

## Planning Application - 2023/5323/P

I have been a resident of Bristol House is a mansion block built in the late Victorian era, with 26 flats. The majority of people living in the block are long-term residents, many are families and older people.

As you will know, the current planning application relates to a commercial unit on the ground floor level of Bristol House where for over twenty years, there was a newsagent which was a valued resource for the local community. There are eight commercial units, which over the years have nearly all become food outlets. As a result of these restaurants/fast food a number of issues have been created for those of us living in the building. For example, there are constant food odours which penetrate the common parts and a number of the individual flats; there is often a lot of noise even late into the night and the pavements can become congested with delivery bikes. Very often there are multiple bags refuse on the street containing food waste. These can attract rats and mice and this has been an ongoing issue in the residential part of the building and has become very difficult to control. We have also had issue with blocked drains in the building as a result of restaurateurs disposing of fat-based waste into the sinks and drains.

I am very concerned about the potential impact of this new food outlet on the quiet enjoyment of my family and other residents of Bristol House. It is imperative that, if planning permission is granted for this unit, there be strict enforcement of hours of operation. This applies to both the restaurant opening hours when customers will be served and for any ventilation and air conditioning units, which are likely to cause intrusive noise and odours. Under so circumstances should these systems operate overnight and all equipment must be turned off by 11 pm remain off until 9 am. There must also be a guarantee that noise levels must stay below current background noise levels at the rear of the building where there are proposed heat pumps and extractors. These are very close to certain flats and, being in the lightwell, the noise from them is likely to be transmitted upwards. It should be noted that there is one flat in the basement (Flat 1) which is not acknowledged in the submitted plans which is approximately 1.5m meters from the proposed heat pumps. The noise measurements in the supporting documentation were taken from 5m which makes them inaccurate in terms of the noise impact on Flat 1.

I am also concerned about the flue which is to discharge 1.2 meters above the above the roof of the building. The flue would require a license from Bristol House Ltd (of whom I am a director, and permission has not been sought for this). The flue would be placed directly outside the windows of a number of residents which is likely to impact them with fumes and odours. The proposed ventilation system emits fumes at ground level, which is unacceptable. I am concerned that the Odour Assessment which is contained in the application states that only soups and prepared dishes will be reheated in the new restaurant. One of my colleagues has been through this and has formed the opinion that the assessment in the application may be unreliable. The original DEFRA/EMAQ+ risk assessment approach still quotes the situation as being high risk. Bristol House is already dealing with ongoing odour issues relating to cooking fumes from the Holborn Hub in another of the ground floor units. These odours fill the common parts of the building and are creating significant problems for residents and also clients of the Bloomsbury Alexander Centre and Bloomsbury Therapy Centre.

In this regard, it is imperative that, if there is a change in practice from just heating up soups and pre-prepared dishes and they actually start cooking (which seems fairly likely in a restaurant), the proprietors must be compelled to seek further consent. If this current application is successful, any conditions attached should state that grilling, frying, or any other cooking methods which are not simply re-heating pre-prepared food is strictly prohibited, and that all windows must remain closed with no alternative ventilation systems operating.

Finally, I bring your attention to the fact that building works have been taking place in this unit for several weeks, even though planning consent has not been given. I live directly above and there is loud noise relating to the building works every weekday and Saturday mornings. I am anxious that they may actually complete their proposed works before planning consent is granted which might make it extremely difficult for the Local Authority to object.

**Dr Jonathan Sheldon**