

<b>Application No:</b>	<b>Consultees Name:</b>	<b>Received:</b>	<b>Comment:</b>	<b>Response:</b>
2024/0712/P	Christiane Ten-Hoopen	13/05/2024 15:12:10	COMMNT	Dear Miriam Baptist,  On behalf of the BCAAC I have no comments to make on this application.  Christiane Ten-Hoopen

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2024/0712/P	Meta Zimmeck	14/05/2024 19:55:35	OBJ	<p>I have lived in Queen Alexandra Mansions since 1985. I strongly oppose this application on for the reasons set out below.</p> <p>I have read the supporting documentation to this application: Purcell's 'Camden Town Hall – Bidborough Works Fit Out Design Statement', February 2024; and Heritage Potential's 'Planning &amp; Heritage Statement', 2024.</p> <p>1. Planning anomalies/issues</p> <p>The original planning applications for the refurbishment and use of the Camden Town Hall including the Camden Centre (2019/2238/P and 2019/2257/L) permitted the change of use of the Camden Town Hall sui generis as (part) basement, second and third floors to B1 office use and change of use of the Camden Centre sui generis to events use. The Council retained the use of part of the basement and the ground and first floors.</p> <p>A second set of applications (20222/3554/P and 20225038/L made minor adjustments, including inter alia, a change in usage of space G17 on the ground floor from part of the wedding suite to a 'community space'.</p> <p>(a) Basement</p> <p>This application is about the so-called 'Bottaccio demise'.</p> <p>There is an issue about the space in the basement.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Design Statement Section 3.0 'Existing Plans', p20 presents the spaces in colours: with lavender areas labelled 'Camden Centre'; a large blue space (in the middle) labelled 'commercial space'; and green areas (Tonbridge and Judd Streets sides) labelled 'plant areas'. The blue area is ringed with red to indicate that it is within 'the Camden Centre demise'.</li> </ul> <p>However:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ditto Section 4.0 'Proposals', p24, shows most of the space greyed out to indicate 'area not included within application' and the white space ringed with blue is labelled 'part of the 'Bidborough Works Fit Out'. It also now includes a bar/café.</li> </ul> <p>My understanding is that this basement area was not covered by the two sets of planning applications listed above but has been included in this application without change of ownership from LB Camden to Eventhia Ltd and without change of use from 'commercial space' (that is, the advertised space for incubation spaces and offices for local businesses) – to 'event space' as part of the Camden Centre. Certainly when I and my fellow residents of Queen Alexandra Mansions took a tour of the Camden Centre last autumn, Eventhia Ltd had already assumed possession of this space.</p> <p>(b) Use of second and third floors as office space or 'commercial space'.</p> <p>There is a similar problem of definition here as per the Design Statement:</p> <p>Second floor: This shows the entire space as belonging to the 'Bidborough Works Fit Out'. It includes not one</p>

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but two kitchens (2.13 and 2.20). 2.13 is located over the Camden Centre. It seems odd not only to have two kitchens on the same floor but also to have kitchens of similar size on different floors (B.21 and 2.13) connected by dumb waiters (pp22 & 26). Why not rationalise?

Third floor: This shows the entire space as belonging to the 'Bidborough Works Fit Out'. It includes two kitchens (3.11 and 3.13) and 3 bars. It also shows the terraces on the four corners of the building as an integral part of the design (pp23 & 27)

(c) Ultimate purpose: unclear

These views seem to treat the spaces under consideration as part of a single venue/Camden Centre.

- The licensing application currently under consideration (APP/PREMISES-NEW/11990) is for opening for late night refreshment (all days, 23.00-05.00), for recorded music, performance, dance, plays, alcohol, live music and films Monday to Thursday; Friday and Saturday 10.00-midnight; and Sunday 11.00-22.30). Hours of opening = 24 hours. This actually goes beyond (and not in a good way) the previous licensing application for the Camden Centre.
- Design Statement, p4: 'The proposals outlined in this application are to provide the fit out to meet the vision of Il Bottaccio, a company owned by the D'Anna family, the leaseholder for The Camden Center.'
- Ditto, p5: 'The ambition is to create the premier destination for large luxury events in King's Cross through full refurbishment of the Camden Centre.... Events will vary from awards evenings and industry-leading lectures to fashion shows and gala dinners. The events will be split across the ground and first floor with kitchens and associated service spaces located in the basement. The basement, second and third floors will be fit-out as high-end work space with flexibility to host conferences and industry-leading events. Kitchens will be installed to provide staff canteens and events catering opportunities.'
- According to the Heritage Statement (p15): 'Due to commercial requirement to hold functions such as conferences, it is important that the services integrated into the workspaces allow for higher capacities.... The third floor will be re-used as a higher status part of the building, with easy access to roof top external areas.'
- According to 'Il Bottaccio's' website: 'Opening Q3 2023: A stunning 20,00 sqft Venue, with a 13 meters high ceiling Main Hall, vast performance stage, lifts, full AV system, with 9 meters LED screen, live broadcasting studio, large doors for direct car access, a variety of green rooms and breakout spaces and storage areas. (<https://bottaccio.co.uk/london>)'
- According to Emilie Edburg, executive director of Eventhia Ltd, who gave evidence to the licensing hearing for the Camden Centre, 23 November 2023: 'The final initiative will be that of providing specialized university-level short courses in the fields of business and administration – in partnership with the European School of Economics. These courses will be run throughout the year and, as part of the agreement with the Council, will ensure that a 50% scholarship program will be available for all local Camden residents who want to enrol.' [!]
- Eventhia is also planning to turn the office space in question into a members' club (see its registration of

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Town Hall (Members Ltd).

So the proposed use of these spaces is confused and confusing – and commercial office space use seems the least likely of the exciting alternatives on offer. This looks like planning by stealth: yes to office space; oops, it's really for events (fait accompli).

So to give planning permission when important components are not clear or have been fudged is not the right thing to do. I urge you to reject this application and require re-submission to rectify missing or flawed information.

I might add that there is no information about the maximum number of potential users ('higher capacities') for the second and third floor/terraces. Given that the maximum number for the Centre is 1,200, it is vital to know what the additional numbers are likely to be.

## 2. Other issues

### (a) Prevention of noise disturbance

These proposals have the effect of destroying local residents' quiet enjoyment of their homes.

Bidborough Street and the grid that runs from Bidborough Street via Tonbridge Street to Cromer Street and via Hastings Street back into Judd Street are full of dense hard-surfaced housing plus a primary school (which the Council has gone to some expense to turn into a low traffic school street). At present the area is very quiet at night with few pedestrians and little car traffic.

The proposed party use of the Centre and Town Hall will without doubt increase noise levels and echoes at street level from the potentially large number (and, if this application is agreed, an even larger number) of pedestrians 24/7 plus noise escaping from the Centre (we have had assurances about noise containment but no evidence; and there is also no indication in this application about additional sound-proofing for the changed use of the second and third floors). It will also increase traffic around the grid, as we know from previous experience of the Council-run Centre when there were lots of motorcycles and cars circuiting the building, revving and blowing their horns.

These proposals exacerbate the nuisance of high-level noise (plus the loss of privacy of those living in Queen Alexandra Mansions) via use of the terraces, which are, it appears, a major attraction to Eventhia Ltd, and are likely to be involved in the entertainments set out in the licensing application. This is really outrageous and irresponsible and, I believe, it was removed from earlier proposals due to vociferous opposition. We have for years fought to reduce outside noise levels that interfere with work, sleep and even watching television - from football crowds at the local pubs and from (initially) parties on the Standard Hotel's terraces.

So I urge you to refuse any change of use from office use - as is your public commitment and as is normally understood to be quiet working 9-5 without kitchens, bars, music, dancing, etc.

### (b) Prevention of crime and disorder

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This is an inner city neighbourhood with all the benefits and disbenefits of its location. Crime, particularly drug-dealing has been increasing. We have now had a number of incursions of people making an unauthorised entry to the building and using the roof for partying. Bringing a large additional number of party-types (unlike the proposed business people) simply rolls out the welcome mat for badly-behaved people, especially the drug dealers who are cruising the stretch of pavement on the south side of the street by the Town Hall. This proposal - at such a scale and in night-time hours - presents a real threat to those who live here. I have lived here for forty years and for the first time I avoid going out at night. These proposals simply provide the opportunity for the quality of life in our neighbourhood to decline. We cannot rely on complaining after bad things have happened (as seems to be the thrust of the Centre's management proposals - CCTV, taking down complaints, hope). We simply do not want bad things to happen - particularly in order to enable the Council to act like 'entrepreneurs'.

(c) Lack of democratic openness and respect for residents

There have been serious problems with the Council's performance in consultation with local residents and stakeholders – as a symptom of its lack of respect. So far as I know, no efforts were made to alert local residents who might be interested to the licensing applications and now the planning application. Indeed the details for this application were put on the Council's website late, which reduced the window for responding. There have been no notices in the vicinity that changes were happening and inviting a response. I have asked around and few local people and businesses were even aware of these changes but were alarmed when they were informed. This failure was compounded by the Council's gleeful assertions that no one cared because they had not complained. They had not complained because they were not informed.

On these grounds alone - failure properly and meaningfully to consult - I ask you to reject this application.

(d) Conflict of interest

The Council is in the position of profiting in monetary terms from the decisions it makes about itself. It is transferring the use of space which was originally for local businesses and small enterprise startups (a worthwhile social purpose and appropriate for a Labour-controlled council) for a greater monetary return. I have no doubt that providing office space is less lucrative than providing space for a 24-hour party palace with dancing on the roof and drinking almost round the clock. When I and other residents were taking a tour of the Camden Centre back in the autumn we were assured by one of Camden's officers and Ms Edburg that there was no financial benefit to the Council of raising the number of users and going for very late-night opening hours (that is, the Council would not receive more money for more users and late closing). I do not believe this assertion because otherwise there would be no benefit in pursuing such an anti-social policy.

The Council has not made available any information about its rationale for changing the use of the Centre and parts of the Town Hall, the planning status of these changes, or the terms of its commercial agreements with Eventhia and its new subsidiaries (why 3?). Has the Council carried out a fresh tender for the spaces now under consideration and if not, why not? Why has the Council not provided relevant information which would support this change of use and consultees' ability to make informed comments (information on soundproofing; arrangements for 24-hour management of the whole building, etc)? It would seem that the Council has chosen to make money (perhaps, appropriately, in bitcoin) and tear up the provisions of its own guidelines to the detriment of its residents and voters. This really is shameful.

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Again on these grounds alone - failure properly and meaningfully to inform - I ask you to reject this application.

3. In conclusion

These proposals are not fit for purpose. They should be rejected, a proper evidence-based consultation should take place, and then the proposals should be resubmitted with a view to achieving something better than the sum of two poor-quality and incompatible parts.

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