

Flat 27 Shepherd House
York Way Estate
London
N7 9QB

12/03/2015

Dear Mr McClue

RE: reference 2015/0906/P the Admiral Mann public house

My name is Richard Lewis and I have lived at the above address for five years along with my wife and we been using the Admiral Mann for as long. I wish to strongly OBJECT to planning application 2015/0906/P.

I work at the nearby Arsenal Football Club and I have come to value the Admiral Mann as a way to engage with the local community and have come to appreciate it as one of the last traditional style London pubs in the area. I was disheartened by its sudden closure having been sold by McMullen's Brewery to a property developer.

The impact on the community was felt immediately, especially among older residents, sports teams, musicians, and local traders. It served its customers through hosting of wedding parties/wakes, darts tournaments, charity fundraising events, pub quizzes, and 'Cockney Evenings' (singing and traditional food, you may have noticed the Pearly King of Finsbury made an appearance at the final 'knees up'). The pub was also open each Christmas Day for a couple hours which was greatly appreciated by regulars who live alone. It was on account of the strong feelings about what was happening, the regulars mobilised and had the pub successfully nominated as an Asset of Community Value.

There was local press coverage highlighting the ways in which the pub was important to the social wellbeing of local people in the *Camden New Journal*, *Islington Gazette*, and *Islington Tribune* as well as the widely read youth culture magazine *Vice*. Links to these can found easily by simply doing a Google search for Admiral Mann.

When London Borough of Camden approved the nomination to have the pub listed as an ACV, they said in their reasons

"The pub was used by long term local residents of all social classes who are not well served by other public houses in the area which tend to serve a younger, more transient population. There have been closures of similar pubs in the local area in recent years and it seems that the Admiral Mann was the only pub of its kind left in the local area."

The Department for Communities and Local Government, in a response to an E-petition entitled *Save our Pubs, change the Planning Laws* have said

"We recognise that community pubs are important assets, making a significant contribution to the economy and providing local hubs that strengthen community relationships and encourage wider social interaction. The fact that significant numbers of community pubs are listed as Assets of

Community Value highlights the need to enable local communities to consider planning applications for the change of use of a pub of particular local value."

They further go on to comment "The local planning authority may take the listing as an Asset of Community Value into account as a material consideration when determining any planning application. Local and neighbourhood plans should be consistent with and reflect the strong support for pubs in the National Planning Policy Framework. This encourages local planning authorities to plan positively to support the sustainability of communities. This includes plans to deliver the social, recreational and cultural facilities and services the community needs." Source: <http://epetitions.direct.gov.uk/petitions/66572>

Can I insist that the planning committee **give material consideration to the ACV status** and act to ensure that the building as described on the original ACV application remains preserved in its current use class so that it may further the social wellbeing of the community in accordance with **Section 88 of the Localism Act 2011**.

The application seeks to retain a pub, but also build several new dwellings in and around the former Admiral Mann building. I believe this new pub will have a floor space significantly reduced with an approximately 40% reduction to what is already a relatively small back street pub. There would also be newly built accommodation the same floor, immediately above, and to the side with the flats being built at 1-7 Hargrave Place. Such a change will dramatically alter beyond all recognition the pub as a viable community resource, and indeed change the character and layout of a Victorian pub which had been in continuous business since circa 1880's. The Admiral Mann was built specifically to provide refreshment, entertainment, and community focus for residents in the surrounding streets and visitors to the Borough. This proposal seeks to permanently change the building's emphasis away from that of a public house, potentially denying the community of a social amenity facility with something like 140 years of history. The majority of the building would be demolished under these proposals. It is unacceptable and unnecessary to make the Admiral Mann a mere façade of its former self.

With the floor space reduced, partial demolition and new private accommodation built around it, I maintain the viability of the pub would be critically threatened. The community aspects which allowed it to be nominated ACV status would be all but diminished by space and noise issues. As such, the proposal could be contrary to policies **3.1 (Ensuring Equal Life Chances for All)**, **3.16 (Protection and Enhancement of Social Infrastructure)**, **4.8 (Supporting a successful and diverse retail sector)** and **7.1 (Building London's neighbourhoods and communities)** of the **London Plan 2011**. If the current owner was serious about running a pub, it is strange that he should have retained it closed and gone through the expense of having live-in guardians residing in the building for several months. It has also been asked where the customers would go to smoke, being so close to the proposed new accommodation windows. It is difficult to envisage this new proposed pub space being anything other than a precursor to further development and in time another flat.

Furthermore the pub features ancillary accommodation above it in the form of a flat and kitchen area to serve the pub. This was designed as part of the original pub building to provide a home for the licensee/manager and his/her family. The flat is ancillary to the pub. This is a typical

arrangement, and this proposal does away with it. **National Planning Policy Framework (Paragraph 70)** has been used by inspectors to defend a pub use and to maintain established pub facilities e.g. gardens and landlord's accommodation. The conversion of this large building into a development of flats and subsequent reduction in size of the bar area by close to 40% would result in the loss of the pub as a community facility. This planning application is therefore contrary to NPPF Paragraph 70.

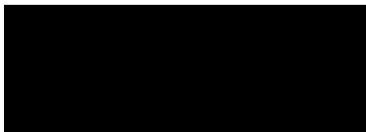
The pub is valuable to the community precisely because of its traditional layout i.e. ancillary accommodation, detached, independent, one planning unit under common ownership. This is the most sustainable and viable arrangement in the long-term. The Dartmouth Arms and The Albert in Primrose Hill are examples of where similar proposals were enacted and it remains to be seen if viable pub use will ever return on those sites. On the other hand I understand Camden rejected applications affecting the Black Cap and the Golden Lion.

As a tenant myself privately renting a flat inside an inner-London Borough, I am only too aware of the issues surrounding housing in this city, however methods to address housing issues should not come at the expense of community amenities, and especially so with those with historical and heritage aspects to them. As I understand it, **the pub is a locally-listed non-designated heritage asset**. Any proposals to demolish and significantly alter the building, such as 2015/0906/P seeks to ought to be met with serious consideration, indeed I would argue in this case it should be refused. At the very least they ought to be considered at the highest level possible, i.e. it should not solely be considered/subject to delegated officer approval and preferably go to a committee meeting.

In summary the Admiral Mann is of a category of facility in short supply in its particular area. A reduced sized pub with changes to residential use would surely be of higher financial value to the freeholder but the planning system is there to safeguard neighbourhoods from the negative impacts of the market. Sustainable communities need places to interact and socialise. Also, the *Campaign for Real Ale* has estimated that a typical pub generates £80,000 annually for the local economy in addition to the profit realised to its owners. The Admiral Mann raised a tremendous amount for charities and good causes. The building should be retained in its current condition with the view to it being reopened as a successful community-minded pub and viable business. It can happen, there is a large demand for it, and being run properly it can make a profit too.

PLEASE refuse consent.

Yours sincerely



Richard Lewis

P.S. This was also submitted online
but I wanted to send
printed copy also.