

I am writing to comment on application nos 2015 / 2559 / P;
2015 / 2920 / P; and 2015 / 3618 / P.

There are, however, aspects of the proposals in general that bear upon the applications for the approval of details and materials. These are set out below:

I. Background: the development

Your council rightly concluded in its decision notice dated 1 November 2002 that the density of the proposed development was too great. It is possible that skilful design might have overcome this question while maintaining the Council's standards of overshadowing, overlooking, and design. Unfortunately this was not the case. Residents have identified problems with the proposals — including those listed below — which, it will probably be recognised, all stem from the attempt to cram too much accommodation onto too small a site:

I A. Overlooking of College Lane houses


The four storey 'mews' houses to the north of the site are placed so close to the windows of the existing houses in College Lane that the Council's standards designed to avoid overlooking are not reached: fully glazed walls look straight on to bedroom windows only 10 meters distant. There are also blank walls facing the existing windows as close as 7 meters.

I B. Aspect

The two blocks to the south of the site are both placed tight against the southern boundary depriving their residents of southern light and causing the maximum detrimental impact on the gardens of Lady Somerset Road. The relationship with the existing no. 30 College Lane is rough and crude leaving a saw tooth gap against the existing building.

I C. Overlooking (in southernmost blocks)

In consequence of the positioning of the two southern blocks the access path to the eastern block (where 38 bed spaces are indicated on the drawings) passes directly in front of the only windows to the ground



floor single-room flat. The arrangement of the access also means that the main living room window of the western of the two ground floor flats is overlooked by everyone entering or leaving the two blocks: the main living room window of the basement flat below is similarly overlooked.

1 D. Site Area

The area of site indicated on the drawings is not all in the ownership or control of the developer (a strip of land to the east is in the ownership of the Council). There was a strong opinion that this error put the consent gained into question, and that the opportunity to mitigate some of the problems outlined above had arisen. The developer has however seems to have adopted the position that he will change no aspect of the design whatsoever (notwithstanding the error in site boundaries).

However we are now told in support of the applications and appeals that the design is 'outmoded'. I argue here that 'outmoded' or not, it is flawed — for the reasons stated above. Any revising of the consent should have as its aim the mitigation of these problems.


2. To address the applications in particular:

2.A 2015 / 3618 / P (Landscape and External Works)

- i. The access path to the four-storey southern block remains so positioned that the serious **overlooking** described above continues. The opportunity should be taken to reduce such overlooking to an absolute minimum — and, in the mean time, the application for approval of details **refused**.
- ii. The arrangements shown for refuse disposal are those current in the last decade. The landscaping drawings should reflect the current arrangements for refuse disposal and recycling.
- iii. As noted in 2 B below, low walls have been built in an unapproved brick.

2 B 2015 / P2920 / P (Colour of facing bricks)

The change proposed is from a darkish brick — intended, as I



understand it, to blend with the predominantly London Stock bricks of the surroundings — to a **bright yellow** brick. This change increases the harmful impact on the Conservation Area making the identified flaws in the design that affect its neighbours more conspicuous. It is also hard to see too why two contiguous blocks are faced in different colour bricks.

Notwithstanding that the yellow facing bricks remain **unapproved**, they have already been built in place. The same unapproved yellow bricks have also been used in the low brick walls that are part of the **landscaping scheme**.

In support of the applications and appeal it is stated that non-approval of changes in materials ‘*risk[s] delay to completion*’. These events, however, seem to suggest that the developer is quite prepared to ignore the Local Planning Authority and build regardless of approvals. The application should be **refused**.

2 C 2015 / 2559 / P (Facing materials to four-storey houses)

In view of the close overlooking and overshadowing of the existing houses in the Conservation Area, **no consent** in respect of materials should be given **unless and until** the Council is assured that the materials specified have the greatest possible mitigating affect in relation to the existing College Lane Houses. Perhaps a number of sample panels built on the site would help to reassure councillors and residents on this matter.