

Application No:	Consultees Name:	Consultees Addr:	Received:	Comment:	Response:
2015/7207/P	Tom Young	19 Bassett St London NW5 4PG	12/04/2016 10:23:07	OBJ	<p>The scheme proposed by Goldcrest Land on the land next to The Fiddler's Elbow ph fronting Malden Rd has important weaknesses that make it unworthy of planning permission.</p> <p><b>AFFORDABLE HOUSING</b> The planning statement says LBC's original scoping document exploring the site's capacity does not presume affordable housing: this is far from clear. It includes a simple schedule of accommodation and no mention of the tenure type.</p> <p>No affordable housing is offered in the development. Nor has any compensatory off-site provision been arranged.</p> <p>This is woefully inadequate given need for affordable housing for keyworkers able to fill posts provided locally.</p> <p><b>BUSINESS USE</b> Malden Rd used to be fronted by many more ground floor retail units. They were swept away by comprehensive redevelopment in the late 60s and early 70s, the "regeneration" of that time.</p> <p>Remnants of the retail frontage lie opposite the planning application site. They provide low cost entry level spaces for all kinds of enterprise.</p> <p>In fact, the 60s and 70s development did include retail spaces: see the adjacent Leydown buildings and Cheriton further up the street. In other words, there was some recognition at the time that it was necessary to compensate for lost business space, even if the frontage effects were not precisely tuned.</p> <p>Further up Malden Rd, the local authority is engaged in "regeneration" of the Wendling Housing Estate. The works planned include so-called "frontage improvements" in recognition of the fact Wendling's existing relationship to the street is inadequate and damaging to the public profile of the area as a whole.</p> <p>Gospel Oak has lost a great deal of its local authority business or employment space under CIP. The losses are compounded by the PDO class J.</p> <p>Malden Rd is an important public space in the area as a whole. The 24 and 46 buses run along it. Development appropriate to the more pronounced "publicness" of the street should be sought.</p> <p>Shop or commercial spaces at ground floor with</p> <p>Given the developer's plan to house young professionals in a development of 20 or so 1b or studio flats, there is no particularly strong or obvious reason not to include ground floor commercial space. This seems even more sensible given how constrained the ground floor studio flats shown in the planning scheme are.</p>

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Replacing the possibly rather unpleasant ground floor studios, which are single aspect, and publicly exposed, with commercial units would be consistent both Malden Rd's need for sensible frontage development that acknowledges its public importance and the local loss of employment space. It would moreover provide space for the kinds of startups that "young professionals" generate: it would in other words offer another dimension for incomers drawn by the development to become local stakeholders.

In short, the lack of ground floor commercial spaces is a serious mistake, obviously driven by the developer's lack of interest in "patient investment": in other words, Goldcrest Land aim to "hit and run": build, sell and leave.

#### GROUND FLOOR RESIDENTIAL

The approach to the ground floor studio units is to recess their main public frontage behind a railing. The flats each have a single window/door screen facing Malden Rd. The front doors are in this screen.

There is no daylighting at the rear of the plan.

Along Malden Rd, the main approach to reconciling residential buildings to the street's intenser public condition is to withdraw the housefronts behind a set of steps up to the front doors. This device establishes a real and ceremonial distance.

Purpose-built shops and pub buildings along the street are on the other hand built up to the street. This distinguishes more public buildings from less public ones.

The effect achieved by street level residential space (particularly in relation to small flat plans) can be seen on Weedington Rd where the Pocket Living development offers similar accommodation along a street where the intensity of passing traffic is much less great. It is not particularly impressive.

The Weedington Rd units are in a state of permanent curtained closure. The "amenity" space at the front is not used.

The result is the public realm is distorted by an overtly uncomfortable relationship between homes and public space. Not only that, the unused amenity space is wasted. By building hard up against the pavement, and including ground floor commercial to suit, it would have been possible to build bigger upper floor units. Given the tightness of the internal arrangements both in the Pocket Living development and at 3 Malden Rd, it seems misguided to waste this development space because of unwillingness to follow the traditional pattern of including ground floor commercial or workspaces underneath dwellings.

#### SIDE-ELEVATIONS

Including ground floor commercial would quite possibly make it much easier to house utility spaces such as a bin store along the street. The submitted plan shows the bin-store opening onto the side alley-way where its impact will be heightened by constrained space.

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					<p>The bin-store should be housed inconspicuously, inodorously and conveniently, along the main street frontage where it can be readily and swiftly accessed by the recycling vehicle.</p> <p>The north-side upper flats have kitchen windows facing up Malden Rd in a position which might make future development of the Leydown building more difficult.</p> <p>SUMMARY OF SUGGESTED CHANGES</p> <p>The Goldcrest Land proposal to developed the site at 3 Malden Rd would be improved by making the following changes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>—replacing all the ground floor studio flats with commercial space</li> <li>—extending the ground floor spaces out to the street line i.e using the space now assigned as amenity space for the studio flats</li> <li>—linking some of that commercial space with the "Yo-Pro" programme for the building</li> <li>—incorporating the binstore along the street front in a tidy and modest way</li> <li>removing the north windows from the upper floor flats</li> <li>—extending the upper floor flats over the extended ground floor</li> <li>—adding an affordable housing component</li> </ul>

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