



5 November 2013

Camden Councillor Phil Jones
Cabinet Member for Sustainability, Transport and Planning
Member Support, Town Hall
Judd Street, London WC1H 9JE

Dear Councillor Jones,

I am very worried about the fate of my community, Primrose Hill NW1. We are facing the loss of Utopia Village and Tryoga through the relaxation of planning policy. The complications and changes of the planning processes have left me and my neighbours feeling bewildered, while the developers are moving fast. However, we refuse to sit idly by and watch the developers eat away at the local democratic process, our area and livelihoods.

Under "The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (Amendment) (England) Order 2013" there is no longer a need to obtain prior planning approval of which public consultation was a part, now just a pared down 'Class J' application is submitted for change of use and objections from the public are only allowed on the grounds of: transport and highways impacts of the development, contamination risks on the site; and flooding risks on the site. This is outrageous, as these are not the reasons we are against this change of use and we are therefore unable to object on grounds of humanity.

Islington has approved an *Article 4 Direction*, which withdraws the new permitted development right from the whole Borough. But unfortunately it will be too late for many businesses as they have to wait one year before it applies so that the council will not be vulnerable to compensation claims from developers.

Richard Simpson, who chairs the Primrose Hill Conservation Area Advisory Committee, is using the Islington example to ask Camden to agree a similar Article 4 Direction for Primrose Hill, but the danger is that it may come into effect too late to prevent irreversible harm to the area, the destruction of both its economy and its historic character.

Please help us keep our village out of the hands of developers who will strangle local businesses and cause the inexorable decay and death of Primrose Hill.





I AM ASKING FOR IMMEDIATE ARTICLE 4 EXEMPTION FOR THIS APPLICATION AND LEGISLATION.

Dear Mr Jones,

Two years ago Wagstaffs Design moved its business to Utopia Village in Primrose Hill and currently employ 18 people. We are now presented with the prospect of being forced to move out of the area as a result of a planning application for the change of use (ClassB1(a)) to residential (Class C3). This would have a massive, negative impact on not only our company but many others within Utopia Village, the vast majority of whom oppose this application.

Utopia is currently and has been for many decades, a thriving office development. Should these plans go ahead they could potentially result in the loss of jobs within Utopia Village and will also

be hugely detrimental to local businesses and facilities, some of which have opened to support such an economy and could face closure as a result. This will in turn be a loss for existing local residents

The redevelopment comprises 53 flats. However there is provision for only 11 parking spaces. The new residents will have no choice other than to park in nearby streets where finding a parking space is already a challenge at the best of times. Currently, the majority of employees at Utopia Village commute to Primrose Hill from out of the area by public transport. For the few that do use cars there is a small provision within the site, and these are for use mostly during the day, with therefore little or no effect on parking in local streets. This will be quite the opposite were these plans to go ahead and will have a serious impact and put additional pressure on the Controlled Parking Zone.

Primrose Hill has a unique and rich character and integral to this is the diversity of

uses. This is not the only proposal for similar "change of use" development locally and these applications have the potential to change the very essence of the area and its community.

Surely this change of planning policy was intended for the redevelopment of redundant or under utilised office space not to force successful businesses to have to relocate?

Along with many others, I fail to see the logic of destroying local jobs and the potential damage to the businesses within the the complex.

If new homes are required, then why aren't empty buildings being renovated?

I would appreciate hearing from you as to why you would consider this plan a positive one for our neighbourhood and especially the hardworking people trying to make a decent living, within Utopia Village. I can only see it being extremely profitable for the Landlord but would be interested to hear your comments.

