

Cindy Galvin
3 Streatley Flats
Streatley Place
NW3 1HR

Rob Tulloch
c/o London Borough of Camden
Regeneration and Planning Development
London Wc1H 8ND
Re: Planning Application 2014/7778/P

19 January 2015

Dear Rob,

I am writing to voice a strong objection to the proposed hotel development that would be located at 6 Streatley Place, reference number 2014/7778/P.

I have significant concerns that this development would have a negative impact on my privacy and quality of life, on the character and overall living conditions of Streatley Place and have the potential to significantly increase noise and security issues.

I am troubled by the fact that the development could cut off a significant amount of natural light for all residents of Streatley Flats and, indeed, for some Mansfield Place residents. And I am most opposed to the proposed positioning of two access doors—the main entrance and access to the area where bins are to be housed—directly across from Streatley Flats and, principally, my flat. People will come to realize there is another area with bins and I can foresee the dumping of goods by this door. Already goods are being dumped along Streatley Place—a mattress and another piece of furniture were dumped a few days ago, and as of this morning were still there. We certainly need no more encouragement for people to dump their goods wherever they please.

I take issue with section 4.2 of the Design and Access Statement dealing with neighbour consultation. A statement is made that information was sent to all who would be affected by this development. I received nothing of the sort, and a quick check with some of the other Streatley Flats residents reveals the same. But considering the numerous errors that have been made in this proposal—identifying streets by the wrong names, mislabelling New End as Streatley Flats and, in some cases, referring to Streatley Flats as Streatley Cottages—this may explain why no communication was received. These errors give me pause, as does the proposal characterizing Streatley Place as a ‘steep alleyway’.

I contrast the lack of consultation from the hotel proposers to the care and outreach done by Heathside school to engage with residents who will be directly impacted by their renovation of the old Tabby Cat Lounge. But this does not surprise me: Heathside has been in Hampstead for a long time and cares about the neighbourhood. It specifically wanted to avoid doing anything to impact the character of this area. The planners of the hotel have no vested interest in Hampstead or, presumably, for residents who will be affected by this development. Just as the transient guests of this proposed hotel would care nothing about the area or impact they will have on it.

I am rather shocked that section 3.2 of the Design and Access Statement goes on in some detail about the potential impact of this project on what it calls neighboring properties, yet fails to make any mention of the impact on Streatley Flats. This impact being, as referenced earlier, entrance doors directly across from our residential building that will create noise and potential security issues and the cutting off of natural light.

Maintaining local character

The proposal cites the National Planning Policy Framework in its submission, section 12 of which deals with conserving and enhancing an historic environment. Local planning authorities are to take into account various things, including the '*desirability of any new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness*,' as noted in paragraph 126.

Policy CS14 of Camden's Local Development Framework states that the Council will ensure Camden's places and buildings are attractive, safe and easy to use by requiring development of the highest standard of design that *respects local context and character*. And Development Policy 25, Conserving Camden's heritage, states that in order to maintain the character of Camden's conservation areas, the Council will only permit development within conservation areas that *preserves and enhances the character and appearance of the area*.

I fail to see how the proposed design would have a positive contribution to the area nor how it maintains the character of this lovely area in Hampstead.

The Hampstead Conservation Area Statement notes that open spaces are valuable and, on page 58, says that pressure for development can reduce the quality of the visual and ecological environment. This proposal clearly reduces the visual quality of this area. It will create a dark and forbidding pathway on Streatley Place by the building of these far too high brick walls, and will have an impact on the amount of natural light also able to come through to Streatley Place and to Mansfield Place.

Expansion on objections

I purchased 3 Streatley Flats over six years ago. I have lived in Hampstead for over 15 years and chose to move to Streatley Place because of its charm and quietness, the latter despite its proximity to Heath Street.

I had the choice of buying one of two flats in Streatley Flats, the other being number two, which is on the ground floor. I chose Flat 3 because of the open view and light that floods in. I particularly chose it because no one can overlook my windows, and I have enjoyed being able to look out across the brick wall to see trees and sky. The fact that no one could look directly in to my windows was, for me, a significant factor as a single woman living alone.

The Design and Access statement notes that rooms in the hotel would be constructed to take most advantage of the natural light coming in. While this would be ideal for the transient guests who have no connection to, or care, about this area, and who will spend a short amount of time here, it will have a significant impact on those of us who have chosen to make this our home.

Compare the light you can see coming on to Streatley Place in the photo taken in the early 1900s. The look and feel of Streatley Place is the same today. This proposed structure will completely change the look and feel of this area. The architectural rendering tries to show that light would still come in; but I fail to see how this would happen given the idea of building such large brick walls and having a two-to three-story structure.

Section 3 of the Design and Access Statement addresses overlooking. The large open glass windows proposed for the third floor appear to definitely afford the ability for transient people to look directly in to all of the front-facing windows of Streatley Flats. This also gives me pause. The cutting off of natural light and having to draw curtains to avoid being looked in on will create an extremely unpleasant living environment.

The potential for any structure that could cause breaches in privacy for local residents goes against the spirit of section 7.4 of section 7 of Camden Planning Guidance CPG6. This section notes:

Development should be designed to protect the privacy of both new and existing dwellings to a reasonable degree. Spaces that are overlooked lack privacy. Therefore, new buildings, extensions, roof terraces, balconies and the location of new windows should be carefully designed to avoid overlooking.

We are a relatively small street with many long-term residents who gradually come to know each other or have a nodding acquaintance. We care about maintaining what is a very special and unique area of Hampstead, and London generally. I do not see how the erection of a three-story modern structure could possibly maintain this character.

A hotel would bring a constant turnover of occupants who would have no long-term care for this area or sense of being mindful of the many residents living in close proximity who will be bothered by their noise.

I have written previously about the two doors proposed to this area—one the main entrance and the other for bins. What operating hours will this hotel be required to meet? Will residents of Streatley Flats be treated to the sound of glass and bottles being dumped in to the bins at all hours of the night? Who will be there to stop occupants from doing this?

Further to the last point I raise, there is no mention in this report of the peculiar acoustic aspect of living on this narrow pedestrian street. Even the smallest noise echoes and is amplified. This is exacerbated at night when the street becomes quite. The entrance door across from Streatley Flats could introduce an unacceptable amount of noise. The plan notes that up to six people could be renting the house at any time—that is six times the amount of disruption that could be caused by people coming and going at all hours.

Camden Council visited Streatley Place, and specifically Streatley Flats, last week to inspect the noise caused by the refrigeration units behind Gaucho Grill. These units are further away from Streatley Flats than the proposed access doors to this hotel, and yet the noise coming from these units is intolerable at night. Gaucho will be required to significantly muffle the sound. Will residents of Streatley Flats, Mansfield Place, New Court and Lakis Close be faced with having to complain regularly to Camden because of being woken up or otherwise affected by the noise of this hotel?

What guarantee will local residents have that the operators of the hotel will guarantee that its occupants do not contribute to noise pollution? I can anticipate the answer: none. The hotel will be a commercial business looking to recoup costs.

What will the hotel propose for illuminating the entrance to the building? Streatley Place retains its charm by being lit by electrified gas lamps. I will object to anything being used to light the entrance door that will take away from the charm and character of this area. Not to mention anything that would shine directly into the flats of Streatley Flats.

I trust that Camden will be mindful of the significant concerns that I have raised when considering this proposal, which I feel is not the right solution for the open plot of land or for Streatley Place.

Regards, Cindy Galvin