



Planning Department
Carnden Council
Town Hall Extension
Argyle Street
London WC1H 8EQ

Attention: Richard McEllistrum

Dear Mr McEllistrum,

Ref: Planning Application No. 2013/1598/P (Planning)

University of London: **Garden Halls**

We are long-term residents of Sandwich Street, having purchased our house in 1994, and we are extremely concerned about the impact of the proposed development of student accommodation at Garden Halls/Cartwright Gardens.

Sandwich Street has particular character as a quiet 'backwater', neighbourly street. It is very different to the busy city thoroughfares of Euston Road, Judd Street, Tavistock Place and the eastern side of Cartwright Gardens. We ask the Planning Office to ensure that Sandwich Street is protected from all forms of interference which detract from its present peaceful, residential character.

Our particular concerns with the proposed development are as follows:

1. Entrances/exits

- a. One of the particular features of Sandwich Street is that it only has access points to the properties on the eastern side of the street. This is a critical factor in the peaceful ambience of the street.

- b. *Number of access points:* The proposed plan radically increases the number of access points onto Sandwich Street (from one fire exit to at least 13 potential entrances/exits). This will inevitably result in more pedestrian traffic/gathering, noise and litter within the immediate vicinity. We object to any new access points onto Sandwich Street.
- c. *Access points to the new terraced houses:* As we understand it from the plans, these new access points will be open at all hours and therefore potentially give rise to late-night noise with the student population going to and fro into the early morning. At an earlier stage of the proposals the University itself suggested that they would ensure that these access points to the new terraced houses would be closed at 11pm. This suggestion directly recognised the concerns that we are expressing. It is not clear whether this is still envisaged. In any event, such a measure would present other difficulties, namely the use of the access points after 11pm by local youth and drug-dealers.
- d. *Access points to the central block:* In addition to the entrances to the new terraced houses, the plans show three additional access points to the central block on Sandwich Street. One of them appears to be simply a doorway to an electricity station (we have no objection to this provided that it is adequately fenced off). There are however two other access points (one of which is immediately opposite our house) whose function is unclear. At present, there is only one exit for use only in the event of a fire (which is adequately fenced off). We have no objection to similar fire exits (ie. 2) in relation to the new development. We do however object if the purpose of the proposed access points go beyond that.
- e. *Loitering at proposed access points:* At present, there is a regular problem, particularly in the summer, with large groups of (mainly) young men and drug-dealers loitering outside the car-park exit at the rear of Commonwealth Hall. The Council are invited to contact the Neighbourhood Police team to confirm this. To date, the Neighbourhood Police team have been unsuccessful in moving them away. As parents of three young girls, we are particularly concerned not to exacerbate this problem by the introduction of a range of new access points as presently proposed.

2. Light and space

- a. As can be seen from the various photographs of Sandwich Street on the plans, it is a pleasant, light-filled and open street.
- b. The proposed plan will radically alter the feel and space of the street in many respects.
- c. *Lightwells*: It is not clear from the plans whether the existing lightwells will remain at their full width. During the public presentation of the plans, the University were unable to guarantee that there would be no extension of the present footprint of the three Halls into the lightwell zone. We think any encroachment will be seriously detrimental to the feel of the street: it will make the environment more claustrophobic.
- d. *Impact of the height of the new building on Sandwich Street*: It appears that the whole frontage onto Sandwich Street will be significantly higher than at present. This will inevitably reduce the light available to the lower floors of all the properties on the eastern side of Sandwich Street. We urge the Council not to accept the light reports produced by the developers. These are not independently verified and we assume that the Council would want to obtain its own expert advice on this particular matter. It goes without saying that if the footprint of the new building encroaches as described in (c) above, this also will have the effect of reducing the light on the eastern side at low levels.

3. Trees

- a. The trees on Sandwich Street are well-established, thrive in the summer, and lend a soft, natural character to the street in keeping with the Bloomsbury Conservation Area.
- b. It is imperative that these trees are preserved throughout the works and once the development is complete.

4. Noise

- a. This development is likely to last for a significant period of time and impact greatly up on the presently quiet nature of the street, particularly during the day.
- b. It is imperative that such noise as there will be is confined to working hours only, Monday to Friday.

5. Other responses

- a. We have read the other representations posted online as part of the planning application and agree and adopt them, in particular the detailed points made

in the letter from the Sandwich House residents (Jennifer Gould/ 28 April 2013).

We are submitting our objections online at the address we have been provided with by Jess Barratt but will also send this letter separately by email and by post. Please confirm safe receipt.

Yours sincerely,

Desmond and Jane Kilcoyne