

Comments Form

Name..... SALLY KEABLE + BAJRAM ZEQRIRI

Address... 278 KENTISH TOWN ROAD LONDON NW5
[REDACTED] 2AA

Planning application number... 2014/6606/P

Planning application address... 276 Kentish Town Road

~~I support the application (please state reasons below)~~

I object to the application (please state reasons below)

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Your comments

Firstly we declare an interest in this application because we have been given notice to quit our business premises at 278 to allow this application, which is described as relating to 276 Kentish Town Road without mentioning our premises, number 278 Kentish Town Road as a separate unit at all, to proceed. However we believe that there are relevant planning issues to take into consideration.

Firstly we believe the failure to mention 278 as a separate unit is to

Please continue on extra sheets if you wish

disguise the fact that 278 will be lost as a separate retail unit if this application is granted. It is specious to say, as the applicants have said to us, that as they will be only selling takeaway food on our premises, that is retail sale and therefore not a change of use of 278. The takeaway will sell food cooked in 276 and that is only practically possible if the two units are knocked into one, which is what they show on the plans, therefore the application affects the whole building.

There are already more than enough restaurants/takeaways / places such as Greggs where you can buy hot food, in Kentish Town Road. Someone has counted 27 such outlets in the stretch down to

Prince of Wales Road. This is destroying the character of the street. We believe the Council's policy is for this to be a mixed use and predominantly retail street, not a restaurant street such as Drummond Street NW1, but that is what the area of the street around the Tube station is in danger of becoming. There are several empty retail units, arguably because this end of the street is becoming less attractive to shoppers, and the loss of a retail unit which contributes considerably to the retail frontage, will only accelerate this. An example of what this street could become is the area around Belsize Park Tube station which is virtually all restaurants, and therefore unless they are using the station, very few people go

there during the day.

The Council's planning policy must be to serve the local area. Kentish Town currently has a varied mix of social groups which is part of its appeal and success. Some of these groups do not have the money or desire to eat in any restaurant, apart from the type of large restaurant proposed, whereas they do rely on shopping locally - how are they served by this proliferation of restaurants?

The loss of small independent retail units (and 278 as it stands is too small to be likely ever to be acquired by a "brand name") damages the character of an area, and takes away its individuality and therefore a reason to choose to visit it or

shop there, or indeed to live there. The marketing campaign of the local estate agents Parkheath who are sponsoring a Christmas tree near the Tube station, is based on units like ours which are exclusive to Kentish Town which is known for its community "village" atmosphere where shoppers and customers know each other. This will be destroyed by permitting more large units where there is no personal relationship with the operators of these businesses. Local residents do not want Kentish Town Road to become like Upper Street where the large majority of the shops now are chainstores that you see on most high streets in the UK, and the only "unique" shops retail at prices out of reach of the people who used to

shop there - Upper Street largely no longer serves the local community in the way that it used to and has become faceless.

There is also the fact not everyone will visit the proposed restaurant on foot or by Tube and the traffic on Kentish Town Road is bad enough to say nothing about the lack of parking facilities locally.

Also we believe the frontage of the Tube station is listed, or if not, it should be a candidate for listing. Not many years ago Transport for London restored the whole facade of the station to its original appearance, replacing missing tiles etc, and when we signed our lease about 18 months ago, TfL asked us to replace our shop sign on the facade with something more

in keeping with the age and style of the building, which we did, it would appear 278 as it is now, is as it was when the station was built ie it has always been a small independent unit with the same frontage as the pillars at the front are obviously part of the original design, and it has never been connected to the floor above. If this is changed into a combined restaurant premises with a takeaway in 278 the whole appearance of the building will drastically alter. Inevitably there will be a modern frontage for the takeaway with advertising for the restaurant upstairs and a much more "gauch" appearance than there is now.

We also do not see how the smell of

yet another cuisine can avoid escaping
onto the pavement no doubt together with
yet more recorded music. Also there are
several local primary schools nearby: do
we need another takeaway food outlet as
"in their face" as this one will apparently be?

We are attaching to this a petition
against this proposed development signed
by, at our count, 1052 of local people. We
have not heard from anyone who thinks
this proposed development would be an
improvement to this area.