

Application No:	Consultees Name:	Received:	Comment:	Response:
2024/1039/P	Tom Hankinson	22/04/2024 09:27:42	PETITNSUP P	I am in favour of the proposal, as it will improve the general quality of Darwin Court and contribute towards significant improvements in the basic structure and facilities such as lifts and disabled access. There may be difficulties during the construction phase, but these are less significant than the benefits achieved.
2024/1039/P	Sue Samsonov	22/04/2024 09:52:07	SUPPRT	<p>On balance I believe the addition of the penthouse flats will provide the Darwin Court residents much needed improvements. The freeholder has not maintained the buildings or brought them up to modern standard and now we are faced with agreeing to the much needed improvements with the addition of the penthouse flats or paying for improvements ourselves. I believe the prior inactivity of the freeholder has made residents of Darwin Court quite skeptical of any proposed plans. With careful review of the plans I am in support of them.</p> <p>I do not think the flats will be very visible as the architects have worked to maximise the space and minimise the appearance from the road.</p> <p>Lift disruption, noise and debris during the work is of concern to me. The addition of temporary exterior lifts and personnel to assist while work is underway would satisfy my concerns about lifts. The installation of new lifts as part of the project would prevent future lift disruption. I would hope that the work is conducted to minimise noise and would be limited in time. Additionally debris must not be left in areas that make the grounds unsightly or become a nuisance to residence.</p> <p>Additional improvements to the blocks, as per the plans presented to date including refurbing of the entrances, improving access, rubbish bin area, installation of bike racks, would also be beneficial and add security to the premises.</p> <p>I am in favour of the development as long as it is speedy, minimises disruption and suitable funding is secured to ensure that the job will be completed and not linger in limbo as some construction projects do if funds are tight or unexpected costs arise.</p> <p>On this basis I support the development.</p> <p>Thank you</p>
2024/1039/P	Olubunmi Oni	22/04/2024 10:04:15	SUPPRT	<p>I support this proposed development on the basis that the promised benefits are delivered; viz platform lifts which makes access into the buildings easier for those with mobility challenges, upgrade of interior common places, new lifts in all blocks, roof replacement for all blocks, lower service charge for residents since service charge will be shared by a larger number, external garden upgrade, upgrade of pavement at entrance to each block, front low wall suitably upgraded to prevent unauthorised access, no additional cars parked on the street as the extensions will not have parking authorisation, fire safety enhancements, cycle storage and bin area upgrade, rear land extension and upgrade.</p> <p>It is recognised that any development of this nature will entail some disruption which has been put at less than 6 months for each block because the major part of the construction is offsite.</p> <p>The important proviso is that Airspace WILL complete this work themselves (and not sell on the planning permit if granted) in the promised time frame, and that the work will not be stalled by lack of financing or other avoidable issues.</p>

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2024/1039/P	J. Stanger	23/04/2024 18:47:20	SUPPRT	I live in the Primrose Hill Conservaton area and was leafleted by a group which oppose this proposal. I am afraid that I do not agree with them. Although I do not live in or near Darwin Court, I pass by it often and know some of the residents. I looked at this application with some interest. It would seem that from the Statement of Community Involvement that the developers intend to significantly upgrade and improve the whole of the Darwin Court by providing better access and sustainability. The design of the new penthouse flats is in keeping with the original building. Darwin Court desperately needs refurbishing fifty years after its construction. In my view, on balance, the benefits of this carefully designed and argued proposal outweigh any possible negative impact on the conservation area.
2024/1039/P	Susan Hankinson	22/04/2024 09:45:16	COMMNT	The development will enhance Darwin Court and cause no very obvious issues for our neighbours. I am in favour of it, with safeguards. I hope the development proceeds with all speed.
2024/1039/P	Barry Stirland	22/04/2024 09:17:32	SUPPRT	I am writing to express my support for this planning application. As an architect working in London, I am very conscious of the tension that can be created between new development and existing context, not just physically, but also in terms of community and politics. New homes are badly needed in the borough, which is reflected in local planning policy - promoting growth in supply of new homes. In this case, I see a well-balanced proposal which will provide new homes on the top of existing apartment blocks. There would be a negligible impact on the conservation area - the existing buildings not making a positive contribution themselves - with the high-quality design enhancing the roofline. Additionally, improvements to accessibility, fire safety, and landscaping will extend benefits to the existing apartment blocks. Naturally, such a complex proposal raises questions for existing residents and the local community, but these can be addressed through planning conditions - for example approval of materials or construction methodology - to help support the positive development of new homes on this existing site.

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2024/1039/P	Andrew Warren	23/04/2024 09:55:44	OBJ	Dear planning team,

I STRONGLY oppose this proposal as it favours the profit-seeking endeavours of a neglectful freeholder over the well-being of Darwin Court residents, other affected locals, and the entire Primrose Hill Conservation Area. Implementing this proposal would inflict immeasurable disruption upon the local community and irrevocably alter the distinctive charm of the Primrose Hill Conservation Area, cherished by both residents and visitors alike.

I FAIL TO COMPREHEND how the construction of a MERE EIGHT apartments could possibly warrant the disruption, potential damage, and irreversible harm that this proposal is poised to inflict on the local area.

Specifically, my objections are as follows:

Against the principles of the Primrose Hill Conservation Area:

Primrose Hill Conservation Area features significant Grade 2 listed Victorian structures, contemporary houses, and Cecil Sharp House. However, the 1960s saw the loss of Victorian villas due to Darwin Court's construction, a decision that would likely be prohibited today. Strict limits on bulk and height were subsequently imposed. Extending this building contradicts Primrose Hill Conservation Area principles, particularly impacting Cecil Sharp House's unique setting.

Appearance

The proposed penthouses would disrupt the existing building's clean lines and architectural integrity, diverging significantly from the area's aesthetic. Despite claims of setting them back, they would remain prominent eyesores, out of scale and character. This discordance would particularly impact Cecil Sharp House, a Grade 2 listed building. The proposed brickwork also fails to align with neighbouring structures, exacerbating their unsightliness. Choosing a light beige shade further diminishes the community's visual cohesion, especially near Cecil Sharp House.

Precedent for future building and further strain on local services

Setting a precedent for future development and straining local services are key concerns. Increased residents could overwhelm essential services like doctors and schools, while parking shortages are already evident. Construction-related parking exacerbates street congestion. Though not directly related to this application, clarity on future provisions is vital for evaluating the suitability of building penthouses on our rooftops and the precedent it may set.

Height of the development

At present, Darwin Court is no higher than the villas and terraces around it. The plans show an extra floor with water tanks and heat pumps on the roofs of the penthouse flats, so instead of adding one floor, the plan shows two floors.

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**Overlooking**

Overlooking is a concern due to the extent of proposed terraces on the rooftops to Gloucester Avenue residents and Cecil Sharp House particularly.

**Loss of views and light:**

The proposed development would significantly impact neighbouring properties, particularly in terms of views and light. It would notably affect the light received by residents of approximately 30-40 houses along Oval Road and Regent's Park Terrace. The Daylight and Sunlight Report is inadequate, as it only assesses the impact on Gloucester Avenue and neglects to consider these two streets.

**Light pollution from new penthouses**

While the windows of the new flats are at 90° from the roadside direction, there will inevitably be additional light showing, especially in winter.

**Environment and Wildlife Concerns:**

The proposed landscaping of the rear gardens would disrupt an undisturbed wild area that serves as a habitat for nesting birds and other wildlife reliant on natural trees and shrubs. The green space along the railway tracks, which serves as an urban greenway for wildlife, would be lost. Isn't there a London-wide policy aimed at preserving such urban greenways along railway tracks?

Additionally, the potential damage or loss of large roadside trees at Darwin Court would be detrimental to local wildlife. The developer's plan to thin trees by 15% raises questions about oversight and contingency plans for accidents or negligence that could harm these beautiful trees, which are integral to the unique setting of Cecil Sharp House.

**Traffic disruption and congestion throughout the process**

The development will inevitably lead to months of work on each block thereby causing access problems to Gloucester Avenue over a long period. Residents are all too aware of how significant this can be since the extensive works conducted by Thames Water on Gloucester Avenue in 2023.

**The strain on existing residents**

During construction, building operations on the top of the blocks will impose an intolerable strain on the existing residents of Darwin Court for months on end in terms of noise, intrusion and mobility. Many residents are elderly or families with young children. A prolonged time without access to a lift will be extremely difficult for them. The developers have not properly addressed this issue.

**Luxury, Not Affordable Housing:**

This planning application focuses on eight luxury penthouses for the wealthy, offering no provisions for social housing. It fails to address the housing needs of lower-income individuals or make any contribution towards affordable housing initiatives. I understand a contribution may be made as you will see in my comments further on, I don't see how Airspace can adequately calculate a contribution based on the absence of detail in their plans.

**Lack of Quality in Planning Drawings and Absent Information about Penthouse Fabrication:**

The planning application's drawings lack essential quality and detail, raising significant concerns regarding structural and infrastructure resilience. Without adequate information on how the new flats will be fabricated or

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constructed, including materials, external finishes, and MEP infrastructure, assessing their impact on existing buildings is impossible. This omission poses a major risk, not only to flat owners and neighbours but also to the viability of the proposal itself. Furthermore, the absence of a detailed construction methodology is particularly alarming given the existing blocks' structural limitations and the safety concerns of hundreds of residents. For a proposal of this scale, a thorough investigation by independent surveyors/engineers is essential to determine its basic viability and ensure the safety of all residents. These omissions should be a red flag to the quality of this proposal.

#### Risk of Damage to Buildings or Disproportionate Collapse:

Given the lack of quality plans mentioned above, the absence of a structural assessment for each block poses a significant risk to the structural resilience of the buildings. Without a block-by-block and roof-by-roof assessment, proposing rooftop development for Darwin Court is a major health, safety, and financial risk for current flat owners and neighbouring buildings. There's a risk of disproportionate collapse, especially for 1970s buildings with cavity wall construction, particularly with HS2 tunnelling beneath the blocks. Adding a floor without a full understanding of the foundations could potentially harm existing buildings.

#### Water Penetration into Existing Buildings:

Persistent leaks in the current Darwin Court rooftops, neglected by the freeholder, pose a significant issue. Additional accommodation with penetrative footings and foundations would exacerbate water ingress problems. The weight of such structures could cause deflection in existing rooftops, creating new routes for water ingress and structural defects.

#### Plumbing Issues:

Persistent issues with the original pipes in Darwin Court raise concerns. Without a comprehensive MEP infrastructure survey, adding any additional services could lead to catastrophic failure of the existing MEP systems in the blocks.

#### Asbestos Concerns:

Considering Darwin Court's age and the presence of asbestos in the building, the lack of consideration for asbestos disturbance raises concerns about potential asbestos exposure during development. This is a key health and safety risk for residents and local environment.

#### Lack of Meaningful Consultation:

There has been a noticeable absence of meaningful consultation with local residents concerning the proposed development, both by the developer and Camden Council. Notices of the proposal are conspicuously absent from key community locations, such as the library, post office, and community centre. Additionally, there are no notices across the road or on majorly affected roads like Regent's Park Terrace and Oval Road. The views and concerns of the community must be considered before decisions are made, this includes ensuring that signage is prominently displayed to make residents aware.

#### Misleading Information and Lack of Transparency:

Leading on from the lack of a meaningful consultation, upgrades and repairs that have been portrayed to residents as "benefits" should be clearly outlined in the designs, including costings, as part of the proposal. However, this information is currently lacking. Instead, residents have received vague promises that are not reflected in the planning application. Using such promises as a form of "bribe" for support is not an appropriate

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approach for proposals of this scale. Transparency and honesty are essential in conducting such projects.

**Financial Viability and Risk of Mis-Costing:**

The lack of quality designs and assessments raises concerns about the financial viability of the plans. It opens the possibility for the developers to have underestimated the build cost, and the absence of specific information on fabrication increases the risk of mis-costing. This could potentially leave existing Darwin Court residents with a partially finished build, highlighting the need for more detailed financial analysis and transparency in the construction process.

**Concerns Regarding Airspace Track Record:**

A significant concern regarding Airspace is their lack of a verified track record, which may not be a material consideration for planning consent but is crucial in assessing their ability to execute a complex development within the local community. Despite claiming credentials for similar projects, Airspace's track record is marred by the failure of a project previously undertaken by a precursor company, First Penthouse Limited, due to financial constraints. It's noteworthy that one of Airspace's directors was also a director of First Penthouse Limited, which is now under liquidation. This, combined with the poor consultation and inadequate detail in the planning application documents, should raise further red flags regarding the viability of the proposed development.

**Destruction of Iconic Common Areas:**

The proposed modifications to Darwin Court's iconic mid-century common areas are concerning, as they risk altering important architectural landmarks. Darwin Court, alongside other mid-century blocks like the Grade-2 listed Ernö Goldfinger building and the James Stirling block, forms a significant part of the area's architectural heritage. The proposed interior alterations necessary for extending the internal lifts may diminish the charm and character of these spaces, diminishing their historical and architectural significance. These beautiful spaces, with their era-specific lighting and panelling, serve as pleasant meeting places for residents, adding to the charm of the Darwin Court community.

**Loss of Property Value and Increased Service Charges:**

Although the impact on property values may not align with the narrow spectrum of 'material considerations' by planners, in reality, residents may be negatively affected financially. The installation of external platform lifts which will result in increased service charge costs for residents, is just one example which highlights the profit-first approach of the development at the expense of existing residents' financial wellbeing. Whilst legislation to readdress the balance of power between freeholders and leaseholders is currently in development, at present, the residents of Darwin Court are facing the prospect of increases to their expenses at a time of financial instability and pain, due to the profiteering of a neglectful freeholder.

In light of all the aforementioned concerns and risks, HOW can the construction of a MERE EIGHT new homes be justified in the best interests of residents or the integrity of the Primrose Hill Conservation Area?

Best regards.