

Comments Form

Name..... SOL SCARFE

Address..... 1 IVOR STREET, NW1 9PL



Planning application number..... 2014/7908/P & 2014/4679/P

Planning application address..... 140-146 CAMDEN STREET, NW1 9PF

I support the application (please state reasons below)

I object to the application (please state reasons below)

Your comments

The latest application is undoubtedly an improvement in scale and appearance. However I still object to the loss of commercial space & drastic increase in residential buildings in the area which will also increase traffic with refuse collection, Post deliveries etc on the main street as well as tight alleyway system behind.

The main Camden Street block (C) is still a storey too high and the dominance effect of the top "set-back" floor, unnecessarily adds to its looming dominance of the streetscape. The very highest point on this block should be lower than the main height of Shirley House (52.29). It should equal to Regents Canal side at 50.35 max: in order not to tower over the Camden Street housing opposite as well as to at least attempt to respect the old domestic housing further up.

That Shirley House is too tall is bad enough but at least it is on a busy corner of two major roads. However, on the canal side, Shirley House & its established height is detrimental to the canal, making an unpleasant impact on this valuable local amenity as will the new buildings using it as its measuring stick. The situation must be avoided in the future of the Shirley House site being redeveloped even higher using 140-146 as its precedent.

PLEASE LOWER THE THE 8 STOREY BLOCK TO 7.

Please continue on extra sheets if you wish

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13 January 2015

Attn: Peter Higginbottom

RE: Objection to proposal 2014/7908/P 140-146 Camden Street NW1 9PF

I write on behalf of North Camden Town Neighbourhood Forum Steering Group to object to the proposed development reference 2014/7908/P.

Background

The proposed development located at 140-146 Camden Street is within the Regents Canal Conservation Area and on the boundary of the Jeffery's Street Conservation Area. It represents a step change in the height and mass on the site and introduces a significant number of residential units on a site that is currently 100% commercial in its use.

The proposed building is a full basement rising to 8-storeys' on Camden Street (Block C), 5-storeys on the corner of Camden Street and Bonny Street (Block B), 4-storeys' on Bonny Street (Block A) and 3-storeys' on Regent's Canal (Block D).

Area Appraisal

Shirley House (BTP Headquarters - 25 Camden Road) is defined in the Regents Canal Conservation Area Management Plan as "a building that harms the CA due to its height and massing".

The elevation of Shirley House is drawn as though it has an additional storey. The parapet level is 52.23 level. Everything above this is ductwork, set well back from the facade. When Twyman House replacement 2011/2072/P went to committee, the height was reduced at Committee "not to exceed 52.23, the parapet level of Shirley House". In practice, construction has led to it being slightly below this.

The buildings adjacent on Bonny Street, Nos 2-8, are Listed. The buildings opposite on Camden Street are set back from the road and are 3-storeys in height.

New Development Issues

The developer claims to have carried out a significant amount of community consultation and indeed to have taken action on the comments received. The initial scheme presented in April 2013 was ludicrously high and clearly done so the developer could easily reduce the height so as to be seen to be responding to community concerns.

The second consultation in July 2013 showed a reduction in Block B with an imperceptible reduction to Block D. At this exhibition the community again stated concern that the building was too high and should be reduced in both height and massing.

The currently proposed Block C tower is eight storeys in height, and is shown exceeding the Shirley House parapet height of 52.23. We believe the level of the Shirley House parapet (52.23) is already established as a Planning Principle in this location so any new development should not exceed this.

The reduction in height has reduced the amount of daylight and sunlight being 'blocked' by this new development and with a few exceptions this scheme meets all of the Building Research Establishments' (BRE) Guidelines, at least in terms of simple numbers. What is hidden by such a report is the qualitative

impacts of these reductions. For instance the number of sunlight hours, especially in winter, may meet the guidelines, the fact that the 'best' hours, say between 11.00am and 2.00pm, are lost is not made clear and has a negative impact on neighbouring properties.

The currently proposed Block B is 5-storeys' and should be reduced by at least 1 storey. Block A should be reduced by 1 storey to align with the parapet of the listed terraced houses at 2-8 Bonny Street. Block D should not exceed the 37.98 parapet as noted on the proposed elevation that aligns with the adjoining block of the recent Regents Canalside development.

The cumulative impact of a number of residential developments has not been addressed. Regents Canalside, 79 Camden Road, Hawley Wharf, and Agar Grove are adding a huge number of residences with no additional GP Surgeries or school places. The only GP Surgery taking patients from this postcode is off Leighton Road in Kentish Town. The new housing proposed here will displace current residents from school places that are already in short supply.

There are still a very small number of social housing units in the proposals with no lift being proposed to this block (except the internal lift to the wheelchair accessible unit) and no access to amenity space.

Local Planning Policy: Townscape, Heritage Assets and Visual Impact

Policy CS14 requires that development is of the highest standard of design and that it respects local context and character. It also ensures that Camden's heritage assets and their settings, including conservation areas, listed buildings, archaeological remains, scheduled ancient monuments and historic parks and gardens are preserved and enhanced and promotes high quality landscaping and works to streets and public spaces.

Paragraph 2.3.5 '*Retaining and enhancing the traditional and historic character of the area*' stresses the importance of maintaining links with the past, especially in those areas which have sustained great change in the past and high levels of growth. The importance of maintaining a 'sense of place' by the use of traditional architectural styles and materials is also stressed.

The proposed development does not achieve these policy requirements, as the design does not respect the local context and character of Regents Canal CA, Jeffrey's Street CA or Camden Broadway CA.

If constructed as proposed it will be visible from all these areas causing a negative impact.

The developer has employed a consultant to prepare a report that takes a subjective view of the impact of the proposed development. The author of the report is not a local resident and is of course being paid by the developer to support their proposals.

We have the following comments on Citydesigners Report dated 10 December 2014:

6.1 They state that the developer's proposals *enhance the character and appearance of the Regents Canal CA and also enhances the setting of the adjacent Jeffrey's Street CA*. We disagree, as the proposal is too high for this area closing in on the canal and towering over neighbouring buildings.

7.1.14 We disagree that the proposed development has been designed to relate to the scale and proportions of Bonny Street, as it is significantly higher and not in keeping with Bonny Streets character. There is a substantial amount of dark brickwork on the Bonny Street side of block B which is out of character with the street.

7.2.6 We disagree that Block A has been carefully designed to relate in terms of scale to the listed buildings at 2-8 Bonny Street. The proposed Block A is too high and does not relate to the parapet of the listed buildings so should be reduced in height.

7.2.20 We disagree that nos 3-11 Bonny Street require greater enclosure. One of the nice qualities of Bonny Street is that it is open and in scale with its surrounding buildings both within Bonny Street and also across Camden Street.

7.2.26 Citydesigner ignores the height of the building at Camden Bridge. In our view detailed architecture is no mitigation for the height of Block A and so the current proposals will be detrimental to the setting.

8.7 We believe the height and massing of the proposal does harm to the Regents Canal CA and to the listed buildings on Bonny Street.

8.9 We disagree that the scale of the proposed development provides the best response to CABE/DETR's 'By Design' (2000).

8.25 We disagree that the development satisfies policy CS14 as it fails to respect the local context and character, does not enhance the public realm around the site and does not provide lift access to Block A (social housing block).

8.28 We disagree that the proposed development satisfies DP24 as it does not properly consider the setting, character and form or scale of neighbouring buildings, not all building blocks have access to amenity space and block A has no lift.

8.30 We disagree that the proposed development satisfies DP25 as the proposal does not preserve or enhance the Regents Canal CA, the Jeffery's Street CA or the listed buildings in Bonny Street. It causes harm to all of these due to its height and massing.

8.36 We disagree that CPG 1 Section 2 has been met, as we do not accept that the proposed development is well considered in the context of its surrounding area due to its height and massing.

9.0 View 1 – outside 11 Bonny Street (page 45). We disagree that the effect of the proposed development is beneficial. The view from 11 Bonny Street is better as it is currently for those who live in the area and the change to the view is major. The image supplied appears not to be rendered in the dark brickwork shown in the elevations so is not a true representation.

View 2 – Corner of Camden Gardens (page 47). We disagree that the impact of Block C is beneficial. The height and massing of the building is detrimental to the area and out of character with other buildings in Camden Street. Note our earlier point about Shirley House having a detrimental effect on Regents Canal CA.

View 5 – on Kentish Town Bridge (page 53). We disagree that the effect is beneficial. Block C once again imposes itself on our skyline.

View 6 – on Grand Union Towpath by Hawley Lock (page 55). We disagree that the visibility of the proposed development will be a virtue. It will add to the enclosure of the canal and views along the canal when the Hawley Wharf development begins.

View 10a – on the corner of Camden Street and Camden Road (page 65). We disagree that the residual effect is beneficial due to the height and massing of the proposed development. Shirley House is too high and the proposed new Block C is higher.

View 11 – on Camden Street, outside Sainsbury's (page 67). We disagree that the residual effect is beneficial due to the height and massing of Block C. It is out of character and context with the surrounding buildings.

View 12 – on North Road Bridge (page 69). We disagree that the residual effect is beneficial due to the height and massing of Block C. It is out of character and context with the surrounding buildings and encloses the canal in an overpowering way.

View 15 – on Grand Union Towpath, by North Road Bridge (page 75). We disagree that the residual effect is beneficial due to the height and massing of Block C. It is out of character and context with the surrounding buildings and encloses the canal in an overpowering way.

Conclusion

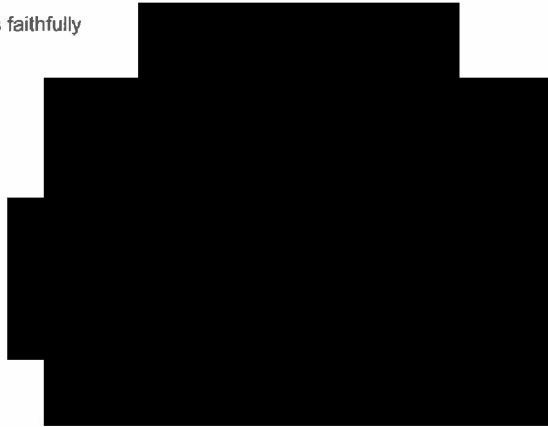
The development remains too high for this site. There is precedent that any new development should not exceed the height of the Shirley House parapet.

The developer has paid a consultant to state that all aspects of their proposals are positive and beneficial to our area. This view is subjective and should not hold weight when the local community clearly has a different opinion.

Whilst this revised application appears to be more compliant to a number of local planning policies and national guidelines, it remains, in our view, non-compliant with the 'spirit' embodied within them with regard to the preservation of the quality of existing residential accommodation as well as the need to enable appropriate development.

We urge you to reject this application as it currently stands and would seek a local working group to be assembled to work alongside the developer to agree a suitable scheme for this site.

Yours faithfully

A large black rectangular redaction box covers the signature and any accompanying text or contact information.