

Tania Skelli-Yaoz

Marc Dorfman

Planning Services

LB Camden, London

WC1 H 8ND

11-11-14

[planning@camden.gov.uk](mailto:planning@camden.gov.uk)

**Re: 27/29 Whitfield Street London W1 Ref: 2013/8158/P**

**Comments and Objections**

Dear Ms Skelli-Yaoz,

I am a practising town planner. I regularly visit Fitzrovia and I have worked in that area in the past. Over the past 20 years I have been the Chief Planner at the London Boroughs of Ealing, Redbridge and most recently Haringey.

Please confirm that you are in receipt of these comments and objections and that they will be taken into account when considering the above planning application in its latest form.

**Objections**

1. DESIGN: The height, bulk and massing of the proposed basement, ground, 1<sup>st</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> floors and Louver Roof extension severely compromises the architectural value of the Grade 2 Listed Building at 1 Colville Place and the architectural and urban design context and merits of the Conservation area - particularly as the scheme relates to the corner of Colville Place and Whitfield Street and views both north and south along Whitfield Street.
2. AMENITY: The position and depth of the proposed roof terrace and the proposed height of the 2<sup>nd</sup>/3<sup>rd</sup> floors unacceptably reduce normal amenity and privacy of the external space terrace at 1 Colville Place. The last drawings that I saw the proposed scheme projects forward of the terrace at 1 Colville and overlooking would result both from terrace of the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor and the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor roof.

**Justification**

3. The existing building at 27/29 Whitfield ensures that the corner between Colville Place and Whitfield Street is properly "held and turned". This is done by the building's height and its

render banding. This banding provides an unusual but appropriate structure for the building and breaches the difference in window opening positions of Colville and Whitfield. The proposed scheme fails to respect this important corner which needs to balance the largely homogenous Colville Place and the more eclectic, ad hoc and modern – and higher Whitfield Street. The proposed bulk and massing to Whitfield is too heavy at the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor to respect the “turning into Colville Place”. It should be considerably reduced and pushed back from Colville Place or removed altogether. This will allow the strength of the corner to be maintained. Covering or obscuring the poor rear of 19 Goodge Street is no reason to fail to enhance or protect the qualities of the Conservation Area at the corner of Colville and Whitfield.

4. The clear architectural and urban design priority is Colville Place, (even without 1 Colville being Listed). Even more distant views along Whitfield Street both north and south show the basement, ground and 2 floors above, of the existing building at 27/29 Whitfield, working well for Colville and also for the generally higher Whitfield street (see photos attached) The strength and importance of this corner is a key element in the Conservation Area. The views along Whitfield appropriately drop down from 19 Goodge Street looking south and climb up looking north. This street rhythm adds to the character of the Conservation Area supported by the excellent pavement open space to the south of the corner whose trees provide seasonal street variety throughout the year. The proposal spoils this rhythm and makes the corner abrupt and over dominant. Being able to see sky through the trees and then at the corner with Colville is a delight.
5. The carefully designed “solid to void” ratio of “younger” 1 Colville Place - and the placing of the window openings and horizontal decoration - relate well to the rest of the terrace. A new scheme at 27/29 Whitfield offers a real opportunity to continue this architectural relationship and produce an excellent example of architectural progression. Instead the proposal refuses to consider this and simply opens up and lengthens its existing Colville windows. No attempt is made at using inexpensive design techniques to answer the call of a new/refurbished building that sits well in this complex Conservation Area. The proposal fails to protect or enhance the relationship to the Listed building or the good urban design characteristics of this part of the Conservation Area.
6. There is not much to say about the proposed “louver roof extension” – it is lucky it can hardly be seen from the street as it has no merit and no architectural purpose. The applicant should be guided to find a way the extra space it craves can be put to a good design use – or it should be dispensed with. In the past it was always the tradition of Camden Planning to mould good design from applicants proposals – particularly in important conservation areas.
7. In the last drawings I have seen the poor relationship of the position and height of the proposed terraces at second and third floors also causes an unacceptable loss of amenity to 1 Colville Place given that a precedent has clearly been set that no overlooking takes place on Colville Place. 1 Colville Place would expect only something similar to what exists to its west.

Yours faithfully

Marc Dorfman



**PICTURES and CGI of the Proposal**





