the junction with Royal College Street.

Royal College Street has protected cycle lanes on both sides; the one on the east side is a contraflow lane and thus cycles cannot be diverted into the main carriageway if the lane is obstructed. Further, as detailed above, the junction has been the location of a number of collisions between cycles and motor vehicles.

It is essential to understand how construction vehicles will access the site. Access from Baynes Street would seem to be difficult, due to the narrow width, but if access from Royal College Street is planned, then it is critical to understand how this would be done while keeping the contraflow cycle lane open and safe. This needs to be understood and a plan decided before planning permission is granted.

Therefore we object to the plans as filed, both from a long-term safety point of view and because of the lack of a draft CMP.

We would be happy to discuss our concerns with Camden officers and/or with the developer.

John Chamberlain
Camden Cycling Campaign
3rd May 2023

cc: Max Lyne, Anthony Christofi, Camden Council