
From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 30 April 2024 21:09
To: Planning
Subject: Objection to 2023/4757/P Utopia Village

ref: 2023/4757/P Utopia Village

To the Planning Officer,

[REDACTED]

I am writing as owner and occupier of 6A Chalcot Road regarding the proposals at Utopia Village. Before proceeding with details of our objection, we must point out that their proposal continues to almost completely ignore the fact that our property, and that of 6 Chalcot Road, is immediately adjacent to their air inlets/outlets.

6A is the 1st, 2nd and 3rd floor of the same building as 6 Chalcot Road, and our living amenities are entirely above the ground level, including an outdoor balcony. As such, we're fully exposed to the proposed air inlets day and night and have the right to be fully protected by local policy on noise pollution with regard to this proposal.

We have had no communication from Utopia Village whatsoever and their proposals continue to ignore our very existence, despite the immediate adjacency of their proposed construction, noise and heat generation.

In terms of where we believe their application does not comply with policy, we have a number of key objections.

1 - Climate Change

It is unclear to us why any of this is required and how it is in any way going to conform to "Camden Local Plan Policy CC2 Adapting to Climate Change". Energy use looks to be significant, efficiency is not explained, and there is no strong reason for this large scale energy use in the first place.

8.39 Urban Heat Island - The Council will discourage the use of air conditioning and excessive mechanical plant.

The council discourages applications such as this because it will increase the burden on the local microclimate, which is already problematic. 8.39 through 8.43 are inadequately complied with by the proposal since little detail is provided on either mitigation or reasons for the substantial requirements. Offices of this type simply have no need for this kind of industrial construction. Even if they did show such a need and suitable mitigations, which we don't believe they can, the positioning is still inappropriate and creates effects on the immediate residential area.

In short, this is very clearly excessive energy usage for a co-working space therefore does not comply with policy. The design is of a style required to support industrial style server farms and/or building cooling - one

of the most problematic and increasing energy uses at this time. Individual office units can have small, local cooling and improved, more efficient design instead - as happens elsewhere.

In addition, in a discussion with council planners we were told in 2022 that to cool our property we would need to open windows. If this proposal is allowed to go through, we can hardly open our windows to our FIVE rear-facing rooms to cool our property given both the noise and heat coming from the new building right beside (behind) us.

It would make an absolute mockery of planning if this were the case - potentially leading to multiple properties installing air conditioning because there would simply be no choice.

2 - Noise and Vibration - Policy A4

6.87 There is a proliferation of fixed machinery, such as air conditioning units.... Such sources of noise and the character of noise can increase stress levels and cause significant disturbance.

There is recognition of the impact of air conditioning units as a cause of stress and disturbance. Utopia's plans are for an entire cooling building immediately adjacent to multiple long standing residential properties.

6.88 The aim within development proposals should be to design out noise prior to proposing mitigation. The effect of noise and vibration can be minimised by separating uses sensitive to noise and vibration from sources that generate them and by taking other design and operational measures to reduce any impact.

The proposal does not design out noise, it's the construction of an unnecessary building for purely commercial purposes which generates noise. It quite specifically pushes all the noise to the residential area and the mitigations offered have been reviewed by independent assessors as being ill defined and extremely unlikely to work (if not impossible).

If the proposal had truthfully been designed to minimise impact, the build would be more central to Utopia's land and they'd have the option to add regular office space to the area adjacent to residential property. Whether this would comply with policy is still subject to other issues.

6.89 In assessing applications, we will have regard to noise and vibration thresholds, set out in Appendix 3, and other relevant national and regional policy and guidance and British Standards.

We trust that these will be upheld on full consideration that 6A is not a ground floor or garden level property given that the proposal claims noise will be outsourced to the upper levels of properties. We claim as much right to the lowest sound level as lower level properties. The proposal requests otherwise and we do not believe this to confirm to policy.

6.90 The impacts on external amenity spaces such as gardens and balconies will also be considered

We do not believe the impact on gardens or balconies has been considered appropriately given the nature of the local environment and the immediate proximity of the edges of gardens such as 6 Chalcot Road. Utopia continue to mislead garden proximity to their proposal, with gardens coming within 2-3 metres of air inlets.

6.91 Noise generating uses and fixed machinery will likely have a greater impact on amenity when the background noise level is lower or in areas where noise sensitive uses such as residential developments co-exist with other uses. The Council will take into consideration the general character of the noise (whether noise is intermittent, has a distinct screech, bang, hiss) and where appropriate, the cumulative impacts of noise from one or more noise sources and will assess whether tighter noise restrictions, secured by planning condition, should be imposed.

We believe this proposal is in breach of this clause in full. The proposed development is entirely inappropriate for a residential area and will create 24-7 noise of a character that will be severely detrimental to nearby residents, including persistent low frequency noises which are near impossible to sufficiently attenuate given the local conditions.

In addition to the above specific comments, the overall proposal lacks many details, is heavily disputed by an independent noise assessor on numerous counts (details being provided to you by Simon Todd), is occurring in a conservation area without due regard to the environment and local buildings, and continues to avoid addressing the key failures with regard to compliance with local policy.

If such a proposal were approved, it would contravene several local policies, create undue noise, stress, traffic, and microclimate effects, reduce the value of local properties, permanently damage the area, and for absolutely no benefit to the locality except enrichment of the existing owner.

It's quite clear this proposal is completely unsuitable for a residential area and we dispute all of the supposed benefits the proposal claims.

As such, this proposal should be firmly and definitively refused.

Regards

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