

52 Fortess Road  
London  
NW5 2HG

September 14<sup>th</sup> 2015

Dear Mr Peres Da Costa

**PLANNING APPLICATION CONSULTATION: 2015/4501/P  
36 - 52 & 20 Fortess Grove NW5**

I write in response to your invitation to comment on the above application for M&A Coachworks at 20 Fortess Grove to be converted to housing and business floor space, according to plans submitted by the Eleanor Pamer Trust.

I am the freeholder of the listed property that is 52 Fortess Road and the leaseholder of the Garden Flat in that property . It is - and has been - my family home of 30 years : the side wall of the Garage is my rear garden wall . I am very heavily impacted by this application and so you will understand my most fervent opposition to this proposal .

My material reasons for objection are listed below.

**Noise**

The back gardens to the terrace on Fortess Road provide a quiet haven against the very busy main road. This proposed conversion to housing directly where the gardens are on our terrace will inevitably mean increased and constant noise, which was unintrusive when M & A Coachworks occupied the site, as they operated on working hours, with evenings and weekends quiet and restful. Noise will no longer be restricted to these times and will result in a loss of peace in the evenings in our gardens and back bedrooms, which are not double glazed and where I, and many residents, including the elderly and young children of Fortess Road, choose to sleep given the noise and busyness at the front of our houses.

The mitigation of the glass roof to our side of the terrace, which I understand is a compensatory feature that resulted from pre-planning meetings with the applicant, will not silence the noise that will 'leak' from the open terraces at the back of the new housing. This noise will have a significant and I fear unbearable impact on our quality of life twenty-four hours a day.

~ I therefore object on the grounds of strongly increased, disruptive and permanent noise.

## **Privacy and Proximity**

The housing development which the applicant proposes, standing to the apex of the existing roof, will directly overlook my garden and back rooms, which are my bedroom, my glass roofed conservatory and on the ground floor, my kitchen. This represents a significant loss of privacy, again which is even more precious due to our location on a busy main road, from which passengers on the 134 bus can see directly into our front rooms. At night, the light shining from these new properties will cause a direct disturbance. Again this loss of privacy would particularly impact our quality of life. The development stands less than 18m, from my conservatory, and I believe this close a development represents considerable overdensity.

Additionally, I am particularly concerned about the lack of design clarity and information from the applicants in regard to the glass windows within the existing warehouse wall and their plans for them. These are currently breeze-blocked sealed, which contributes significantly to our privacy and noise reduction; if these blocked windows became transparent, I would lose all privacy in my back garden.

~ I therefore object on the grounds of breached and diminished privacy

## **Effect on Listed Building and Conservation Area**

The houses planned constitute an overdevelopment for this area, and the loss of a building which is very well suited to light industrial use, the reason it is has been occupied for years. Housing, particularly that which is so tight in the space of these proposals, ruins the character of the former stables and their relationship with the Grade II listed terrace.

The houses planned are too many for this tight space, the density of occupation and the overlarge size of the development is an inappropriate form of infill development.

~ I therefore object on the grounds of a poor fit with the nature of existing buildings.

## **Design Appearance and Materials**

I do not believe the use of a glass roof is an attractive or acceptable feature from the view of neighbours, nor is it an appropriate material in a listed conservation area, clashing as it would with the character of brick. Furthermore, we have had no reassurance around the removal of the long asbestos roof that currently covers the structure nor do I believe that the glass or its narrow frames provide the privacy they attempt to achieve.

Additionally, the use of a new yellow brick facade to the housing within the shed structure is completely inappropriate, clashing with the existing brick palette on

both the Fortress Road and Railey Mews sides, standing out against the current character of the landscape.

~ I therefore object on the grounds of poor fit with the nature of a conservation area.

### **Nature & Conservation**

There are tall trees at the back garden of 52 and a mature tree close to the structure in the garden of 54, and there seems to have been no research into whether these trees could be damaged by construction or that they may cause problems for the newly-built housing in the future, requiring their removal. The gardens and roof of the shed are home to an abundance of wildlife and I am concerned that the construction and the finished development will result in its loss, will interfere with the much needed greenery and fresher air provided will severely reduce our enjoyment of our gardens and our homes.

~ I therefore object on the grounds of the risk to nature and impact on to the welfare and wellbeing of the residents of the area

### **Local, Strategic, Regional and National Planning Policies**

It is evident the application in this form is coming forward as a result of the current temporary permitted development extension of business to residential conversion. However, even as a compromise of nine housing units and some retained employment space, it fails to satisfy requirements, providing as it does, a poor range of housing, unaffordable to most and in contradiction to Camden's wishes for its residents, with an overall loss of employment space.

I believe this development to be contrary to the borough's intentions as characterised in the Local Development Framework 2011 and as supported by the GLA London Plan. The LDF's Policy 1.13 (page 25) states Kentish Town is a particularly suitable site for office use and other employment space

As stated earlier, the development of housing would result in a loss of the character of a mixed area the shed and existing housing currently achieves. The Council's desire to retain such characteristic mixed areas is stated in Policy 4.13 (page 44):

The proposed development stands in contrast to neighbour, community and Council wishes for the area and its contribution to London. Furthermore, the development does not provide affordable housing, contributing little to the housing Camden really needs in this housing crisis.

~ I therefore object on the grounds that these plans do not fulfil agreed Camden's policies and priorities.

In conclusion, I wish also to register my concerns about yet another considerable construction exercise in another small space with the risks that this entails, in particular disturbance , security and safety.

I look to Camden Council to live up and into its own policies and plans, which I support to the full, by rejecting this application which fits badly with our hopes for our neighbourhood and our expectations of their stewardship .

Yours faithfully

Dr Ruth Silver DBE