

Dike, Darlene

From: McClue, Jonathan
Sent: 10 October 2014 16:02
To: Planning
Subject: FW: proposed expansion of Heathside Nursery School. Ref: 2014/5352/P Objection

From: Dame Hilary Blume [REDACTED]
Sent: 08 October 2014 16:00
To: Caswill, Vivienne
Subject: proposed expansion of Heathside Nursery School.

Please could you ensure that this gets through to the Planning Dept. Sorry to use you as a forwarding service, but as you know I seem unable to contact them directly.
Dame Hilary Blume

MANSFIELD PLACE RESIDENTS OBJECTIONS

There are several weaknesses in the application itself.(not necessarily in order of importance)

The noise assessment has taken no account of likely noise impact on Mansfield Place (except possibly on nos. 12 and 13). There is either a deliberate attempt to avoid the issue, or simply a lack of awareness of the layout and echo effect in what is the valley of Mansfield Place. In fact, only nos. 12 and 13 are regarded as neighbouring properties, which shows an ignorance of the area.WE NEED A SITE ASSESSMENT ON THE NOISE IMPACT

The traffic assessment suggests parents walk to the school and nursery.(They must be the only parents in Hampstead that do). We think this implausible.

Rebecca has pointed out that the current premises, in the church hall, are being used not only by the nursery but by the older children, from the Heathside Prep. School in New End (Hence the endless rehearsals of Oliver). So the idea that the premises will be used for a short nursery school day are spurious.The application itself refers to usage up to 7 pm (past nursery school bedtime)

The application says there are no plans to expand pupil numbers. The school is a profit making entity and it seems unlikely that they will not try to recover their investment costs by expanding the nursery/prep school etc.

MAIN GROUNDS FOR OBJECTION

The whole site is unsuitable for school use. It has no safe entrance point,spilling out as it does onto Heath St. (The fire exit on Streatley Place has been confirmed as unsuitable as an entrance)

The school has developed stealthily along the back of Mansfield Place, with scant regard for the noise impact on the residential properties. The proposed expansion means the school will run virtually the whole length of the terrace from no. 7 onwards.There are windows within feet of the houses.These open on to the backs of the terrace, and some are jammed open, with scant regard for the disturbance of the neighbours.

The planning application proposes a playground in the open space behind and above Mansfield Place. This will cause a huge amount of noise, and IS THE MAIN OBJECTION TO THE CURRENT APPLICATION.

The developer/architect did say the area could be glassed in, but this has not been done on the application.

Apart from a playground , and the headmistress's claims of it being a quiet play area (she has apparently found a way of muffling the loud voices of 3-5 year olds) the rooms themselves abut Mansfield Place, and could be noisy (they are very large capacity rooms)

The expansion of the school will generate more traffic. There is no need for extra private nursery or infant school provision to serve the area's children. Too many of the large houses in the area have been converted into prep. schools, to the detriment of residents. Hampstead's cafes , pubs, shops attract a great deal of traffic. They bring benefit to the residents and are a feature of the area. The large number of schools for primary age children serve those outside the area, to the detriment of residents.

We cannot undo the planning consents given in the past, but we ask not to compound the problem.

If consent is given for the expansion of the school, we ask for the following covenants to be put on the buildings (Covenants not planning conditions, because the latter can be changed).

Any windows and skylights be fixed shut and double glazed if they open out onto Mansfield Place. Skylights are included because they are above Mansfield Place and because of the echo effect the noise would carry. All ducting/air conditioning should be onto Heath St., where noise and pollution already prevail. (This is actually another reason why the site is unsuitable for young children: the high pollution levels in Heath St.).

That use of the buildings be restricted to nursery school use (so cannot be used in the evening) nor should they be used by pupils from the other Heathside site.

That there should be no letting out of the rooms (Our fear there is that they could be let out for parties, as rehearsal rooms etc) with obvious noise implications.

2 of the houses in Mansfield Place are rented out, on relatively short lets, and the tenants are not informed nor caring about the planning issues. Two of the houses are used as pied a terres, and the occupants not always contactable. All the other occupiers in Mansfield Place are unanimous in their opposition to the scheme.

There is some concern that existing planning consent is for restaurant use, and of course that has caused noise problems in the past, but the consistent failure of the restaurants in Heath St (except for those that have been there for years) should deter all but the most stupid and unaware restaurateurs from attempting to open a restaurant on that site, and it would be sensible to rescind that consent. When restaurant use consent was given, people sat quietly and ate their food. Now restaurants blare out loud music. It would make sense, especially in the current climate, to restore the building to their original use as homes, or as a large retail unit.

I would like to address the Planning Committee on the matter.

Dame Hilary Blume