



From: Adrian B [REDACTED]
Sent: 10 February 2024 23:43
To: Elaine Quigley <[REDACTED]>
Subject: Planning Application: 2024/0286/L

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Dear Ms Quigley,

I hope that this message finds you well.

My name is Adrian Bucher and I am a resident at the Alexandra & Ainsworth Estate. I am writing this message in strong opposition to the planning applications intended for the estate - which includes 2023/5339/P and 2024/0286/L. Though two separate applications, they very much relate to the same issue and so will be spoken about together.

I would firstly like to start this by stating that I am appalled by the actions of Camden council to produce these applications without consulting residents appropriately. No one on the estate that I have spoken to were consulted on these very significant changes to the places that we are living. This is undemocratic.

While residents have indeed experienced issues with heating and hot water, the solutions being proposed by the council are problematic for a variety of reasons including (but not limited to) being environmentally unsustainable; having been brought about by largely disregarding the views and preferences of those on the estate that have been working on the issue for many years; and ultimately introducing a situation which inevitably will not only fail to fix the issues, but actively harm the living standards of residents.

From a financial perspective, this proposal is destined to fail. What is being proposed is tens of millions of tax-payers' money to be spent on a system that cannot and will not be able to heat homes properly or anywhere near as evenly as the present system (even with its faults) due to the inability of Camden's proposed system to avoid draughts, condensation, and (therefore) black mould; as well as the hesitancy and outright inability for some residents to afford even the most basic of heating with the seemingly never-ending energy price increases. For anyone that has ever lived in the estate, it is clear why this is an important issue due it being built using concrete. I would rather not be sentenced to having poorer health in my own home.

Compounding this issue is that, what Camden council are proposing isn't even fixing the present problem - simply putting shiny new equipment while the underlying infrastructure, where the issues lie, remains the same. This is absurd. The present issues will continue to persist meaning that Camden will continue to spend money and valuable resources on maintenance trying to fix the present issues that will persist (not to mention any new ones that may arise) - but the only difference is that millions will have already been wasted on implementing this doomed proposal. It is puzzling as to why anyone would waste this much money on a system that is worse - and one that nobody wants. The only reason that I can think of as to why anyone would want to implement this is from the perspective of the council that wants to shift even more costs to residents. I (perhaps naively) hope that this isn't the case as the council are supposed to help the people of Camden instead of making their lives harder. However, that's how life seems to go more and more these days.

Furthermore, speaking to neighbours, it becomes clear that the council has a bad reputation as far as maintenance of the present system is concerned. If the council cannot be relied upon to fix the present system, then there is no guarantee that the future maintenance of an inferior system can be depended upon. In fact, it would be foolish to think that this would change.

The amount of work and disruption that this would cause is also unimaginable - not just when the actual work is being done (issues like property being left unlocked all day, furniture moved, the noise, the mess, etc.) but once the work has been completed (layout of properties will be completely changed that will, in several cases, need further work). This will have significant financial implications for residents - for which I'm sure that the council will absolutely not volunteer compensation. What of properties with older adults? Younger children? People with disabilities? Pets? People who work from home? People who work late shifts? It is impossible that these groups were not considered when this planning application was submitted...but it just feels like someone just doesn't care. This last remark may seem harsh, but is not without grounds. No one that I have spoken to wants this new system.

The Tenants and Residents Association, who have tried to work with the council on this for years (even being consulted via a workshop), have had their views all but disregarded - and they are people who actually live here, which, I recently found out, is not the case with employees of Camden council. How can such a significant change be proposed by people who don't even live here?

I also understand that the council have also hid behind the estate's listed status to avoid doing work in previous years but then decide when it does or does not apply. I cannot believe that the council seriously intends to add external piping to the building. The estate is an architectural beauty, so why does Camden Council seem hell-bent on defacing the buildings?

We accept that there are present issues - but what is being proposed in the planning applications makes absolutely no sense. Especially since the residents at Whittington Estate had similar works forced upon them to dire results. Again, is the main aim for Camden to waste money?

I, along with many other residents, firmly object to these plans by the council.

Regards,

Adrian Bucher
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