

Application No:	Consultees Name:	Received:	Comment:	Response:
2024/1558/P	Mark and Rosanna Duff	27/07/2024 17:38:03	OBJ	PLANNING APPLICATION 2024/1558P Comments Dated 27 July 2024

Mark and Rosanna Duff  
8 Jeffrey's Street  
NW1 9PR

#### OBJECTION

Please read our submission below in conjunction with our objection to the applicants' previous proposals in their application 2023/5081/P.

We would like to make clear that we have received no formal notice of this application, having only by chance seen the mandatory notice on a lamppost, and been alerted to it by our neighbours. It would be kind if the council's procedures could be amended to ensure that in future all residents directly affected by applications were notified directly of any proposals that might impact on their health and happiness.

This latest proposal is just the latest in a series of developments in Jeffrey's Place that have gradually whittled down our privacy and the enjoyment of living in Jeffrey's Street. Ten years ago, we returned from several years abroad to see the finishing touches being put to a balcony at 15 Jeffrey's Place. From there, to this day, the residents' cigarette smoke wafts down and over us as we sit here on our garden bench - a tiny example of the human impact of planners' decisions taken too often, it would seem, without any consideration for those most directly affected.

It is hard to overstate the impact this new proposal and its predecessors have already had on our sense of wellbeing — the worry, the sleepless nights; the loss of peace of mind about our future in what's been our home for more than 25 years and in which we were hoping to see out the rest of our lives.

That a developer can be so uncaring about the impact of their plans on those who would have to live with the results of their actions should, perhaps — and sadly — not come as a total surprise, but it does challenge one's faith in human nature, let alone the planning process.

At the outset, it's worth stating that if Camden is as serious as it claims to be about combatting threats to privacy in its 2021 Guidance on Amenity, this application should not be allowed to proceed. Simply put, how could it ever pass that test?

In our submission on the applicant's previous proposals, we stated that we felt particularly exposed to any such development. This is because of the large ground floor window which we inherited on moving into our home in 1997, which is unique to Jeffrey's Street, and which already leaves us exposed to the scrutiny of people a few metres away. The plans already approved will make that worse; while those now up for consideration envisage a layout that would be even worse. Their impact would be intrusive, and destructive of our privacy and that of our neighbours.

No effort seems to have been made at the planning stage to mitigate the impact of these proposals on the overlooked properties in Jeffrey's Street. Even allowing for the desire of the developers to maximise the

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ingress of light into the Jeffrey's Place houses, mightn't it have been possible - to cite just one example - to insist on the use of frosted glass rather than clear glass balcony panels, as a tiny gesture towards the privacy of residents in Jeffrey's Street?

Beyond the immediate impact, the longer term effect of these proposals on our wellbeing would be baleful. Approval would clear the way for copycat developments. We are particularly worried about what - given the precedent set - would almost certainly happen one day at 14 Jeffrey's Place, next door to the site of the current plans, and directly behind us. Were that to happen, we would - sitting in our living room or courtyard — be exposed to view like goldfish in a bowl. The residual amenity value — the peace and quiet, again— of our home and garden would be destroyed. This current proposal sets the scene for just such a development.

On top of all this, the proposed development would dramatically exacerbate the problem of noise pollution. Sound bounces off the walls round here at the best of times — from Jeffrey's Street, Jeffrey's Place and Prowse Place. At ground level, some of the noise is muffled by its surroundings — trees, fences and so on. This development — by contrast — would be at the top of the house. We all know the phrase "to shout it from the rooftops": that is precisely what would be the effect of constructing an inset balcony at the top of a house in Jeffrey's Place that is within spitting distance of bedrooms in Jeffrey's Street. Is this fair or equitable — or right?

In conclusion, we would appeal to the council to consider the sensitivity of the unique, dense domestic architectural ecosystem of Jeffrey's Street, Prowse Place and Jeffrey's Place. As you are well aware, the design of the town houses on Jeffrey's Place, when built, reflected a sensitive awareness of the needs not just of their occupants, but of the wider immediate community, most notably the residents of Jeffrey's Street. With this in mind, rooms at the rear of the new houses were designed with high level windows to minimise overlooking and intrusion. The need for privacy has not changed in the 50 years since they were built and remains as relevant as ever, if not — given everything we've since learned about the impact of our lived environment on our mental health — more so.

In addition, the cultural diversity of Camden — itself one of the most wonderful, life-enhancing aspects of living here — demands that enough space is allowed, both physically and metaphorically, for people from all backgrounds and societies to coexist in comfort and peace. As we write, our Japanese neighbours, behind us in Jeffrey's Place, are happily staring down at us as they smoke, from their first floor balcony. I'm sure they mean no harm, but they seem blithely unaware that their stare could be intrusive, unwelcome, unsettling even. If Camden is to remain a vibrant, multicultural melting pot, planners need to play their part in ensuring that its physical fabric — the space and buildings in which we all live - reflect the need for privacy. Approving the current proposals would do quite the opposite.

As the appeals inspector wrote relatively recently, in 2001:

'The rear of the property faces towards the rear of the dwellings in Jeffrey's Street. The distance between these dwellings is limited to about 15 metres. The sensitivity of adjacent dwellings to overlooking was reflected in the original design of dwellings in Jeffrey's Place which had high level windows looking towards Jeffrey's Street.' (Appeal reference: APP/X5210/A/02/1089536)

We are very grateful to councillors Callaghan and Cotton for their kindness in responding to our plea for help

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				in this matter.
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