

6 Colville Place
London W1T 2BJ

Zenab Haji-Ismail
Planning Officer
London Borough of Camden

Dear Ms Haji-Ismail

RE: 2016/1345/P. 28 Charlotte St, London W1

I own 6 Colville Place and have 2 young children who have used the playground in Crabtree Fields since they were born.

We would all like to object to the proposed planning application for the above property.

The playground is a great area for both children to play in and for parents to sit and relax and have some time out while their children play safely in this enclosed area.

There is a bench at the rear of the play area where my wife used to sit and breast feed while our slightly older child played in the sand pit. The area at the back where the bench is was designed to be private, just for this reason. It is still used today by mothers in the same way my wife used it.

Being enclosed by high walls on 3 sides with no overlooking, this play space is a very calm and safe space for parents to let their children be free to enjoy themselves, to play and be creative in their play. I understand that the wooden cabinet at the back of the play area, against the rear wall, where the applicant proposes to open up, is designed for such creative play. It is a secret place at the back of the playground where children can imagine and make up things. It's lovely to see how the children use this space and the cabinet and this sort of play is extremely important for children's creative development.

There is not another open space in the whole of Fitzrovia that offers a play space like this and looking at the proposed planning application, this space will be destroyed if the application is granted.

I think the reasons for saying this are pretty obvious, as the applicant proposes to remove the solid wall between their property and the play area, which will render the area at the back of the play ground a no go area for parents to sit privately and forget for a moment that they are in the middle of a hectic city. Then there are the various terraces and windows for numerous flats, which will create overlooking into the playground.

Looking at the proposed planning application, it seems like the ground floor flat will be only about a metre behind the proposed opening in the rear wall, so there really would be no privacy in the oasis at the rear of the playground, as it will feel like you are on the terrace or in the garden of that flat.

There is also a terrace at the 2nd floor level, which will loom over the playground and again will mean a loss of privacy and seclusion for parents and children in the playground.

This is a shockingly unsympathetic proposal in relation to the children's playground, Crabtree Fields and also the lovely Georgian building that they would gut and ruin forever, if this application were allowed.

I have one more objection to this proposal. Looking at the walls that surround the playground and also the former use of this area before it was a public open space, I believe that the walls surrounding the play area belong solely to Camden Council and not the applicant.

There used to be a warehouse in the space where the playground now is, which was bombed during the war. The original high walls that surround the play area would have supported the roof of the warehouse. The warehouse owner built the walls and so the walls would have been the property of the warehouse and not the buildings that surround it.

So it appears to me that this neighbour is presuming they own the wall in which they would like to hack huge holes in, or they are hoping no one will check who owns the wall.

Can I ask that the ownership of this wall is called into question and clarified, before any planning decision is made, as if it is solely Camden's property, I would hope the council would not give permission for these openings to be put in it's wall, when there is such a sensitive public use involved, such as a playground.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

Gary Sollof