

Gillian Tindall

27 Leighton Road
London NW5 2QG

Jennifer Walsh
Planning dept.
London Borough of Camden
Town Hall, Judd Street
WC1H 8ND

20 Sept 2014

Your Application ref. 2014/5900/P

Dear Ms. Walsh,

The Castle, 47 Kentish Town Road NW1 8PB

You have invited me to comment on a current application for the demolition of this building, retaining only the façade, and the erection of a four storey building plus basement behind façade. As I am sure you and your colleagues are aware, this application is only the latest manoeuvre by the owners and would-be developers (Messrs. Ringley, estate agents) in a long-running saga.

In May 2013 the owners attempted to have this locally-listed Victorian public house pulled down rapidly, without reference to the Council or any warning, no doubt in the hope that they would achieve demolition before any preventative action could be taken. In the event, they were foiled in this by concerted action on the part of local residents, councillors and Council officers, although the building was badly damaged and left exposed to the elements. It took repeated efforts on the part of the Enforcement officer to ensure that the building was given some sort of protection.

The precise details of what followed I do not think I need lay out here, but the net result has been that the owners are now subject to *two* judgements on the part of two separate inspectors from the National Inspectorate in Bristol, one resulting from the owners' appeal against the enforcement notice and the other resulting from a subsequent appeal of theirs against Camden's supposed failure to determine an interim planning application that they had put in. Both judgements were that this mutilated building must be restored to its original architectural state (complete with windows surrounds, cornices etc.) The latest compliance date given was the end of this current month – some sixteen months after the attempted demolition.

Not only has there been no discernible attempt on the part of the owners to comply with this double judgement, but apparent further time-wasting devices have been employed. In this summer of 2014 local residents of Kentish Town were invited to several different occasions on which supposed plans for restoring the building and adding a new addition behind it were discussed – plans that might indeed, with suitable modification, have proved acceptable to the community. However, now, at the last possible moment before the due-date of their legal obligation to restore, we are confronted with a new and totally unacceptable alternative which flagrantly ignores the Inspectorate's judgements. For this reason above all, I trust that this last-minute application will be swiftly rejected.

Quite apart from the essential undesirability of their schemes, it has become clear that the owners are so lacking in honesty, and in respect for the law, the Council and for local opinion, that no reliance can be placed on any assertion they may make, and that they are unfit persons to undertake development on this significant site.

Yours sincerely,

Gillian Tindall