

Dear Ms Quigley

Re: Use of premises at 147 Kentish Town Road NW1

I understand there is a campaign by some local residents to try and deter Camden from permitting the change of use of the above premises from an alcohol / entertainments venue - ie pub / club.

I would like to appeal to you in the strongest possible terms to allow the use of premises and conversion of the building in accordance with Ringley's estate agents proposal. I am in no way connected to Ringley's, I am a local resident who fought hard to seek Camden Licensing to enforce action against the operation of a nightclub at the premises - at that time known over several years as Verge / Flowerpot / Bullet then finally Heroes. The premises was under leasehold to a Mr Vahik Mansourian (nicknamed Toby) by the freeholder who also owns The Grafton pub in the area.

During the time that nightclub was operating it was found to be out of licence, infested with both German & Asian cockroaches, in breach of noise regulations, breaching the opening hours, and found to have incredibly high levels of cocaine readings in the toilets and around premises, it was squalid and filthy and the source of endless environmental problems. There were numerous persons randomly 'managing' and working at the premises and living informally in the rooms above. The problems of the prior nightclub and of Mr Mansourian and his track record (also at pub / club 3one7 Finchley Rd) are well documented and rightfully the Licences on the premises were unanimously revoked by those in attendance at Camden Council's Licence Hearing and the Highbury Magistrates Courts Appeal Hearing. Prior to the nightclub and leasehold to Mr Mansourian, I am informed by numerous local residents the pub known as The Castle was a shoddy, down at heel dive which despite only being open during the 'old fashioned' opening hours, ie to 11pm, and not being a music venue, was frequently the source of nuisance to local residents and there were often acts of extreme violence perpetrated by frankly undesirable drunks with bottles and glasses often smashes all over the street.

I witnessed first hand the horrors of the nightclub when I first moved into Flat 15 / 244 Royal College Street NW1 9QP in September 2009 - directly opposite. The noise and behaviour of patrons and staff from the premises was intolerable. I spent considerable time and effort gaining support and witness statements from local residents in order to try and curb the noise pollution which was occurring until often 5am several nights per week. I was thwarted at every possible turn by Camden Environmental Health officers Lee Perella and Anita Kidby whom I consider to be frankly corrupt or lazy and dishonest. As I understand the numerous witness statements I gathered and countless hours of video footage and photographs were eventually not included as evidence for the court hearing by Sandra Brown of Camden Council despite the fact that myself and other local residents had put so much time and effort into putting a strong case of evidence. All of my actions were witnessed and documented by Camden Licensing Officers and specifically Toby Daynes.

Following the revocation of the licences, the premises shut down and Mr Mansourian 'fled' as indeed he had done before at 3one7 on Finchley Rd. The freeholders who already run The Grafton are not and were not interested in using the premises as a pub / club and neither were any other parties. Specifically approached by the freeholders as I understand were the proprietors of Annies on Kentish Town Rd, the Abbey on Kentish Town Rd, the Union on Camden Rd, and the nearby Tapping the Admiral. No parties have seen fit to show an interest in the premises for use as a restaurant / pub / club - I think that just about speaks for itself that even the freeholders who run their own pub are disinterested. Meantime due to the current economy, what were 'successful' entertainments venues are now closing down hand over fist. Therefore, for Ringley's to show interest in this shabby, unkempt, infested, disused, near-derelict building is surely a fantastic opportunity for the freeholder, for local residents, for Camden Council who collect the taxes, and for local employment levels.

When I was leafletting in the local area to try and garner support for action against the nightclub, I posted approx 600 leaflets to the following areas: Royal College St (north of Camden Rd), Kentish Town Rd, Castle Rd, Castlehaven Rd, Rochester Rd, Rochester Place and the whole nearby vicinity. Of the hundreds of flyers I put out I received overwhelming support by way of people who lived in the area ringing me and emailing me,

many of whom didn't want to make formal complaints due to fear but were being driven literally insane and suffering ill health as a result of the degradation of the whole area by drunks, drug users, drug dealers, and the noise from the premises. All of that has now ceased. When I walk down the street, people stop me and thank me for prompting the action against the premises and the resulting peace and quiet. I never had one single negative report. I understand that Camden Licensing had ONE single submission in support of the Licence and this transpired to be from a person I had spoken to who was aggrieved that Camden would not act against a gospel choir singing in their Tenant's Hall on Sundays - so effectively they weren't in support of the licence they were inappropriately aggrieved that Camden were paying attention to one issue and not another.

I did two further rounds of flyers prior to the Licensing Committee meeting and again not one single person put in a representation of support.

Then, the Kentish Towner newspaper / website and the CNJ both did some heavily biased reportage a few months ago about the proposed change of use of the premises and the fact that Ringleys wished to reconstruct the building to a new look. This press and publicity is the sole and only reason people are campaigning for the premises to stay as a pub / club and for the building not to be altered. I mean let's face it, nobody likes estate agents. However, these now campaigning people did not once step forward when there were appeals for submissions to the Licensing Committee. The people who are arguing for a 'community pub' have clearly never stepped foot in the premises in the entire time it was actually a pub / club over the last 20 years otherwise they would have been rightfully horrified at the use of the premises - it was never a 'community venue' - it was a ramshackle hellhole. This fact can be validated by the local police forces of Camden Town & Primrose Hill, Cantelowes, and Kentish Town - all whose areas meet at the junction of the road plus every authority ever involved with the place.

Not one single investor has shown interest in this premises. It is not and never was a 'Listed Building'. The use of premises was revoked by all parties legitimately concerned. The freeholder has not been able to do anything with the plot and has allowed the actual building itself to fall into a terrible state of disrepair which frankly nothing short of knocking the place down and rebuilding will resolve. Local residents who actually live next to the premises on nearby streets are all unanimously in favour of Ringleys' proposals and yet now this whole thing has been hijacked by local press and 'do-gooders' who don't live adjacent and know nothing of the history, never stepped foot in the building, and are swayed by a couple of critical news reports.

If any area in the region of Camden Town / Kentish Town URGENTLY warrants regeneration and complete alteration to the existing structure then it is 147 Kentish Town Rd. It is never ever going to be 'restored' by an historian to some ye olde worlde venue and a local pub for local residents, it is not financially viable. If the proposals by Ringleys are blocked, as far as I can see this premises will continue to fall into wrack and ruin for decades to come, will stand empty at risk of squatters, will fail to earn revenue or provide jobs in the community and will be a blot on the landscape (which it already is).

If the property was of such value to the community and as an historic building then a) why was it never listed?; b) why did no-one defend the prior Licences - not even the freeholder?; c) how come scores of people submitted signatures of petition and witness statements against the Licences; d) how come no-one bothered to even notice the building until the CNJ and Kentish Towner ran extremely prejudiced and biased reports, not one single person spoke in support.

It is of note the immediate adjacent premises to 147 are a 'sauna' ie brothel, a CashConverter ie money laundering for junkies, and a Somali internet cafe which is never in use and in my suspicion sells khat. Hardly a great local community area? It will be decades to come before someone would want to open another pub in that location. There are numerous already successful beautiful pubs and clubs in Camden that are closing down hand over fist and there are plenty on Kentish Town Rd. I doubt even a place like McDonalds or Starbucks would want the building.

As a local resident who was forced to move home due to the sheer volume of nuisances from 147 Kentish Town Rd, I would like to **STRONGLY SUPPORT** the proposals by Ringleys and I will be prepared to give whatever personal statements and information you could possibly request. I now live down the road on a quiet street, Rochester Road, but it is still only very close to the venue and therefore I am still a local resident and I would still be affected by whatever happens at the premises.

I please appeal to you not to stand in the way of the proposed regeneration of that plot of land - it is vital it goes ahead it is nothing but a derelict wasteland and frankly shameful for anywhere in Central London to look like that.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if there is any information I can provide.

Yours sincerely

