

From: Essential Vintag
Sent: 18 January 2015 16:22
To: Ampoma, Nanayaa
Subject: Planning Application 2014/7695/P

Dear Nanayaa

I strongly object to the above planning application for the following reasons:

1. The Application

The application is for change of use from office (B1a) to residential (C3) to create 8 residential flats and has been submitted for prior approval under GDPO provisions.

This requires that the subject of the application must have been in office use only on or prior to 30th May 2013.

There is clear evidence that the ground floor of the building was in fact used for retailing up until the end of 2014 which culminated in a bin end sale of wines to the general public who could freely go into the premises to make purchases.

The ground floor is also officially recognised by the council as being in retail use since 1994 - application 9400518 in Camdens own records establishes this fact.

I therefore beleive that the application misrepresents the facts regarding usage of the premises.

I maintain that the ground floor area is in fact a retail space and as such is excluded from permitted development arrangements as it is situated within a conservation area.

2. Contaminated Land

The site's previous uses have included a working garage, petrol station, builders merchants and theatrical costume house.

Some of these uses will have enevitably involved the use of chemicals and possible noxious substances.

The applicant's report on this is completely inadequate in addressing these issues and leaves a series of question marks over the safety of the site.

Worse still the plans contain an intention to "break ground" to lower the basement level by 600mm. Is it the case that contractors would envisage addressing possible contamination threats once the construction phase has begun?

3. Loss of Employment & Commercial Space

The current occupiers of the site employ over 150 people.

In addition to this number a large volume of business visitors attend every weekday.

Whilst I know that Bibendum are relocating, the loss of this large volume of people will have damaging effects on the local economy and the conversion of the site to residential will remove the potential for any other company to occupy the site in the future.

Although there is a case to be made for additional housing there is also a need for mixed areas such as Primrose Hill to have businesses to service the community and maintain a balance of amenity.

The relentless eroding away of commercial premises has gathered pace in Primrose Hill in recent years resulting in the loss of vital anchor businesses such as Triyoga and those who occupied Utopia Village.

Together, these two examples represent a loss of employment of around 300 people. The footfall created by Triyoga in particular is estimated at an even higher number.

The cumulative effect of removing these important business hubs is a compromised retail environment that suffers a loss of footfall and revenues putting them under a genuine threat.

The daily influx of workers to Primrose Hill is fast diminishing as a result of this type of application.

All of these workers are customers of shops, cafe's and restaurants. If they continue to decline in numbers the effects on our local economy will be a disaster.

For these reasons I think it is vital that this employment space be maintained.

4. Amenity of adjacent properties

Residential properties adjacent to the building (particularly those situated in The Chesterfields building that backs onto the site) will suffer from a loss of amenity if this application is granted.

Currently the business use of the building allows for a degree of evening privacy for neighbours while the building is unoccupied.

Conversion to residential will result in light pollution and loss of privacy for the flats to the rear of the site which are in very close proximity to it.

This loss of amenity is unacceptable.

5. Conclusion

For the reasons stated above I would urge that this application be refused.

Kind regards

Phil Cowan

Flat One
2 Albert Terrace
London NW1 7SU