

Application No:	Consultees Name:	Consultees Addr:	Received:	Comment:	Response:
2016/1117/P	Simon Kemper	32 Reachview Close Baynes Street NW1 0TY NW1 0TY	30/03/2016 15:16:28	OBJ	<p>I wish to oppose the planning application as it is currently proposed.</p> <p>I hold it to be too massive, dominating and harmful to this currently open and light section of the canal where the towpath is widely used and enjoyed by the public and noted for being sunny and pleasant. The new scheme will destroy this open pleasant character, forming a continuous, cliff-like wall from most angles, as the 2 buildings visually merge into 1. It will overshadow the canal, the towpath and existing housing for much of the time, as is clearly shown in the Daylight report accompanying the application.</p> <p>The new buildings are twice the height of existing buildings of character in this section of the canal such as the Constitution Pub, Eagle Wharf, also Royal College Street housing immediately adjacent to the site. There are very few buildings of greater height than 3 stories for a considerable distance in Royal College Street. The width of the new buildings also add to the effect of them being overbearing monoliths. In particular, the Southern building on Georgiana Street is a huge monolithic block that will dominate the area in a completely new way, as is effectively admitted in the Design and Access report :</p> <p>"The development ... will help pedestrians, cyclists and canal users to orient themselves around the area" (Design and Access report P 32)</p> <p>Clearly this is only possible if the new buildings are out of scale with the existing ones, i.e. much too big and massive for the character of this canal section. Nor is there any evidence at all that canal users or pedestrians are in need of this aid or are getting frequently lost.</p> <p>New Courtyard - fresh public Space</p> <p>The developers claim that the space between the 2 buildings, the courtyard, will be open to the public and provide valuable new public space. Both of these claims are highly questionable, for the following reasons :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the daylight report shows that the new courtyard will be almost continuously in deep shadow, hence cold and gloomy • it will be surrounded by tall, cliff-like buildings • it is a dead end unlike the towpath on the other side, with no incentive for the public to go there • the main entrance is a completely roofed in tunnel in a wall of building fronting Georgina Street • it is likely that very few of the public will be aware of this space and that it will be of such a gloomy, overshadowed character that few or none of them will use it in the fashion claimed. <p>This new courtyard in no way compensates for the loss of amenity of the existing canal/towpath due to overshadowing by the wall of new buildings</p> <p>Gap between the 2 Buildings</p> <p>The developers claim that the gap between the 2 buildings will continue to allow the sunlight onto the</p>

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canal and preserve the open character of this canal section, in addition that it will preserve the view of the valuable roof layout on Royal College Street housing. They make extended comparison with the sensitive and largely low-rise development at Lawfords Wharf, pointing out that the gap between the 2 main buildings is the same.

The smallest building proposed in Bangor Wharf is both significantly higher and much wider than the largest building in Lawfords Wharf, the comparison is spurious. Most of the longer building in Lawfords Wharf is only 1.5 stories in height, even the smaller building proposed for Bangor Wharf will be a solid block 20 high by 20m wide, while the buildings behind Lawfords Wharf are themselves lowrise, hence considerable amounts of light are allowed to reach the canal.

To achieve a similar effect to the gap in Lawfords Wharf, the gap in the Bangor Wharf buildings would need to be at least half as big again. The Daylight report shows that for much of the time especially in Winter, the shadow will form a continuous block across the canal and towpath, and up the Reachview Close flats on the other side.

The graphics released in the application clearly show that the 2 buildings will form a continuous visual wall when viewed from the towpath, fencing in the canal section from most angles. In addition, the graphics clearly show that very little of the valuable Royal College Street roofline will be visible from the towpath as the developers claim, even then it can only be seen when viewed direct-on.

Impact on Light and Quality of Amenity in existing Housing

Housing in Royal College Street will lose up to 32% of their current light in total, while Reachview Close flats will lose up to 40% of their vital Winter light. This is a drastic and totally unreasonable degradation of the amenity of existing housing.

Council Guidance for the Site

The specific Council guidance for the site states that the development should :

- to open up the canal frontage and to allow public access
- to provide design of the highest standard that respects local context
- to protect the privacy and amenity of neighbouring residential properties
- to enhance and improve the setting of the Regents Canal Conservation Area

As I point out, it does none of these things.

It does not open up the canal frontage, it walls and shadows it in. In exchange for a light, sunny, popular towpath section, it offers a gloomy, overshadowed, cold dead end of a courtyard that few people will know exists and less will want to use.

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					<p>The building does NOT respect the local context, the buildings are too big and massive, so much so that they can be "used as a landmark", so greatly will they tower above their surroundings.</p> <p>By overshadowing and intruding upon existing housing on both sides of the canal, clearly it does NOT protect either their privacy or their amenity. Nor, obviously does depriving residents of 40% of their vital Winter light, indeed this is a massive harmful act.</p> <p>These 2 huge new buildings, that will wall in the West side of the canal section are totally contrary to protecting the Canal Conservation area, certainly they do not enhance it in any way.</p> <p>For these reasons, I hold this application to be inappropriate and harmful for the area and believe it should be rejected as it currently stands.</p>
