

(*Planning Comments - 01.06.2009*)
Steve Taylor

From: Christoforou, Katrina [Katrina.Christoforou@camden.gov.uk]
Sent: 01 June 2009 18:47
To: Steve Taylor
Subject: 1-8 College Yard- 2009/1329/P

Dear Stephen,

Thank you for the additional drawings that you have submitted. I have prepared some feedback for you below.

Firstly, the application has come a long way from the submission last year. The relationship with properties along Evangelist Road and Lady Somerset Road is greatly improved, as is the solution put forward to allow a degree of natural lighting to the proposed office space.

The mix of units now proposed is considered to be in principle compliant with UDP policy H8 (mix of units), the unit sizes are considered to be compliant with supplementary guidance and the internal arrangement of the residential accommodation has been revised accordingly.

Also, the evidence provided to support the loss of the B8 floor space places the application more favourably within the requirements of policy E2 (retention of existing business uses).

We had previously discussed the arrangement along the elevation with College Lane and again this relationship has been significantly improved. However, I still have serious concerns about the relationship between the properties across the Lane and have studied this in some detail on site with the help of your additional elevation and section drawings which were very helpful. All but one of the residential windows opposite to the south part of the lane are obscure glazed; these windows should not be significantly affected in terms of light or privacy. From what I can decipher the proposed balcony to flat 7 and windows to either side would not face directly onto any residential windows opposite.

It is impossible to see the relationship with the second floor of the buildings opposite from street level but it would appear from the section you have provided that this tier is recessed significantly (approx 10m from the newly proposed side wall at 1-8). Elevation 5 shows windows and a door at this level, possibly to an external amenity space. My concern is that the proposed window and balcony to flat 6 and the bedroom window of flat 2 would result in a loss of privacy and overlooking to the neighbours opposite contrary to policy SD6. The bedroom window to flat 2 appears to directly overlook the window opposite (i.e. the window above the door) which is not obscure glazed. I am also concerned that light and outlook to the first floor (clear) windows opposite (3 which appear to be at 64 Highgate Road immediately opposite and one at number 60 which would not directly face the building) would be seriously affected in terms of light and outlook by the increase in the height of the building. Basic tests show that light could well be affected and a full daylight study would be required but with the outlook and privacy issues to consider it would appear that a re-design would be required.

I also have concerns about the quality of the flats themselves. Outlook and light from/to the living space of flats 1 and 5 will be very limited. Flats 2 and three would only have aspect onto college lane again with limited outlook and opportunities for natural lighting. These flats would therefore be of low residential quality and are unlikely to be considered to comply with policies SD6 and H1.

As the application stands it would have to be recommended for refusal. I would therefore recommend that it is withdrawn. The application expires this Wednesday so I would need written confirmation that you would like to withdraw the application by the end of the day tomorrow (5pm 02/06/09) otherwise the application will be refused. It is an unfortunate situation, you have put great effort into attempting to design out the issues but each alternative brings up its own set of problems. The site is so constrained it may be that achieving this density and mix of uses is not achievable in this location.

Two further issues that will certainly need attention are the ability to carry out the works given the limited accessibility of the site. I noted that there is a lamp post, the primary access point to a number of the hostel rooms at 3-6 Highgate Road and a secondary access to the clinic at number 60 all on the access slip road of the yard, plus access to the car parking of the hostel and to the garage at number 1a. I am still awaiting full comments from the transport officer who will advise further in this matter and I will pass the information on as soon as I have it along with any other matters.

As above, there does not appear to be a simple solution to the issues raised and I would recommend that the application is withdrawn. I cannot envisage a solution without a more dramatic re-think of the scheme but I would be happy to discuss this with you (and your client). If you think a meeting would be helpful this could also be arranged.

I appreciate this is not the outcome you were seeking but please let me know how you would like me to proceed by the end of the day tomorrow.

Kind regards,

Katrina Christoforou
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