

OBJECTION TO PLANNING APPLICATION 2023/1201/P RE 81-84 CHALK FARM ROAD

I am writing to express my very strong objections to the proposals as set out in Planning Application 2023/1201/P.

I am a resident of the 85-86 Chalk Farm Road development, within which the application site sits.

I commented on application no: 2023/1201/P in May 2023, and this is included as part of this submission as the design proposals are unchanged since May 2023, with the exception of a 'green roof' for the eastern elevation.

I note that a meeting was held in July 2023 between one of the owners/agents for the application site, two members of their design team and myself. This meeting was followed by a site visit by the two members of their design team, hosted by myself, to the 85-86 Chalk Farm Road development.

At the meeting, the specific issues raised by me as contributing to the uncomfortable sense of enclosure were:

- the unremitting bulk of the proposed additional floor, which is over 3 metres high and 20 metres long and unmoderated by a set-back, mansard or any other means, which might be reasonably expected for an elevation of this scale, that of 4-5 terraced houses. It was noted that the proposed eastern flank is angled away from the rear of the adjacent Belmont Street properties in a giant mansard form and the fourth floor of the 85-86 Chalk Farm Road development, which is referenced in the PDAS document as a relevant example of an additional storey is set back on three of the four edges.
- the window treatment and in particular the large 'picture' window which protrudes from the façade estimated, from the drawings, to be more than one and half times the size of a garage door, and overhanging the inner courtyard of 85-86 Chalk Farm Road by a metre
- the visually 'noisy' finishes and profiling of the south elevation which contributes further to the dominating and overbearing feel of the design

At the meeting, a commitment was made by the owner/agent to investigate options to address the issues raised and to share these before a further application to Camden was submitted.

I note that I received no further information from the owner/agent or his design team and was only alerted to the re-submission by seeing the planning leaflet on the street frontage on Chalk Farm Road.

I note that the present application shows no alterations to the previous design.

A complex setting that requires a sensitive and responsive approach

Properties in the 85-86 Chalk Farm Road development have a very specific and complex setting that the proposals do not sufficiently acknowledge.

The houses within the development (Nordic Mews) are land locked with no street frontage and their principal outlook is the application site and outer courtyard. This means that changes to this outlook are highly significant and it is considered that a more sympathetic and responsive approach would be to angle the top story as is proposed for the east façade (abutting Belmont Street) or to set it back from the south and west façades, as is the case with the fourth floor of the 85-86 Chalk Farm Road apartments which is set back on 3 out of the 4 facades.

A view is expressed in the updated PDAS document that the additional storey will not create an uncomfortable sense of enclosure for the Nordic Mews properties, because the additional storey is 'similar' in height to the rear of the apartment block. This is in contrast to the view expressed here, that the measurable height may be 'similar' but that the effect and experience of it will be not at all similar. It is considered that the additional floor as currently proposed, will be transformational, fundamentally changing the experience of the courtyard space for the occupants of both the Nordic Mews and Stockholm Apartment properties from one that delivers a finely balanced sense of space in the city where street frontage and rear garden is combined in one space, to one that feels uncomfortably enclosed and over-looked.

For the apartments within the 85-86 Chalk Farm Road development (Stockholm Apartments) who have their principal outlook onto one of London's busiest east-west vehicular routes, that is also an international tourist destination and home to a large music venue, the quieter and more domestic, 'rear garden' experience of the courtyard is a highly valued and key amenity for the residents which is threatened both spatially and aurally by the proposals.

It is noted here that the distance between between the application site and the houses in the 85-86 Chalk Farm Road development (Nordic Mews), is comparable to the distance between the properties on either side of Belmont Street. It is considered here that if a new storey was proposed for properties on the east side of Belmont Street, with the additional floor extending across the full width of 4-5 houses with no modulation or attenuation of height or massing and with protruding windows, that this would be seen to be dominant and overbearing.

Comings and goings and impact on neighbouring amenity

A view is expressed in the PDAS document that, 'it is important to ensure development proposals would not have an adverse impact on neighbouring amenity with particular regard to the levels of coming and going' and that part of rationale for the new façade treatment is that is it capable of having sound insulation integrated into it to mitigate the 'noise and disturbance to...neighbouring dwellings'.

As a resident of the 85-86 Chalk Farm Road development, I can confirm the following:

- there is on-going noise and disturbance from the users of the application site both from coming and goings and from users hanging out in the outer courtyard, chatting, smoking, making phone calls etc, which as anticipated, and noted in the May 2023 submission, attracts other passers-by to do the same, thereby escalating the problem
- no works have been undertaken to ameliorate the acoustic liveliness of the outer courtyard space
- the outer courtyard, through which the users of the application site must pass to come and go and where they then hang out, is not owned or maintained by the application site; rather it is owned and maintained by the 85-86 Chalk Farm Road development. While this is arguably a property rather than a planning issue, it is considered noteworthy as it mirrors the lack of consideration currently being shown in the design proposals for the occupiers of the 85-86 Chalk Farm Road development

Privacy for Nordic Mews properties from obscured glazing

A view is expressed in the updated PDAS document that the obscured glazing to the windows to the proposed new floor will 'ensure the privacy of 1Nordic Mews'. This ignores the principal issue, that it is the visual bulk of the new floor as proposed, that threatens the sense of privacy of the Nordic Mews properties and that the windows as proposed, only serve to contribute to this.

Trees

A view is expressed in the updated PDAS document that the existence of trees in the inner courtyard of 85-86 Chalk Farm Road development should be considered as a mitigating factor to the bulk of the new floor as proposed, despite acknowledging that within a planning context, only 'limited weight can be given to trees on a neighbouring plot..as their continued existence cannot be secured within the consent itself'.

I can confirm that the trees as shown in the updated PDAS document have been reduced in height as part of their on-going maintenance programme and will be further reduced in height to optimise their health and longevity. Once works are complete, they will finish at the level of the existing roof line.

OBJECTION TO PLANNING APPLICATION 2023/1201/P RE, 81-84 CHALK FARM ROAD.

I am writing to express my very strong objections to the proposals as set out in Planning Application 2023/1201/P re, 81-84 Chalk Farm Road. I am a resident of the 85-86 Chalk Farm Road development, within which the application site sits. My objection is that the proposals are unneighbourly. That they do not respect and respond to the immediate context of the site which is a residential development. And that the result of this is that there will be a significant negative impact upon the residential amenity. This impact will be felt in terms of noise and disturbance from the comings and goings of building users and the additional floor, which will feel dominant and overbearing given the compact courtyard setting.

Comings and Goings In Conflict With Residential Context

The application site is surrounded by residential uses on all sides and is accessed via the 85-86 Chalk Farm Road development (1). The access is through the lower end of a courtyard space that wraps around the application site (2). There is deep concern that the comings and goings of the building users through this space and the proposed 'spill out' activities will create noise and disturbance at the expense of the amenity of the residents.

There is also concern that the messaging of an outward facing building with a 'distinctive' façade (8), intended to attract attention, and an aspiration to be seen as part of The Roundhouse, invites yet more pedestrian traffic into the courtyard and people who understand the space to be part of the public realm and then behave accordingly, which is in conflict with protecting the residential amenity.

The courtyard space is highly reverberant, and it is a characteristic of this space that normal speaking conversations held in one part can be heard clearly in another. As I understand it, the footprint, the relative height of the walls and the hard surfaces, come together to reflect the sound so it 'bounces' round the space and gets amplified. Increased activity in this space is highly undesirable.

There have already been some instances of disturbance to the residents by the current users of the building, hanging out chatting and smoking/vaping in the yard and at the entranceway. There is concern that this and the general traffic in and out, will only increase with the proposed increased capacity from the additional floor: a 30% increase in space bringing a 30% increase in disturbance.

At the same time, there is no clear justification for the need for the additional space.

Hustle and bustle in the courtyard space is also undesirable as it makes the management of the gated entrance very challenging. This is a cause of deep concern in terms of protecting the safety and security of the residents. In the past, when the gated entrance has not been effectively managed, the courtyard space has been subject to unwelcome visitors drinking, urinating, defecating, vomiting; there has been vandalism, theft of property and threats to the personal safety of the residents.

Proposals For The Additional Floor Conflict With Residential Amenity

The site sits within a courtyard space which is a highly valued residential amenity for occupiers of 85 – 86 Chalk Farm Road. The space provides a much needed and quieter contrast to the vibrant and very noisy main road, a 'rear garden' experience (Slide 3). This is important for the both the occupants of 1-14 Stockholm Apartments, as their properties face onto Chalk Farm Road, and those of 1-3 Nordic Mews, whose principal outlook is the courtyard space. To the rear, the Mews houses are back to back with the neighbouring properties (3).

Integral to the 'rear garden' experience is the relatively neutral exterior of the application site building and the proportions of the courtyard space, which together provide some calm and the sense of a breathing space within the bustle of the city.

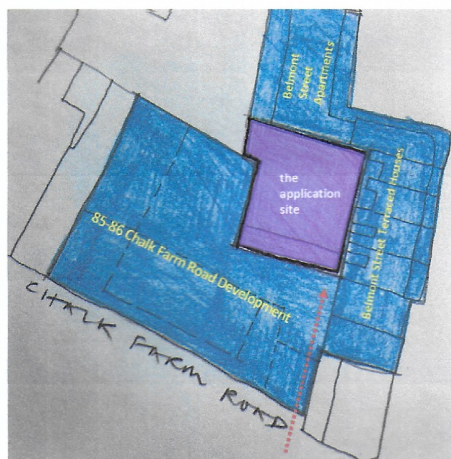
There is deep concern that this will be irrevocably damaged by the additional floor, which as proposed, risks dominating the tight space and generating an uncomfortable sense of enclosure. At the same time the proposals to make the building more 'distinctive', ie noticeable, run the risk of making it feel even more overbearing (4, 8, 9).

1-3 Nordic Mews is only 12 metres away from the western façade at its narrowest point and it is here that it is proposed to locate the 'main bulk' of the additional floor. There is deep concern that the proposal to just vertically extrude the west side wall, in the same plane as the existing wall, for a full floor height, circa 3-4 metres, for the entire length, circa 19-20 metres, will create a cliff experience at ground level and that the visual bulk will block a significant portion of the sky (4, 6, 7,8). 1-14 Stockholm Apartments at only 8 metres away at the narrowest point, and here it is opposite corner of the application site, at the corner, the 'main bulk' of the floor will be very present and visually intrusive (4, 5).

There is concern that the proposed large and protruding windows and dramatic external finishes will give the feeling of being overlooked and feel very dominant in the small scale of the space and that this is very much to the detriment of the residential amenity of its neighbours (4, 9).

It is accepted that the owners of the application site might seek to enhance the value of their building by both the additional of extra floorspace and to create a 'look' for the building that matches their 'brand'. It is felt, however, that the present proposals do so, at the expense of and to the detriment of the residential amenity of the immediate neighbours to the south and west of the site.

The application site is surrounded by residential uses on all sides

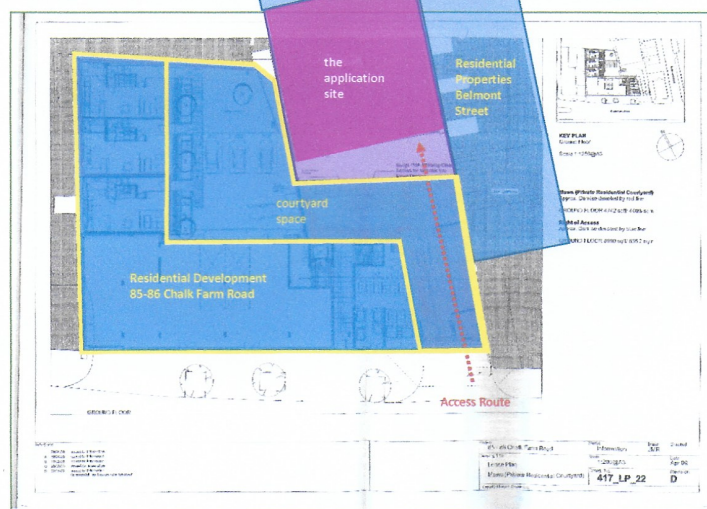


Ref: 2023/1201/P – 81-84 Chalk Farm Road – Objection to Proposals

Slide 01

1

The application is accessed through a residential courtyard

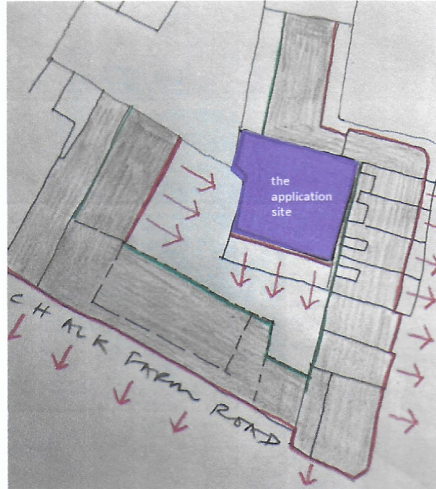


Ref: 2023/1201/P – 81-84 Chalk Farm Road – Objection to Proposals

Slide 02

2

The courtyard is a quiet 'rear garden' experience for the residents

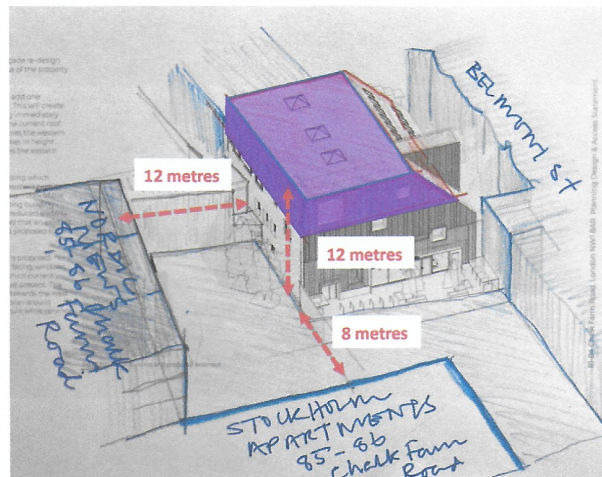


Ref: 2023/1201/P – 81-84 Chalk Farm Road – Objection to Proposals

Slide 03

3

Additional floor will be a dominant presence in a tight courtyard space



Slide 04

4

Corner of 'main bulk' of proposed additional floor

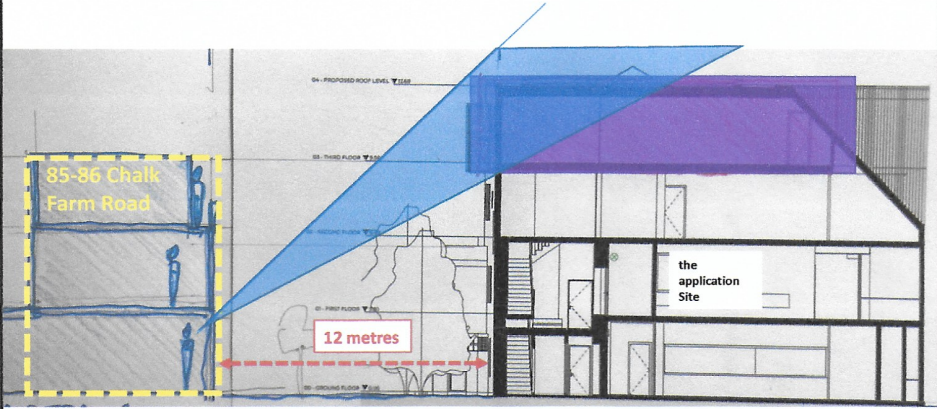


Ref: 2023/1201/P – 81-84 Chalk Farm Road – Objection to Proposals

Slide 05

5

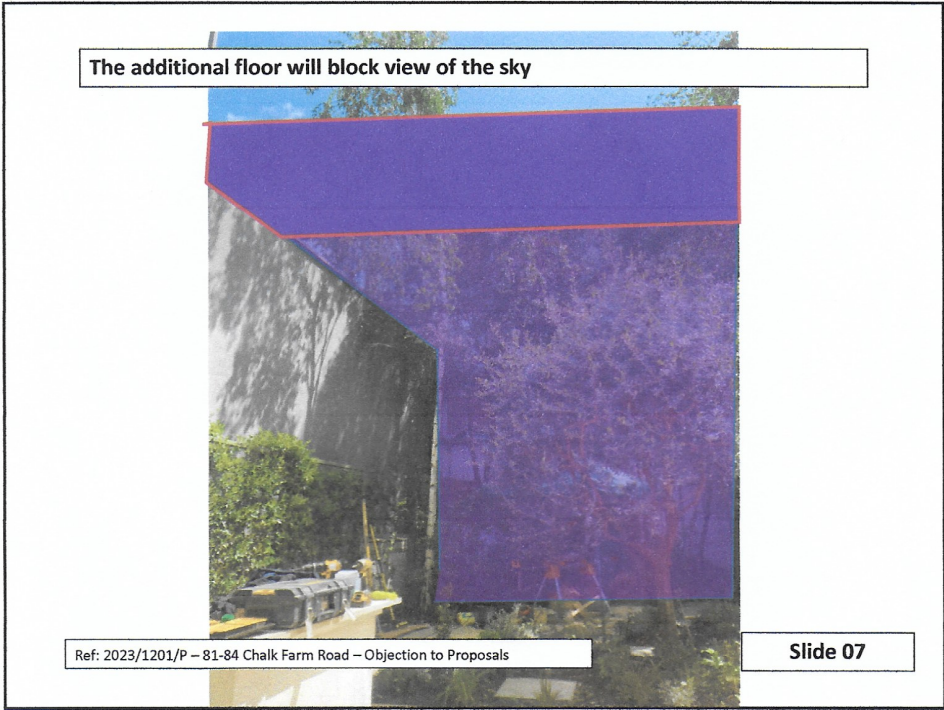
The additional floor will block view of the sky



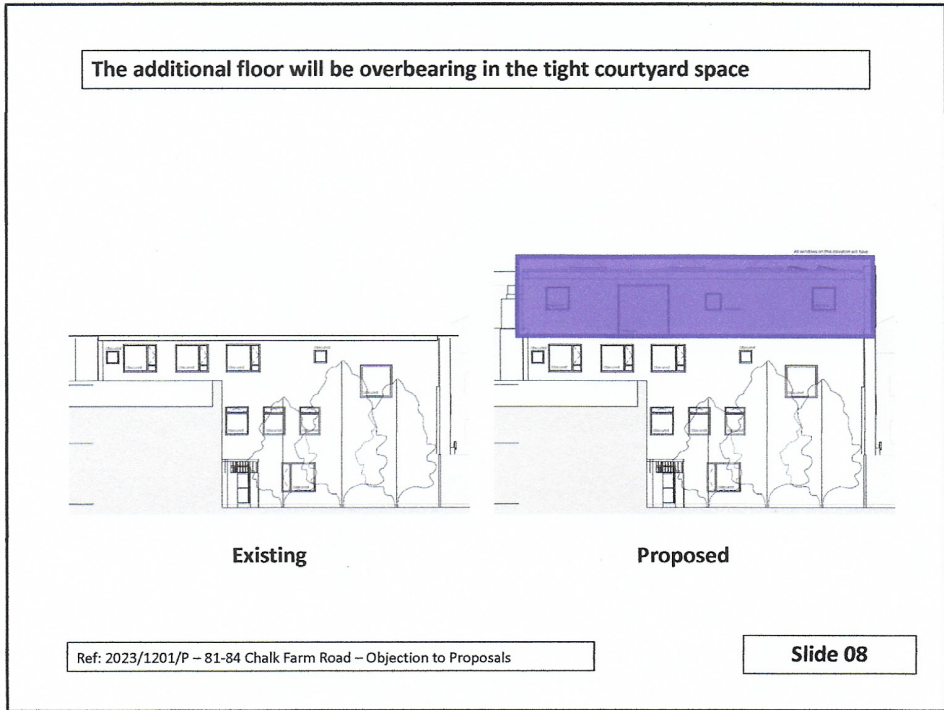
Ref: 2023/1201/P – 81-84 Chalk Farm Road – Objection to Proposals

Slide 06

6

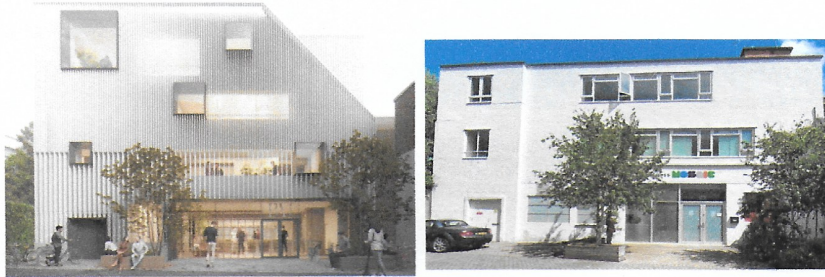


7



8

The size with distinctive façade will be overbearing in the tight courtyard space

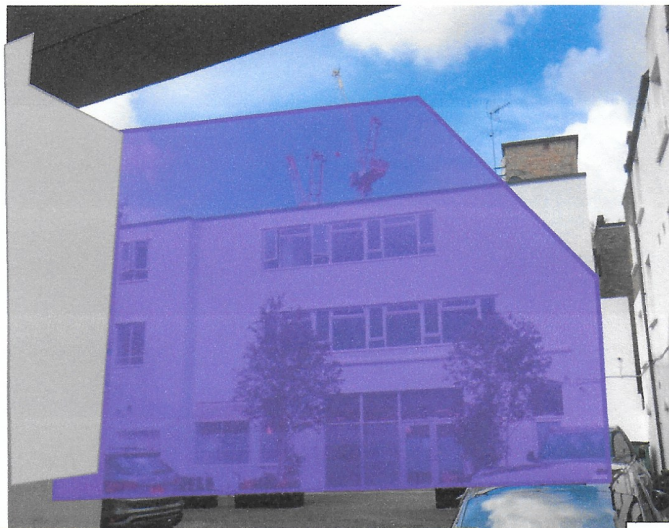


Ref: 2023/1201/P – 81-84 Chalk Farm Road – Objection to Proposals

Slide 09

9

The size with distinctive façade will be overbearing in the tight courtyard space



Ref: 2023/1201/P – 81-84 Chalk Farm Road – Objection to Proposals

Slide 10

10