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London NW5 2RD

London, 10 February 2015

Camden Planning
2nd Floor, 5 Pancras Square
c/o Town Hall
Judd Street
London WC1H 9JE

Dear Madam or Sir,

**Petition to reject planning permission for the conversion of 171 Camden High Street
(‘The Black Cap’)**

I was very happy to read recently that the former Castle pub in Kentish Town Road will now not be allowed to be turned into an estate agent’s office (of which we have plenty – or more than plenty – in the same road already). I do hope that some other use, of greater benefit to the local community, can be found for it.

In a similar matter, I would like to petition you to reject the proposed conversion into flats of the upper floors of 171 Camden High Street, currently occupied by the Black Cap pub.

The Black Cap is a mainstay of Camden’s LGBT community and, as far as I am aware, the only such venue left in the area. It is a cherished piece of local LGBT history (which we are celebrating this month), in this incarnation dating back to the 1960s, and a truly diverse place for older and younger, male and female crowds – a rarity in London, where the ‘scenes’ tend to segregate very much.

While the planned conversion would leave the downstairs club area, it is doubtful that this will offer a lasting compromise. Turning the upper floors into flats will be the thin end of the wedge, as arguments over noise levels are nearly inevitable, and too often have we seen public venues being forced to close due to such disputes, despite new residents’ full knowledge of where they were moving.

I know that Camden is short of housing, but I doubt that the proposed flats – conversions in a prime area – will be affordable to anybody but top earners, doing very little to alleviate the housing shortage. At the same time, the demise of the Black Cap would be a sad loss indeed, so I urge you to vote down this proposal.

