

RTA 124 Croftdown Road
RECOGNISED TENANTS ASSOCIATION

Fiona Davies
Planning Officer
Camden Council
London

19 August 2015

Dear Ms Davies

re Planning ref 2013/6698/P; 2011/6216/P (decision expiry 21-05-2015), Brookfield Estate Heating Replacement Programme

Thank you very much for your time yesterday on the telephone allowing me to express the concerns of residents and in particular those represented by our Recognised Tenants Association, about the heating replacement requiring flues for combi boilers to be drilled in the facades of the buildings in this conservation area and the removal of the communal boilers.

Each block would require 8 flues (one per dwelling), 4 on either side, one above the other, discharging acidic plume which will continually condense, wetting the bricks and mortar. We would like to know if there has been an assessment of the likely effect on the brickwork of these historic buildings.

We understand that the installation of condensing boilers is subject to strict procedures (British Standard BS5440-1) because this plume is very acidic and the average amount of condensate produced per flue is substantial at over 800 litres per year. We understand this could dissolve lime-based mortar, clay drainage pipes, and is likely to affect the brickwork and clay-tiled roof. Even if the plume is directed away from the walls it will fall on the large garden areas. The Brookfield Estate is composed of arts-and-crafts type solid brick and terracotta buildings laid out in the garden suburb style and designed by the assistant of Edwin Lutyens, Albert Thomas, as 'homes for heroes' (1919). They are solidly built of high quality original materials and need to be taken care of with due regard to their character and qualities. We feel multiple flues will be a negative visual feature, alien to the semi-rural quality of the area, and we are concerned that the applicant is not sufficiently sympathetic to the character of this estate, having experienced their previous work to clay-tiled roofs and sash windows. We believe that as the Options Appraisal points out, economies will be provided by tenants having the ability to turn down or switch their heating off altogether when they have to meet the expense of individual gas accounts without the benefit of Camden's bulk purchase. This, combined with the loss of airing cupboards which will be removed when the hot water tanks are removed, and the draught-proofing of the windows which Apollo carried out recently, will lead to damp and condensation and be detrimental to the buildings causing them to deteriorate. We understand that the 'whole life costing' analysis outlined by English Heritage (Historic England) shows that older houses are more energy efficient than modern ones if properly maintained.

We have many concerns about this proposal. We feel it is unnecessary. But if replacement were needed at any point we feel there are far better options such as simply replacing the communal boilers currently installed which work beautifully and provide economies of scale. These concerns are being addressed by residents under the current consultation process to the Council officer concerned.

Our point here is that the planning application to which the current one is an amendment, expired in May 2015. We would therefore be grateful for the opportunity to register an objection to these flues before the permission is extended and to make a proper representation in the event of a new Planning application.

Yours sincerely

Patricia Salazar
Chair
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