

From: tom monahan
Sent: 11 November 2023 12:49
To: Plannin; David Fowler
Subject: 2023/2510/P & 2023/2653/L

I OBJECT to the proposals for the redevelopment of Selkirk House at One Museum Street

REFS: **2023/2510/P & 2023/2653/L**

I object to this proposal for the following reasons which I have grouped into key categories as follows; Design, Ecology, Environment.

DESIGN

It is important to consider the Design of the proposal first since it will have the most significant impact on the people who live and work in the area. The height of the proposal is an increase of almost a third of that of Selkirk house. This shows insensitivity to the historic surroundings and represents interests which fly in the face of Camden's carefully developed design policy and regulations. It is a strong expression of opportunism out of keeping with the existing Camden residents' feelings for the neighborhood and also damaging to tourists' impressions of the area. The proposed height will impact daylighting on surrounding buildings and obstruct familiar views, landmarks and sightlines. These are fundamental aspects which preserve the long term identity of the area for local residents and local school children who develop close associations and memories with the area. The bland, featureless elevations and the increased massing and height of the proposal are incongruous with the area and would detract from the enjoyment of millions of pedestrians who annually use the historic street pattern including local children. The design clearly illustrates a short-term objective which prioritises the provision of maximum profitable floor space for the developer. It capitalises on the location without enhancing or complementing it within the wider context.

ECOLOGICAL

The proposal seeks to demolish the existing building on the site and create a new taller building. The ecological impact of choosing this development strategy is disastrous and completely ignores established scientific proof showing the damage such strategies have on maintaining a sustainable eco system and quality of life both physically and mentally. The priority presented here is to make money at the expense of human health. The design also allows

for the felling of established trees which are a scarce feature in the area and are highly appreciated.

Refurbishing and renovating the existing building would not only be more ecologically sensitive and more cost effective but the improvements could also play a part in the lifting the pride locals have for a recognised landmark and the wider area. The alternative for creating a financially successful development which responds to the need for social housing, public space and support for small and medium sized businesses is the proposal designed by MBH architects. They have years of experience designing buildings in this area with all these complex considerations in mind.

ENVIRONMENTAL

The provision of affordable housing and public green space, which is needed in the area, are clearly regarded as secondary considerations in this proposal and its design only serves to highlight the level of disregard held for the neighbourhood. Other recent developments in the area such as the Post Office Building and Central St. Giles Court were contested by local residents for similar reasons. These new buildings have not lived up to their fantastical projections of creating a new destination integrated with the local area. They have set low standards of design practice in finding solutions set for themselves. As a consequence these buildings provide a dangerous precedent of developing tall buildings which do little to support the needs or interests of local residents and the existing community.

I have a degree in architecture and have close connections with the area. I went to a local primary school and have worked in various local businesses. I volunteer in events which serve to bring the local community together and support local businesses keen to appeal to residents, tourists and visitors.

Yours faithfully,

Tom Monahan