

17th September 2024

From Maureen Duff to the planning department, Camden Town

Dear Team,

Planning Application 2024/3704/A

I understand that 17th Sept 2024 is the last day that objections can be made regarding the signage for the proposed Leyland store at 147-151 Haverstock Hill, Belsize Park, NW3 4RU.

I would like to add my voice to those who have already objected to the signage for this company. It is utterly garish and totally out of keeping with the other shops in the area. I live in Holmefield Court, Belsize Grove and today I witnessed a team from Leyland standing outside the premises while painters tried various shades of blue paint on the walls of the premises. Having these huge walls painted in bright blue paint will be utterly out of keeping with the rest of the more tasteful shops in Belsize Park.

Blue walls, together with even brighter blue shiny signage will look ridiculous and bring down the tone of the neighbourhood. What Leyland are proposing is more suitable for an industrial estate, not a conservation area. Light pollution is another concern for residents in the proximity of the store.

I am also concerned that there will be an increase in noise pollution with this kind of store. Noisy deliveries, lorries backing up and blocking Belsize Grove will be a problem. And where are customers going to park? By its nature, this kind of commercial shop requires cars and vans to take away goods bought in the store. Apart from residents parking, there are cycle lanes on Haverstock Hill and no commercial parking in the area, especially on Belsize Grove. Where are customers going to park? Where are tradesmen going to park? Did anyone in the planning dept think about this?

We already have a very good family business diy shop in Belsize Hardware. I can only imagine that they will not survive if this national giant opens up. There is already a Leyland Store in Camden Town which is well within the local transport area. The shop and its signage are more suitable to that environment. Why would you even consider allowing another huge DIY shop to open up in a mainly residential conservation area? It is as bad as several other proposals for the site that were refused planning permission. A restaurant and Tesco were refused planning permission, due to potential noise and being out of keeping with the local area. Leyland falls into the category of being just as inappropriate.

I do not remember being asked if the residents in the area had any objections to Leyland opening a shop here. When was that planning permission granted? Was anyone ever publicly consulted about it?

I hope it is not too late to refuse Leyland permission to open up a store at all. If it is too late, then I would like to add my objections to the proposed ludicrous signage. Several years ago in Hampstead, a Macdonald's opened up without its signature yellow signage. Its signage had to match the signage of the surrounding shops. That seemed to work.

From what I saw today, Leyland would like to turn the building blue and have large illuminated brighter blue plastic signs all over the place. For all the reasons above, I hope you will agree that this is not the way forward. Please do not allow this to go ahead. It will be detrimental to the entire area.

Yours sincerely,

Maureen Duff