
From: James Watson [REDACTED]
Sent: 08 December 2015 14:56
To: McClue, Jonathan
Subject: 2015/4456/P Admiral Mann Public House
Attachments: AdmiralMannRegister_PlanNGL697839.pdf; Draft Camden Local Plan - Pubs.pdf

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Dear Jonathan,

On behalf of the Campaign for Real Ale I would make further comments on the latest proposal put forward by the owner of The Admiral Mann. CAMRA once more OBJECTS to these proposals and we somewhat exasperated by the repeated attempts by the owner to destroy this valued community pub, which is an Asset of Community Value.

1. It is important perhaps to remind officers at this juncture, that Mr Josh Moore paid almost £1.2M for the pub (attached) and the small flat nextdoor. This figure was roughly 3 times the proper market valuation at the time. As a general rule of thumb, London freehouse pubs rent our at 10-15 x freehold value and so at the price paid a publican would be expected to pay a minimum of £80,000 in annual rent (free of tie). This is an absurd figure for a backstreet pub of the size and layout of The Admiral Mann. A more realistic rent would be £40,000 annually, placing the freehold market price, in its lawful use as an A4 pub, at around £400 - £600,000.

2. The developer has purchased this viable and previously profitable and sustainable pub, at a development hope value. He has taken a gamble. This is not uncommon but it is more usual to make the completion of the sale "subject to planning". If planning permission is not granted, the sale would then fail to complete. This shares the risk between the purchaser and seller. In this case Mr Moore made no attempt to ascertain the appropriateness of a change of use to residential. If had done so, he would have realised Camden Council's excellent yet still improving track record in safeguarding the Borough's threatened pubs. We would remind officers that it is not the role of the planning system to reward gamblers. Moreover, it is the role of the planning system to safeguard communities against the negative impacts of a free market, in accordance with planning policy.

3. The policy arguments vindicating Camden's actions to date at this site are well-rehearsed if now a little tedious. Community pubs such as The Admiral Mann are recognised at Paragraphs 69 and 70 of the Framework, and at 3.1B, 3.16, 4.8, 4.48A and 7.1 of the London Plan. ACV registration is specifically identified in the Mayor's recent SPG and Camden's own admirable policy DP15 is being strengthened and emboldened by emerging policy which will further seek to resist the loss of community pubs and specifically recognise ACV status as material. National, Regional and Local planning policy is stacked well against the applicant. He realises this only too well and is coming back again and again with vexatious proposals, each a mere tweak of the previous, in an effort to wear down the Council and the Camden community. It is important that both bodies remain committed to saving this pub for the sake of future generations but also to send a strong signal to speculative developers who would seek to destroy Camden's community social infrastructure.

4. Our previous comments on the viability of lock-up pubs, the importance of retaining trading and cellar space, the need for a kitchen, and the benefit of generous landlord's accommodation all remain valid and I will not repeat them in detail here, other than to say that the latest scheme which removes the ancillary accommodation and the kitchen and reduces the usable space appears to be a calculated attempt to ensure that The Admiral Mann is unattractive to those pub operators who would otherwise be very keen on this high quality site. The owner's losses will then be offset by the substantial gains from new residential accommodation. Such C3 provision must NOT come at the price of sacrificing the pub, which is protected by policy.

5. The pub has been closed for over 1 year now, quite needlessly. There are strong similarities between this campaign, and that of The Chesham Arms in Hackney. Back in 2012, a speculative developer overpaid for The Chesham Arms and the pub remained closed for around 1000 days (2.5 years). However, having finally exhausted all planning and PD options, the developer reluctantly granted a commercial lease to a publican and the pub relaunched in July 2015 to much acclaim. See www.cheshamarms.com The success of The Chesham Arms is due to a co-ordinated campaign in which Hackney Council worked closely with, and in support of, the local community. The Council was firm in its stance that loss of ancillary accommodation would ham the locally listed pub and undermine

the ACV. This was challenged at enforcement appeal in which the Council won. The reason the pub remains successful and highly profitable, is that the Council resisted any attempts to split the planning unit and retained the entire building as a single A4 premises. Compare this success to the unfortunate experience in Camden at The Dartmouth Arms, where the Council granted consent for A4 to C3 conversion and the pub sadly remains closed.

We have widespread experience of London pub campaigns and we would reassure the Council that there is a great demand for good sites across all inner London boroughs. The planning system has a vital role to play in setting the right planning context in which the market can effectively operate. It falls to you to restrict the use of this site to that of A4, in a robust way without compromise. The pub has remained closed for too long already, depriving citizens of a cherished community space. Our experience has demonstrated elsewhere that after several rejected planning applications (and it might need a failed appeal too) the owner will eventually come to the realisation that what he has bought is a pub. And pubs are worth what people can realistically rent them out for. Please continue to stand firm in support of The Admiral Mann and REJECT this latest application which seeks to destroy it.

Kindest regards,

James

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