

Objection 1:

| Application No: | Consultees Name: | Received: | Comment: | Response: |
|-----------------|------------------|---------------------|----------|--|
| 2024/1187/P | M Martys | 12/04/2024 15:57:39 | OBJNOT | <p>I am writing to formally object to the proposed installation and operation of an LED screen in the courtyard directly in front of the rear of Matilda Apartments at Central St Giles (CSG). My objection is based on consistent disturbances from noise in previous years whenever the screen was installed and operated, including an instance last year where the screen was activated with sound prior to receiving planning permission. Whilst stating the LED is for advertising purposes, the intention is for it to operate like a television and show news and sports.</p> <p>Despite sound tests conducted by the developers, it is important to note that noise sensitivity can vary significantly among individuals. For instance, although my apartment is on the 14th floor, the topmost level, I am directly above the location of the screen. During summer, when I typically keep my windows open, the noise from the screen, predominantly used for broadcasting sports, is clearly audible. Additionally, noise from spectators in the courtyard, such as cheering, further exacerbates the disturbance. Please note that due to the CSG architecture, an amphitheatre effect is created by the building layout that amplifies all noise.</p> <p>The intrusive noise is particularly problematic as I currently work from home and often participate in sensitive online meetings. In previous years colleagues have remarked on the background noise, mistaking it for a television in my flat showing sport, which not only disrupts my work but also appears unprofessional.</p> <p>In CSG's previous communications with me, they stated that the screen would operate from 8am to 8pm daily, with potential extensions until midnight for special events. However, despite assurances from CSG that the noise levels are minimal and unlikely to be heard within my flat, my experience (and that of other residents) contradict this claim. For example, during a volume test conducted on 16 June 2023 (CSG had built the structure and were testing it whilst their planning application was in process), both myself and other residents continued to hear the screen clearly. CSG has acknowledged that the screen noise will be audible, especially if windows or doors are open.</p> <p>In summary:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. It is unacceptable for residents of Matilda Apartments to endure noise disturbances from 8am to 8pm, and in some instances until midnight, from both the LED screen volume and those people watching it2. The requirement for residents to keep windows closed to avoid noise during the warmest months, is unreasonable and constitutes commercial noise pollution. <p>These points outline the basis of my objection to the installation and use of the LED screen, and I urge for a reconsideration of the planning permission in light of these concerns.</p> |

Response

We strongly believe there were no noise disturbances in previous years of the screen.

The option on the planning website states advertising and this is what we fall under, although we are clear we are showcasing sport, news and adverts between 8am-8pm.

We have taken on board comments from the objecting residents previously and conducted further sound testing within residential flats and this sound report was issued with the planning application. We tested the flats nearest to the screen on the lower levels as these would have the most impact if there were noise issues. From the report it is clear that the screen output has minimal noise when inside the flat with the windows open and with the windows closed it can hardly be heard. There are other outside noise contributors such as buses and building works from other properties that were noted to be louder than the screens output sound. To note the screen is also facing away from the flats, as are the speakers. We feel the noise on the 14th floor would be extremely minimal as we tested closer floors nearest to the screen location and have evidence of this..

When we had the piazza sound test completed last year we had to test the noise in different levels, so at some stages the noise from the speaker test would have been louder than we plan to project at, as this is part of the testing. So, this noise output from these tests would have seemed loud, but for the purposes of the testing, different decimal outputs are required.

Objection 2:

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 12 April 2024 09:18
To: Julian Fulbrook (Councillor); Sue Vincent (Councillor); Awale Olad (Councillor); Tony Young; Planning; residents.committee@hotmail.com
Subject: 2024/1187/P Screen planning permission by Central Saint Giles
Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

[EXTERNAL EMAIL] Beware – This email originated outside Camden Council and may be malicious Please take extra care with any links, attachments, requests to take action or for you to verify your password etc.

Dear all,

I am both shocked and disgusted to read email trails in which local council members and Central Saint Giles continue to justify the construction of a public tv screen in St. Giles Square.

I live on the [REDACTED] floor of Matilda Apartments in an inward facing property. If such a screen is to be built in the proposed location, pedestrians will have full view of the inside of my property. This is a complete invasion of privacy.

As proof, please see the attached image of the right hand corner of my living-room balcony doors, which face out onto the square. The box with the orange, yellow and green stripes in front of my balcony is last year's screen. This photo only shows 50% of the screen and it does not show the seating area arranged by Central Saint Giles that has direct view of my property. Thankfully, the screen was never switched on.

**Response**

We would state that no one can see in from the living room location of where this photo was taken, proof is in the photo above. You can see the top of the screen and then our reception behind. You will also note that it is not 1 metre away, but further than that. The resident also states that it does not show the seating arranged by us, that is because the screen is blocking it out as they are placed in front of this.

I am a [REDACTED] whose privacy is at risk should this screen be built. It is already a daily frustration to have Google office staff peering into our personal lives at home, I do not need the added stress of hundreds of eyes staring at a screen that sits directly in front of my home. I am quite certain you are aware of the safeguarding risks should paedophiles gain knowledge of the screen and use it as an excuse to peer into my home.

There will also be the added noise pollution. It will be summer and I cannot be forced to keep my windows shut to reduce noise for anyone's financial gain. Poor ventilation is already a struggle in the summer without the screen.

The increase in crowds that will attract the wrong personalities is also a concern. There will be individuals drinking, smoking and littering. This is completely unacceptable in a residential area where there are families with young children residing. We already struggle with local restaurants, such as Cabana with their occasional late open nights during which they pump out dance music, encouraging antisocial behaviour from intoxicated guests. And this is with their doors closed shut.

Why has Central Saint Giles not chosen to face the screen the other way around and closer to the end of the square where their offices are located? Could it be because they wish to protect the privacy and safety of their staff?

Instead of abusing the rights to safety of local residents, your planning team should shift focus onto how St. Giles Square can be turned into a more environmentally conscious and sustainable space. The ripple effects of this would be more beneficial with a more sustained period of financial return, encouraging tourists to spend money at the cafes and restaurants on-site. Consider investment into a greener space with proper plants and water features to focus instead on mental health, calm, cleanliness, respect and the environment, in a space that is increasingly attracting drug dealers, users and mobile phone thieves. Central Saint Giles has to keep replacing a single tree in the square that repeatedly dies when it is planted simply because they do not invest in more conscious causes. Shame on them!

The past year that I have spent as a resident of Camden has been an eye-opener. I cannot stress my disappointment as a resident and member of Camden Voices Against Abuse at how out of touch Camden Council and the Labour Party are becoming across the board. If you cannot advocate for your residents, this is something that I will personally make myself responsible for.

Kind regards,

[REDACTED]

Response

Central Saint Giles is a mixed-use development comprising of Offices, Retailers and Residential this is how it has always been since it was built. We do not believe it will increase the number of people looking into flats, the screen is for people to enjoy Sport in the Summer months.

Pedestrians would have view of the flat balconies regardless of a screen in situ or not, see below photo which is evidential to this:



Comments regarding poor ventilation would be down to the managing agents of this block, Clarion Housing and not Central Saint Giles.

The screen is on from 8-8pm and we strongly believe it will not attract an increase in noise, drinking or littering. Again, as you can see the Piazza is clean and tidy, we jetwash the stone quarterly and have a dedicated cleaning team onsite who clean throughout the day and night.

Children with their parents/guardians have enjoyed the Screen in previous years and have been able to play outside on the astro turf we put down. We also have table tennis in which anyone can enjoy, so these comments again one directional.

The screen location document identifies that the screen is best placed where it has been in previous years due to the screen facing away from the flats. Therefore, no light or speakers are facing towards the flats. Our emergency services are required to mount the piazza in an emergency, so we have selected the current location as best suited for vehicular access and safe access.

The Cabana restaurant closes by 11pm the latest and their lease does not permit them to have music outside. If they do play music outside our security team would ask them to stop as we have an onsite presence. If any resident wishes to complain about the retailers should they have concerns, they can ring the security control room number 020 7240 6482 which is manned 24/7 and security would then investigate a complaint.

We have replaced 1 pin oak tree as seen in the above photo (smaller tree), after the previous tree of 12 years had to be removed due to a fungus, Ganoderma. This is the only tree we have ever replaced at Central Saint Giles so the comment here regarding that the tree repeatedly dies is incorrect and a false statement. Central Saint Giles takes sustainability and biodiversity into account, and we also have wild bees and birds on our wildflower green roofs. Our piazza is a clean open space with trees, planters, chairs, and games to play. Rainwater is also collected from the piazza drainage for re use in irrigation. There is no use of harsh chemicals on site due to our irrigation system.

We feel there is a lot of factually wrong comments with the above objection and hope our responses clarifies them all.

We also believe that there has been a number of positive comments from the screen which people have taken time to comment on.