

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 16 May 2013 08:23  
**To:** Planning  
**Subject:** (Objection) FW: Re 2013/1598/P & 2013/1787/C  
**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
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 to be processed.

**From:** Mariam Motamedi - Fraser [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 15 May 2013 23:36  
**To:** McEllistrum, Richard  
**Cc:** nicky@nickycotes.com; michael.parker@ethox.ox.ac.uk; Winston Sela; Mariam Motamedi - Fraser  
**Subject:** Re 2013/1598/P & 2013/1787/C

Dear Richard McEllistrum

As long term local residents (one of us since 1996), we would like to register our objection to the Cartwright Gardens redevelopment proposals.

We are deeply concerned about the impact of this scheme with regards, in particular, to the following six issues:

- 1. The character of the neighbourhood.** The essential character of this area has remained constant, despite mostly welcome changes to it, over the last ten to fifteen years (at least). It retains a local, village-like quality which is increasingly rare and increasingly prized in London. This 'feeling of Bloomsbury' means that people in the area know each other, speak to each other, and look out for one another. There is an atmosphere of community here which is priceless, beyond economic value, and which would be threatened by a mostly young, temporary, mobile population of students who will undoubtedly have different priorities with regards to the area in which they will spend only a brief period.
- 2. Conservation.** The proposed development lies within the Bloomsbury Conservation Area. This is one of London's distinct heritage quarters. As such, this area is unique. We believe that Camden's Local Development Framework: Development Policy 25: Conserving Camden's Heritage actively **DISALLOWS** any development that does not 'preserve and enhance' the character and appearance of the area or that causes 'harm to the setting of a listed building' as would happen, for example, if a neighbouring development was not in harmony or sympathy with its surroundings. No one could seriously believe that a nine storey 'solid block' along the eastern side of Cartwright Gardens will be in harmonious sympathy with the Georgian Crescent opposite it, or with the other 19th century houses nearby. Indeed, the proposed design is 5 storeys higher than the Georgian Crescent opposite. We believe that the design of the Cartwright Garden redevelopment proposals - which is large, unwieldy, institutional and alienating - will overwhelm the low rise buildings on Sandwith and Leigh Streets and that it certainly does not enhance the conservation area to an 'appreciably greater' extent. On the contrary, the inconsistency and discrepancy of this development will be striking.

For all these reasons, we believe that the proposals do not comply with Camden's Local Development Framework (DP 25) requirements and cannot therefore be accepted.

- 3. Due process.** We do not believe that due process has been followed with regards to the English Heritage's support for these proposals. We are concerned that 23 of the 54 Associate Fellows of the University of London's Institute of Historical Research list a connection with English Heritage. Of particular note is Dr. Edward Impey, who is English Heritage's Director of Heritage Protection and Planning and regularly attends London Advisory Committee meetings.

- 4. Residential rather than institutional.** While it is true that the University of London has a large number of institutional buildings in the wider Bloomsbury area, we strongly object to the claim that the area affected by the proposed development is likewise institutional. It is not. Historically, and today, this area is characterised by small shops, whose owners live above them, and local residents. The University is riding roughshod over the intrinsic character of the area. This residential/local character has been cultivated for centuries. Today it is felt in the rich grain and texture of

urban life in this part of Bloomsbury.

5. **No public benefit.** The proposals benefit the University and its investment partner UPP. It is unclear how the proposals benefit the local area however. There will be more noise. There will be the invasive behaviour of students who are experiencing life away from home - often for the first time. The light available to Cartwright Gardens will be diminished by a large building. The two tennis courts, where any member of the community is allowed to play tennis, will be removed. This is especially problematic in view of the lack of sports facilities in the area.

6. **Grounds for legitimacy.** Given that there is very little public benefit to be gained from the proposed development, it is difficult if not impossible to justify the destruction of Canterbury Hall, which is only legitimised - according to Camden's Development Policy 25(a) - in the light of public benefit. Both the public and the conservation area, however, is enhanced by the existence of Canterbury Hall: by its art deco facade, upper brickwork, stone rusticated base and ground floor render. How can the destruction of Canterbury Hall be justified in the light of the proposed decision to retain the 14 storey 1960s tower block?

We are deeply sympathetic to the plight of Universities in the light of the draconian changes and savage cuts to higher education in the UK in recent years. Nevertheless, the financial incentive to the university - represented by an increase in student accommodation by 18% - should not be gained at the expense of the erosion of all that is special about this part of Bloomsbury. This serves only to concede to the plight of not just the public sector but of public, civil and urban life in the UK today. It is to pile further unhappiness upon unhappiness.

**In conclusion**, we strongly urge Camden Council's Planning Dept to refuse the University's application for consent to demolish Canterbury Hall and replace it and other demolished buildings with an 'institutional' building of such height and bulk that is inconsistent with the Camden's own policy on Conservation Areas and which devalues - in all different kinds of ways - the unique experience that local residents and visitors have the privilege to enjoy in this precious part of London.

Yours sincerely

Dr. Mariam Motamedi Fraser  
Professor Michael Parker  
Mr. Winston Sela  
Ms. Michaela Vetterman  
Ms. Nicola Coates

All correspondence to:  
Mariam Motamedi Fraser

