

Mr Mahel Shah
Unit 11 New College Parade
London
NW3 5EP

London Borough of Camden
Town Hall
Judd Street
London
WC1H 8ND

February 10, 2014

Dear Mr Mehta

RE: Planning Application 2013/8191/P: 9-12 New College Parade, Finchley Road, NW3 5EX.

I have examined the plans and I know the site well. I wish to object strongly to the development of in this location. We wish to make you aware of a number of strong objections that we have with regard to the proposed erection of the five storey building application number referenced above. As a party directly affected by proposed development, we are of the view that the proposed development will have a serious impact on our business and the local community. Our specific objections are as follows:

1. Detrimental impact upon residential amenities

We believe that the proposed works will harm the character and appearance of an area and the amenities enjoyed by local residents. The proposals do not take into account the form, size and character of adjoining development and do not complement and respect the context, street pattern and amenity of neighbouring developments.

The properties along Finchley Road are typically characterised by two storey commercial buildings. The proposed building combines residential and commercial use and is elevated to five stories. The proposed development, by reason of its height, bulk, mass and detailed design, would be an incongruous and dominant addition within the street scene, to the detriment of the character and appearance of the site and the area.

Alterations to the front facade, would result in a building of reduced architectural quality such that it would fail to positively preserve and enhance the character and appearance of the street scene. The development directly contravenes guidelines 24.7, 24.12 and 24.13 provided in the Camden development Policies 2010-2025 document:

24.7 Development should consider:

- the character and constraints of its site;
- the prevailing pattern, density and scale of surrounding development;
- the impact on existing rhythms, symmetries and uniformities in the townscape;
- the compatibility of materials, their quality, texture, tone and colour;
- the composition of elevations;
- the suitability of the proposed design to its intended use;
- its contribution to public realm, and its impact on views and vistas; and
- the wider historic environment and buildings, spaces and features of local historic value.

24.12 In order to best preserve and enhance the positive elements of local character within the borough, we need to recognise and understand the factors that create it. Designs for new buildings, and alterations and extensions, should respect the character and appearance of the local area and neighbouring buildings. Within areas of distinctive character, development should reinforce those elements which create the character. Where townscape is particularly uniform attention should be paid to responding closely to the prevailing scale, form and proportions and materials. In areas of low quality or where no pattern prevails, development should improve the quality of an area and give a stronger identity.

24.13 Development should not undermine any existing uniformity of a street or ignore patterns or groupings of buildings. Overly large extensions can disfigure a building and upset its proportions. Extensions should therefore be subordinate to the original building in terms of scale and situation unless, exceptionally, it is demonstrated that this is not appropriate given the specific circumstances of the building. Past alterations or extensions to surrounding properties should not necessarily be regarded as a precedent for subsequent proposals for alterations and extensions.

The proposal would also demonstrably harm the local family run businesses that currently occupy the buildings and are enjoyed by local residents. The current businesses have been there for over 25 years and have become a strong part of the local community.

2. Need to avoid town cramming

The proposed development would significantly alter the fabric of the area and amount to serious 'cramming'. The building is situated on an extremely busy road (red route) with high vehicle and pedestrian traffic. Completely demolishing the building would have severe consequences to pedestrian safety and to traffic. The development will also add to additional parking stress causing even more congestion to the surrounding area.

As the construction would take place along a marked red route section of the area, construction vehicle movements would have significant impact on the signalised junction adjacent to the site, and would be likely to contribute to the traffic disruption (including public transport disruptions) and dangerous situations for pedestrians and other road users.

3. Car parking provisions

The development has been put forward as providing lifetime homes. However, there does not seem to be any provision of car parking space for those that may be disabled. Again, the relevant guideline is provided below.

Car parking for affordable housing

- 3.31 Many of those in need of affordable housing, particularly existing social housing tenants, already own a car. In some cases, affordable housing residents may need a car in association with their job. So that new affordable housing is able to meet the housing needs of such residents, it will sometimes be appropriate to provide parking spaces for residents of affordable homes. Where development involves market housing in conjunction with social and/or intermediate affordable housing, the Council will seek a proportion of any off-street car-parking spaces for households occupying each housing type. In negotiating the proportion of car-parking spaces for occupiers of social rented and intermediate affordable housing, the Council will have regard to:
- the needs of any disabled people likely to occupy the housing;
 - the prevailing level of car ownership for each housing type;
 - the impact of the car parking spaces on the economics and financial viability of the development and the affordable housing; and
 - the practicalities of allocating a limited number of parking spaces to occupiers of affordable housing.

4. Affordable housing

The guidelines state that the Council considers developments with a capacity of 10 or more dwellings to contribute to affordable housing in Camden. The current proposal makes a provision of 9 residential units, which would not be in line with the Council's housing requirements for the borough.

- 3.7 The Council considers that all developments with capacity for 10 or more additional dwellings should contribute to affordable housing in Camden. This is consistent with the site capacity threshold proposed by the London Plan, but supplements this with explicit exclusion of any homes that already exist on the development site. We acknowledge that this threshold should be applied sensitively to avoid deterring development that exceeds the threshold and reducing the overall supply of housing.

Yours Sincerely

Mr Mahel Shah