

Camden Council
5 Pancras Square
London
N1C 4AG

For the attention of Laura Dorbeck
Objection to Planning Application - 2020/3043/P
Site Address: 52 Tottenham Street London W1T 4RN

Note

In this document, we refer to the report provided in your website at <https://democracy.camden.gov.uk/documents/s105570/52%20Tottenham%20Street%20report.pdf> as "the report".

We also refer to other documents as found in the planning application at <http://camdocs.camden.gov.uk/HPRMWebDrawer/PlanRec?q=recContainer:%222020/3043/P%22>

We write to you in regard to the proposed redevelopment of 52 Tottenham Street, to which we **object**.

We were aware that planning permission was requested in 2020, after a not-very-publicised consultation in 2019¹ and when we were in the midst of the pandemic. For reasons that we will explain, we are surprised to learn that it has been recently approved:

1. We believe the applicant is willingly ignoring the effect the additional height of the proposed new development will have on surrounding blocks.
2. It is also our perception that the supporting documents provided by the applicant are out of date or do not reflect the actual circumstances of the site.

Taking into account these two factors, **this seems like a defective application**.

We are aware the permission has been awarded in principle, but we believe it is important to share this information as residents and citizens of Camden.

We hope you will be able to take it into consideration.

We will now detail our arguments in the following pages:

¹ As a side note, the applicant provided an e-mail address for the public to comment on the application... but then their e-mail server rejected e-mails from the public with an "The group tottenhamstreet only accepts messages from people in its organization or on its allowed senders list, and your email address isn't on the list." error

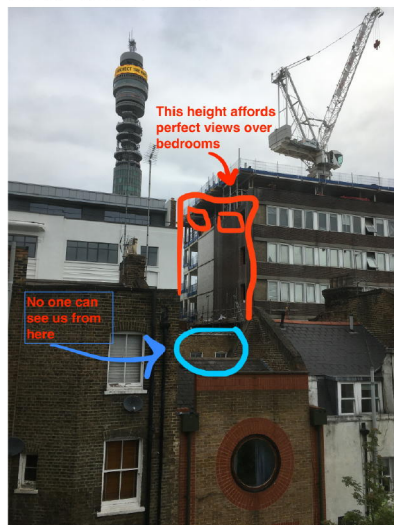
With regards to 1.- the applicant is willingly ignoring the effect the additional height of the proposed new development will have on surrounding blocks:

A building of this height is going to cause a number of negative effects on all the shorter buildings past the immediately adjacent, yet they seem to have been willingly overlooked because they're not "strictly" within the perimeter the law requires to consider:

- It will cause a detriment on privacy, since suddenly there will be a number of balconies that overlook our bedrooms.
- It will also cause acoustic nuisance when noises coming from the taller floors are amplified by the courtyard causing a "canyon effect".
- It will irrevocably change the view (what we can see from the windows) in a conservation area.

When the consultation was first announced, we wrote to the developer as we were concerned about our future lack of privacy due to a number of balconies directly overlooking our bedrooms, and about our future ability to see the sky.

We sent the following image taken from our building that better represents the actual impact the construction would have:



They disregarded our concern and replied with a "technical" answer that argued that "strictly speaking" they were within limits:

Properties on the southern side of Tottenham Street, and beyond on Cleveland Street, benefit from the orientation of the sun, ensuring that a loss of daylight/sunlight would be unlikely, and any issues of overlooking would be limited in light of oblique inter-visibility, physical separation and screening afforded by existing levels of built development. There are no other properties within the vicinity of the site that may be affected by the proposed development.

It's evident that the applicant omits providing illustrations that accurately represent the impact of the development.

Out of all the future representations of the potential site, their "figure 3" (in page 9 of The Report) is the one that looks most innocuous and seamlessly merged with the existing building environment.

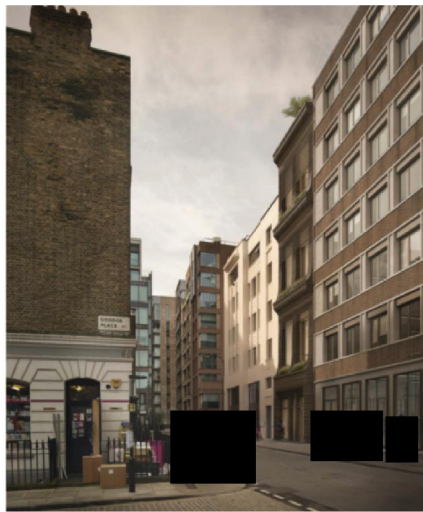


Figure 3 – Proposed street view

The other two pictures provided in their [Planning Statement](#) (page 12) also show a very positive perspective that does not depict what residents would face:



We appreciate that although “technically” the proposal might be “acceptable”, the building not only will fundamentally change the historical character of the area in a negative way, but also will impede the peaceful and human enjoyment of our dwellings.

Separately, since the consultation took place **we have also observed in repeated times that whenever noises of any type are produced on the top floors and balconies of both Take Two and Arthur Stanley House, the noise gets amplified due to the layout of the courtyard**, and it becomes a very distressing nuisance as the noises look as if originating from *within* the courtyard.

We have experienced this in a number of different events: when people have conversations on the terraces, when window glass cleaners do their job, and also when there are parties with music in the upper floors. (See Noise Complaint number **309926309926** for a recent example of this which had to be attended by one of your officers).

We could not bring this up as a response to the consultation at the time, because the events in which human conversation or music coming from a taller building caused nuisance hadn't happened yet.

Since then, **we've also experienced people from these tall locations also enjoy looking out and down. The consequence is that we have to bring the blinds down whereas we normally would not need to.** This means a decrease in air circulation in summer as we live in buildings without air conditioning, and the inevitable increase in indoor temperatures.

While these incidents have been very small in number as office workers have been more or less restrained and the parties have been short-lived and have not generally gone on throughout the night, **we do not believe the future occupants of the new building will resign themselves to not use their balconies, speak in front of their open windows or host people or parties with lively conversations.**

We are also acutely aware of the number of short-lettings that pervade the area. Top floors and balconies are hugely attractive features for short-letting rentals. We worry this building will become a permanent short-letting site as is the case in other new developments in the area, with all the disturbance this causes to permanent residents.

In consequence, **this development will facilitate nuisance by design.**

With regards to 2.- the supporting documents provided by the applicant are out of date or do not reflect the actual circumstances of the site:

The application was sent before the development of both 32 Cleveland Street (now Take Two House) and Arthur Stanley House were finished.

Thus, the proposal did not take sufficiently into account whether it would impact the uses and enjoyment of the immediately surrounding areas. I refer back to the response they sent me where they knowingly declare that "There are no other properties within the vicinity of the site that may be affected by the proposed development."

However, **we are aware of a number of concerns** raised by the occupants of Take Two House as the proposed taller building will severely constrain the amount of sunlight that they get, with the corresponding negative impact. These are accessible from the planning folder, for example [this document](#).

We also note that after the completion of their redevelopment, **Arthur Stanley House has now windows on the side which would be entirely covered by the new development**. The supporting documents provided by the applicant do not seem to evidence or address this situation.

See the following picture for details:



We are concerned that were the approval given and the works started, **we would reach a situation in which we would be left with a hole in the ground, a paralysed construction site** and a developer trying to figure out what to do about the window(s).

The concern about the proposal lacking sufficient detail and leaving this resolution to later on has **also been raised by Take Two House** ("Over-reliance on future Construction Management Plan").

We have endured many years of construction work in this area with all the nuisances that this causes: dirt, noises and vibrations, disruption in pavement access, damaged pavements and roads, noises coming from inadequately secured scaffolding at night, etc, etc.

We are not against a redevelopment that turns an inactive asset into usable and beneficial units, but we are against a redevelopment that does very little of that at a great future cost to everyone else in terms of the negative impact it will leave on the area.

On top of that, we would strongly prefer not to endure unnecessarily protracted construction due to lack of sufficiently thorough planning.

Again, we appreciate the planning permission has already been approved in principle, but we feel these are significant factors that seem to have been overlooked so far.

Yours faithfully,

SP