



18 Wentworth Mansions
Keats' Grove
Hampstead
London NW3 2RL



Dear Planning Officer,

Planning Application no. 2015/3447/P

May we at Wentworth Mansions plead for a stay of execution? Our health and well-being, as well as that of the many people thronging the street, are threatened by the current venture to turn the vacated charity shop into a dog-grooming business.

Foremost among our concerns is the very serious danger to asthmatics. You will have received already, warnings from consultants and doctors at the Royal Free Hospital and a local practice of the risk to the health to one acute sufferer, while there is another asthmatic, also likely to be affected. Both live immediately above the proposed dog grooming business.

Why is there such a strong association between asthma and the grooming of dogs? A lung specialist is best placed to answer that question. As one of the uninitiated, I understand that dogs subjected to the alien process of grooming against their will, upset and frightened in the absence of their owners, moult a larger quantity of dander, which is microscopic enough to penetrate lungs easily, to cause and exacerbate asthma. Much of this dander will inevitably be spewed onto the street, to harm the lungs of passers-by.

If all goes well, the risks remain considerable: should the doggy enterprise go badly, it will be disastrous. The engineers consulted stress the problems of any imbalance and the very high degree of maintenance required to circulate the air within the system. Although nowadays it is unusual to consider workers' health, some may still be concerned. Is it right that those who groom the dogs should be in grave danger of contracting asthma, especially as Pets At Home like to employ young unskilled workers, exactly those unlikely to appreciate the risks.

Who, bar an indulgent Council, would trust Pets At Home to keep their side of an agreement? On 18th of June this year, one hundred complaints were

lodged on TV against Rebranding Pets At Home, the parent company. In 2012 similar complaints, especially the employment of under-qualified staff, were levied against the Company. Few had been rectified three years later.

Would it be possible in future for Camden Council to match area and tenants? Zelman, the vet, a few doors away, already cares for animals in need. We understand Camden rejected both a tile shop and a green grocer, both well-suited to the site, so sadly vacated by the Charity Shop. Nearby shopkeepers are very fearful of the effect of the dog-groomers on their premises. The owner of Sweet Pea, squeezed in next door to the dog-groomers, is very apprehensive of the anticipated noise and the doggy smell, likely to suffuse the delicate scents of her flowers. Food shops and the café close by are under similar threat.

For all the above reasons, all those in the vicinity are hoping that Camden Council will continue to uphold its much envied reputation as a town-planner.

Yours sincerely,

John Mackrell (Dr)