

THE
ISLINGTON SOCIETY

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25 November 2015

Development Management
London Borough of Camden
2nd Floor, 5 Pancras Square
Judd Street
London WC1H 9JE

Dear Sirs

**Planning Applications:
2015/6015/P, 2015/6016/L and 2015/6018/P
Coal Drops Yard, Stable Street, N1C 4AB**

In 2004 the Islington Society, responding to the proposals submitted by Argent for the whole Kings Cross Railway Lands site, welcomed them in many respects, as follows: "First, the fact that after decades of blight, the prospect that something will happen Second the degree to which the heritage of the site is being respected in the plans...". We also welcomed "the provision of strong north-south routes close to the desire line... However, the chosen route may compromise the Camley Street Natural Park, as there are conflicting needs..."

The Society's concern for the conservation of built heritage, for movement patterns were central to its comments. The proposals now submitted for the Coal Drops are in conflict with many of those concerns :

1. The proposals for the heritage of the site that we welcomed did not include the additional storey on the Coal Drops nor the linking of the two blocks and the covering of the courtyard between them.
2. The open air character of the site and the plain functional character of the industrial/railway buildings was to be respected.
3. The curving up of the slated roofs now proposed, to accommodate the extra storey, is out of keeping with the plain architectural character and with the straightforward constructional technology of the Coal Drops.
4. At the same time the courtyard space below will be much darkened by the bizarre structure bridging it overhead, and its character as open space - which is in short supply generally in the development - will be compromised.
5. The development of the Coal Drops as two rows of small retail units and craft workshops almost like an open air market, which is well illustrated in Urban Design Statement para 4.8 forming part of the Approved plans, will be lost, giving it more the character of an enclosed shopping mall.
6. Without having full details to hand it looks as though, if there is a need now perceived for a retail unit with a larger floor space, it might be provided at ground level linking the Coal Drops at their northern end, rather as Waitrose does at the Brunswick Centre, with a route across it from the upper level of the Coal Drops to Lewis Cubitt Square to the north.

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7. Other options should, in our view be, investigated that would be less of a transformation of the character of these listed buildings and retain the sense of open space.

We recommend that the present applications relating to the Coal Drops be refused'.

Yours sincerely

A solid black rectangular box used to redact the signature of James Dunnett.

James Dunnett
For the Islington Society