

Application No:	Consultees Name:	Consultees Addr:	Received:	Comment:	Response:
2015/4001/P	John Stewart	9 Camden Place 110 Kentish Town Road NW1 9PX	24/08/2015 10:47:58	OBJ	Objection to Planning Application 2015/4001/P Background

I am the owner of 9 Camden Place on the top floor of this building.

The planning committee should be aware of the special circumstances of this building.

This is a highly unusual development comprising commercial office premises on the 1st 4 floors and residential flats on the top 2 floors of the building. This is a very unusual configuration in Camden that I have not encountered before. These flats are not situated above retail or restaurant premises and this was a crucial factor in the current flat owners decision to purchase their flats.

The committee should also be aware of the direct financial impact that their decision will have on residents. Flat owners have to contribute significantly to the cost of the common areas of the building and costs such as essential repairs to the exterior.

The existing plans by the applicant involve changing the exterior of the Kentish Town Road side of the building to include a brickwork façade. The brickwork façade will undoubtedly add significantly to the cost of the needed repairs, and it is the residents who will end up having to foot the bill.

Although the applicant has said that they have undertaken a consultation process with the residents they have been very selective with the information that they have agreed to provide the residents. As residents we expressed concerns about how they would distinguish between 'repairs' which we would legally have to contribute to and 'improvements' which the applicant would have to pay for.

Management agents for the freeholder, Workman, informed us on 31 July that their estimates were based on a quantity surveyor's report they had commissioned. I requested a copy of this report to see how they were able to separate 'repairs' and 'improvements', but they have not been willing to provide this to the residents and we have received no response from them at all on this report.

There is a longstanding history of overcharging of residents in the building via service charges. To demonstrate to the committee the scale of this, my current service charge bill includes a charge of over £900 just for my personal share of the electricity used in the common parts of the building. That's over £900 per annum for the lightbulbs used in lighting my way from the outside of the building to my front door. That's just my share for flat 9 and the other 14 flats are billed similar amounts. It sounds unimaginable, but it's true. My total service charge for 2015 will be around £25,000 according to the latest figures supplied.

The applicant is proposing significant changes to the building that will affect residents and my specific objections are as follows:

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Local List of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest:

Residents purchased their flats knowing that their building was on this register. It would be grossly unfair on residents to remove this listing after we have made our purchases on that basis.

The applicant is proposing that our building should not be included on this list on the basis of 2 factors:

1. The Kentish Town Road façade was originally brickwork.

The applicant has gone to great lengths to try and establish the history of the building's external architecture. All they have 'proved' is that the building had a brickwork façade in 1903 and sometime before 1961 the building had a new smooth frontage.

The importance of the building is in its appearance now. Its original frontage is not a key factor in deciding any special status a building should be given.

Again residents made their purchases based on the appearance of the building now. It has a wonderful imposing façade, unique to the area and should be preserved rather than be covered in a modern brickwork façade.

The importance of the buildings appearance was fully recognised by the property developers when developing the flats. In fact it was the building frontage that featured on the entire front cover of the original marketing brochure – not the interiors or the views from the top, but the external Kentish Town Road façade (photograph attached).

I believe the desire to use a brickwork façade is to make the building more inline with other commercial buildings and thus the applicant hopes to achieve higher commercial rents.

2. The exterior is not limestone.

I do not have the expert knowledge to determine whether the façade of the building is true limestone or is a render as the applicant asserts.

I would argue that it does not matter whether it is a render or not. The building looks like limestone and that is the key factor. Look at the many protected historic buildings that surround Regents Park – which are clearly render rather than limestone blocks. The architectural style of the building must be protected.

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Additional Architectural Consequences of a brickwork façade on the building:

The building is not a rectangle but is a wedge shape due to it being near an angular road intersection.

In section 3.0 of the applicants Design and Access Statement this can be clearly seen in the photograph top right.

Unusually, when viewed from Kentish Town Road both sides of the building can be seen at once. It has the appearance of a coherent architectural structure from one side of the block to the other. The applicant has already repaired the Royal College Street side of the building this year without the need for a brickwork façade.

To include a brickwork façade on the Kentish Town Road side will destroy the symmetry of the building, and the overall effect will be a reduction in architectural coherence, detrimental to the neighbourhood.

Change of Use Application for the Ground Floor to include Café or Retail Space

Residents did not purchase their flats with this in mind. We chose a building with commercial use only that provides greater security and a less noisy or smelly environment.

This is an office block and should be kept as such. We did not purchase flats above restaurants or retail premises – to allow this change of usage without residential approval is simply not fair on the residents.

The applicant's plans also allow any tenant to connect to the internal space of the building which causes a security risk for the residents as unauthorised visitors could access residential floors.

The area is amply served with more than enough food and retail premises and would not benefit from additional space for such use being made available.

Overall:

I hope the committee will see fit to reject this application. In a large commercial looking building like this it is very easy to lose sight of the fact that this building actually contains people's homes and commercial motives should not take precedence over residents wishes.

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2015/4001/P	Marco Cortez	Flat 5 106-110 Kentish Town Road London	23/08/2015 23:13:03	OBJ	<p>I really object to create more cafe-potential space in previously occupied factory/warehouse/office space. The planning application requests enlargement of the ground floor unit on the KTR side for "retail" or cafe usage. I object to the potential for occupation by a cafe on the grounds that my area has already too many eating/drinking establishments. .</p> <p>The planning brochure states that the tenant of the retail space will be allowed to "install a short internal ramp and door linking the unit to the internal circulation in the double height space." This will give the retail customers access to the inside of the building, for example to use to common area toilets. I do not see how this improves building security. I completely object this item.</p> <p>I also object to the planned changes to bicycle storage for leaseholders residents. Planning permission for residential use was originally granted in 2004 on condition that bicycle storage would be provided and I use it on a regular basis. This was because residential car parking spaces are unavailable on local streets The only way to get a bicycle into the smaller lift is to hang it on end or to disassemble it. I see this as a violation of the landlords obligation to provide accessible cycle storage for residents.</p> <p>Lastly but not least, I have another public concern. Residents currently have access to the Royal College Street entrance. This is a safer bicycle entry route than the busy Kentish Town Road entrance, which is blocked off by a bus stop. The plans say "At lower ground a lobby is to be added to the East core permitting office area tenants to bring their bicycles in direct from the entrance on Royal College Street. The existing bicycle store for residents and tenants is retained. However the bicycle storage provision for office tenants is improved by the addition of bike racks in the void spaces adjacent to the plant rooms." This is ok and correct, but will be unavailable to residents, who will be obliged to cross a busy road and traverse a bus stop instead.</p>

Application No:	Consultees Name:	Consultees Addr:	Received:	Comment:	Response:
2015/4001/P	Ian Robinson	Flat 1 106-110 Kentisk Town Rd nw1 9px	23/08/2015 11:12:57	INT	<p>I object to adding more cafe-potential space in previously occupied factory/warehouse/office space. The planning application requests enlargement of the ground floor unit on the KTR side for "retail" or cafe usage. I object to the potential for occupation by a cafe on the grounds that the NW1 and NW5 neighbourhoods are unable to sustain their current stock of eating/drinking establishments. Every month in the Camden News Journal here is a new story of one of the traditional public houses under threat to be taken over by a real estate letting agent. The community voices its concern, which I share, over its attachment to these properties, often with heritage status. The approved enlargement of the Camden Locks onto Hawley Rd will also increase the capacity for food retail outlets. At present there are three vacant retail properties boarded up in the block immediately to the North of the subject property, including a former Indian restaurant, now closed.</p> <p>The planning brochure says that the tenant of the retail space will be allowed to "install a short internal ramp and door linking the unit to the internal circulation in the double height space." This will give the retail customers access to the inside of the building, for example to use to common area toilets. I do not see how this improves building security.</p> <p>I also object to the planned changes to bicycle storage for building residents. Planning permission for residential use was originally granted in 2004 on condition that bicycle storage would be provided; this was because residential car parking spaces are unavailable on local streets. At present this access is provided by the main lift, which is just large enough to accommodate a standard bicycle placed diagonally across its floor. The proposed plans will replace this with: "The smaller of the two existing lifts is to be reconfigured with a new lift double entry lift car with fob controls. The shaft is also to be altered to enable this lift to go down to lower ground – at present only the main lift does this. This lift will be accessed at ground floor from the residents entrance. From the internal circulation only the main lift will be accessible at ground floor. This reconfiguration permits the Kentish Town Road northern entrance to be dedicated to the Residents at the 5th and 6th floors. This provides a secure entry point with direct access up via lift to the residential floors and down to the basement bicycle store. Residents would still have use of the main entrance and lift by arrangement for large deliveries and wheelchair access."</p> <p>The only way to get a bicycle into the smaller lift is to hang it on end or to disassemble it, or else to arrange a large delivery every day. I see this as a violation of the landlords obligation to provide accessible cycle storage for residents.</p> <p>Lastly, I have a public safety concern. Residents presently have access to the Royal College Street entrance. This is a safer bicycle entry route than the busy Kentish Town Road entrance, which is blocked off by a bus stop. The plans say "At lower ground a lobby is to be added to the East core permitting office area tenants to bring their bicycles in direct from the entrance on Royal College Street. The existing bicycle store for residents and tenants is retained. However the bicycle storage provision for office tenants is improved by the addition of bike racks in the void spaces adjacent to the plant rooms." This is fine and correct, but will be unavailable to residents, who will be obliged to cross a busy road and traverse a bus stop instead.</p>