24 John Street,
London WC1N 2BH
June 2016

Dear Sir,

Planning Application 2014/3330/P - 13-15 John's Mews

We write yet again to object to this application, which even on the applicant's own engineer's analysis risks "**unacceptably large settlements**".[1] The proposal to construct a basement in unstable waterlogged and **contaminated**[2] soil requiring excavation to a depth of 4.2 metres, with piling to a depth of at least 5.9 metres, (which is 5.2 metres and 6.9 metres respectively below our rear walls) poses unacceptable risks to our property and our health (as set out below).

Aside from lead, the further contamination identified in the most recent contamination report is benzo(a)pyrene. According to Public Health England, in a paper on the internet published by the Toxicology Department in 2008, this chemical is an environmentally hazardous substance, it is toxic by inhalation, ingestion or skin absorption, it is a **carcinogen**, a **mutagen** and a **reproductive toxin**, and is thought to probably cause lung and skin cancer. It is classified as "N", "Dangerous for the environment". Nevertheless, the applicant proposes to excavate tonnes of this soil and drop it from an overhead conveyor belt into an open skip on a public road next to a primary school.

We object to this application for multiple reasons and suggest that on any reasonable analysis it should be refused, even leaving aside the serious procedural irregularities that have characterized it to date.

Preliminary Matters

We lodge this objection without prejudice to our position that this application has been, and continues to be, materially mishandled in a manner that is both procedurally improper and contrary to Camden's professed position that planning applications are dealt with transparently.

This objection is also lodged without prejudice to our position that the Development Control Committee deferred this application on 25th February 2016 solely for the purposes of requiring the production of further information (see the minutes of the Development Control Committee of 25th February 2016).

The Development Control Committee has not released this application back to the Planning Department for further consultation on the basis of further material belatedly disclosed on the Planning Portal and further revisions to the supporting documentation and the scheme of development.

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[1] See Chelmer supplementary letter report of 6th May 2016, paragraph 4.5.
[2] See Chelmer Geo-Environmental Interpretative Report, revision 3, at 6.58 and 6.59.

In the circumstances the Planning Department is *functus officio* – i.e. without mandate – and cannot properly re-run the process (for the second time) now that the Development Control Committee is seized of the application for the purposes of a decision.

The relevant planning officer has twice recommended this application for approval on the basis that the process had been properly followed (despite the fact that it had not been) and it is not now open to the Planning Department to re-open the process (twice since the meeting on 25th February 2016) without specific direction being given to it by the Development Control Committee, which it has not done.

Overview

We continue to to rely upon all previous grounds of objection in relation to this application. However, we wish specifically to identify following 6 points of objection in relation to the application as it now stands:

1. The consultation procedure has been, and continues to be, irregular;
2. There has been neither adequate nor appropriate consideration of the proposed development in the context of its location in a conservation area, the form of the proposed development, and the inherent likelihood that the development will result in the total loss of the properties;
3. The drawings of plan and elevation remain inconsistent;
4. The proposal will result in significant overlooking of adjacent properties;
5. The assessment of damage caused by construction and the impact of the works of construction on neighbours remains unsatisfactory and incomplete; and
6. The consideration of available material relating to contamination has not resulted in the suggestion of appropriate planning conditions.

1. Consultation Procedure

This application has now gone through at least 4 (if not more) alleged consultation periods, none of which has been satisfactory.

The material to which the public is referred on the planning portal is not a comprehensive record of all material relevant to the application, nor does it list documents in the order in which they were received, nor does it record the date on which documents were received, nor does it record accurately the date on which documents were first made public for viewing on the planning portal, nor does the planning portal retain on public display as all times all information that has at one time or another been publicly displayed.

As a result of this, it is hard, if not impossible, for anyone viewing the Planning Portal in relation to this application to be sure what material does, or does not, form the subject of the current version of the application.

Coupled with this, certain of the documents, and in particular the Basement Impact Assessment ("BIA"), have now gone through so many revisions that there is no single document that accurately records the entirety of the relevant information, and in so far as there are multiple documents, then they fail to provide a complete and accurate picture.

We refer in particular to the document entitled "Addendum Letter (Ref: BIA/4507f) Report Revised Ground Movement and Damage Category Assessments, dated 6.5.2016" in which the authors purport to re-calculate the heave/settlement assessments on the basis of "the revised foundation geometries and revised method of construction", although they apparently accept (at paragraph 2.8) that further work would be necessary to get close to a realistic result, with their being a possibility of much larger movements being induced (paragraph 4.4).

From this it is to be inferred that the calculations in the BIA revision 5 (no less) were not conducted on the basis of the latest geometries and the revised method of construction. As a result it is simply not possible for the reader to be sure what information is still current, what information has been superseded and what information remains outstanding or has been omitted completely.

Finally, the consultation procedure adopted by the planning department fails to conform to the requirements of regulation 5A of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Regulation 1990, as in force at the date of the application, given that the application affects the setting of listed buildings and the character and appearance of a conservation area and Historic England appear never to have been notified and there is no information about when and where the application can be inspected in compliance with paragraph 5A(2)(c)(iv) of the Regulation. This latter point is particularly pertinent in circumstances where the Planning Portal fails accurately to reflect the detail of the application.

2. Conservation Area

This application involves substantial work to change the appearance of two buildings identified as making a positive contribution to a conservation area.

On its website, Camden's stated policy is that: "…where [a] proposed development involves carrying out work on …… or a property located in a conservation area, a heritage statement will need to accompany your planning application."

There is no heritage statement accompanying this application.

Camden's stated policy is also that "Where the proposed development involves carrying out work on a property located in a conservation area, a heritage

statement should include the necessary information to meet the criteria outlined in paragraph HE9 of Planning Policy Statement 5 (PPS 5) – Planning for the Historic Environment."

As there is no heritage statement, the necessary information is not provided.

Further, despite the impact of this application on the setting of listed buildings and the character and appearance of the conservation area in which it sits, from the Council's response to our Freedom of Information Request it appears that between 9th August 2013 and 10th April 2016 inclusive there was only a single note of any communication passing between any planning officer and any conservation officer in relation to this site. That document is dated 23rd May 2014 and fails to address the "distinctive character" of the mews houses, as referred to in paragraph 5.189 of the Bloomsbury Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy, or the presumption to retain buildings that make a positive contribution to the character of the area (paragraph 6.7 of the same document).

On page 143 of the Bloomsbury Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy 13-15 John's Mews is specifically identified as being a positive contributor to the conservation area.

Accordingly, with no notice having been given to Historic England, with no proper consultation with any conservation officer having taken place, and in the absence of any Heritage Statement, this application for the change of appearance of buildings making a positive contribution to a conservation area has still not been properly supported by proper documentation or considered by the appropriate bodies.

In a previous application a similar scheme was described by Bloomsbury CAAC as "too high and bulky" and "not in keeping with [the Conservation Area]."

Further, whilst the current version of the application no longer seeks total demolition of the two mews houses, given the works that are still proposed involve the loss of all save the first floors of each house, it appears that the proposal still seeks substantial demolition of the buildings.

This proposal should not be allowed as the Council normally expects that buildings that make a positive contribution to the character or appearance of a conservation area to be retained. There is no attempt by the applicant to justify the loss of these buildings in terms of the requirements set out in PPS 5.

Additionally, given the scale of the works proposed, the instability of the subsoil and the cost savings that would (no doubt) be achieved were the building to be "allowed" to collapse in the course of the redevelopment (along with previous plans recommended for approval in this application in which both buildings were to be demolished), we have no confidence that these buildings will survive the proposed works and that they may well suffer a catastrophic loss, for

whatever reason. If permission were ever to be considered, the Council will need to ensure that this is not allowed to happen.

3. Inconsistent Drawings

Since we have for the last 2 years repeatedly identified the inconsistency between the proposed plan and elevation drawings of the rear of the properties, but these inconsistencies have never been addressed. We repeat that unless there is a coherent set of drawings the impact of this proposed development cannot properly be determined, but we assume that, yet again, our objections will be ignored.

Accordingly we object to this application proceeding on the basis of inconsistent drawings.

4. Significant Overlooking

The proposed development is within 4 metres of our nearest habitable room.

It is proposed that existing first floor windows will be enlarged and altered into doors, thereby permitting a substantial change in the extent of overlooking of the rear of our property. There is no suggestion that those first floor doors will be restricted in their opening in any way, so that it will be possible for music or other noise to be played directly into the enclosed area at the rear of our property.

There is no provision for screening or obscuring of the glass at either first or second floor level, despite the fact that these windows look directly into the rear of our property.

There is no suggestion that there will be a condition preventing future changes to the external appearance of the properties, or that external areas may be used for amenity purposes.

As set out above, there are no consistent drawings of the rear ground floor in plan and elevation, as a result of which it is still impossible to know the extent of the overlooking at this level.

If permission were nevertheless to be considered, in order to protect amenity to the rear, a condition should be attached restricting permitted development rights for potential alterations to all façades and restricting use of the roof/exterior areas so that they shall not be used as amenity terraces and should only be accessed for maintenance purposes. Further, a condition should be attached restricting the opening of the first floor glazed areas and requiring the use of obscure glazing.

Finally on this section, we note in passing that in breach of Camden Planning Guidance 6, there has never been a daylight and sunlight report addressing the impact of the increase in height of the building on our rear basement window, despite the fact that the new development will be above a 25 degree line from the centre of that window.

5. Assessment of Damage and Impact of Construction

The current version of the BIA is revision 5. We have already identified errors, omissions and inconsistencies in that BIA in our earlier objections, and we continue to rely on the detail of those objections. A particular feature identified in those objections was the use in the Burland Scale calculation in paragraph 10.4.9 of the BIA of the minimum heave figure of 2mm calculated as per the PDISP analysis then available and taken from paragraph 10.5 of the BIA.

The applicant has now submitted a supplementary letter report from Chelmer Consultancy Services dated 6th May 2016. That document implicitly accepts a number (but by no means all) of the deficiencies identified in our earlier objections and provides further information. In particular, there is a new PDISP analysis at Table 4A, but we note that now there are no "short-term" and "long-term" figures for heave, but instead multiple figures for different stages showing settlement followed by heave followed by settlement.

In the circumstances we take it that the calculation in paragraph 10.4.9 of the BIA is no longer held out as being the true figure. If it is held out by them as still being an accurate and proper calculation, then we would invite Chelmer to state that they hold it out to third parties as being the right figure and that they accept liability should it turn out to be incorrect.

We note that there has, as yet, been no independent audit of this further information.

We also note that there is no single, comprehensive BIA or a single independent audit of all up-to-date information. We consider this to be a significant, material deviation from acceptable procedure as it deprives the public and the Development Control Committee of the opportunity to receive all relevant information in a single, coherent document.

We now turn to the information provided in the supplementary letter report.

In summary, it appears that plans for the proposed development are still not satisfactory, that the variability of ground conditions leaves the possibility of much larger movements being induced than have been indicated by the report, and that unacceptably large settlements may be experienced.

On page 1 of the report there is reference to an email from Owen Carroll at Barrett Mahoney dated 14th March 2016 setting out a revised method of construction. That email does not appear on the Planning Portal and accordingly it is impossible to be sure of the full extent of the revised method (although there is some information set out in a quote about sequencing on page 2 of the report).

In numbered paragraph 1 of the report (on page 2 of the report) there is reference to further groundwater monitoring. As previously, measurements have only been taken sporadically, there has not been seasonal monitoring, there has been no determination of flow direction and even the report accepts that

maximum and minimum levels during the period are unlikely to have been recorded. We therefore remain concerned about the effect of the proposed development on the local water table in which our Georgian basement sits.

In the section on Ground Conditions (paragraphs 2.4 and 2.5 of the report, and Table 3A), it is accepted that the modeling has been conducted on the basis of soil conditions found in borehole BH1B which were significantly more favourable than those found in borehole BH5. It therefore appears that the report is not prepared on a "worst case" scenario, but rather on a "best case" scenario, which obviously causes us concern.

When one reads paragraph 2.8 of the report, that concern is heightened by the statement that "Various issues were encountered in undertaking these analyses owing to the complexity of the proposed scheme."

The text against Stage 2b in paragraph 2.8 then records that "As PDISP doesn't model soil-structure interaction a lengthy iterative process would be required to get close to a realistic result for this complex load transfer (or a finite element programme should be used). We also consider that the constructions sequence requires further refinement, as described below in paragraph 4.4, which make further analysis of the current proposal difficult to justify."

This suggests that the applicant's engineers themselves do not consider that the design process is yet complete and that it still needs further consideration and improvement, as appears from their comments in paragraph 4.4.

In Table 4A the authors set out their summary of predicted displacements, which range from 8mm of settlement at Stage 1 to 9mm of heave at Stage 2 (giving 17mm as the total range of movement).

Nevertheless, the values in Table 4A do not allow for the possible presence of very weak Made Ground or for the varying buoyant uplift forces that the groundwater fluctuations would cause (see paragraph 2.11 of the report). It therefore appears that the actual movement is likely to be greater than the calculated figures.

This divergence between calculated and actual displacement is also highlighted at the end of paragraph 2.12 in relation to Stages 3 and 4, where it is reported that differential displacement experienced by the slab after it has cured will be greater than that reflected in Table 4A.

Given this revision in the figures for heave and settlement since BIA revision 5 was produced in January 2016, we do not understand how the Damage Category Assessment calculated in that document can still hold good, particularly in the context of the anomalies previously identified in earlier objections.

Further, in their conclusions the authors point out, quite candidly, that whilst the revised scheme is an improvement on the previous scheme, "the complex transfer of loads onto the underpins and only 50% of the piles, while some

underpins are founded on narrow footings in Made Ground of variable consistency, leaves the possibility of much larger movements being induced than have been indicated by these analyses." (paragraph 4.4).

The report goes on to say (at paragraph 4.5) that "The lack of a footing to the first lift of underpins increases the risk that they may settle away from the supported superstructure before the 2nd lift is cast. The presence of loose to very loose (SPT "N" values of zero to 7) and possibly voided Made Ground (as recorded in BH 5) increases further the risk that the two-stage underpinning currently proposed would experience **unacceptably large settlements**." (*emphasis added*).

In relation to the Damage Category Assessment, whilst the report specifically addresses what the authors suppose to be the configuration of the foundations of 23 John Street, said to be set back some 8.5 metres from the proposed excavation and at a depth of 2 metres below 13 John's Mews, they appear, somewhat remarkably, to have ignored the configuration of the foundations for the flanking walls to our property that run to the boundary with 15 John's Mews and include, so we believe, the Georgian party wall that forms the boundary between us and 15 John's Mews.

The flanking Georgian walls and chimney breast, some 4+ metres in height, are the remains of a single storey pre-1875 extension whose roof and rear wall were demolished (with permission) in 1999. They comprise a wall and substantial chimney breast on our Northern boundary and a party wall on our Southern boundary. At the time of their demolition we were advised by our structural engineer that we could not remove the original floor to the building (which remains under the current paving) as he believed that we would risk the collapse of both walls and the chimney breast.

The ground level at the rear of our property is said by the applicant to be 1 metre above ground level of 15 John's Mews. The applicant proposes to excavate to a depth of 4.2 metres, which is therefore 5.2 metres below our ground level, although piling will go significantly deeper. The conclusion in paragraph 3.5 of the report therefore cannot hold good for our flanking walls or the rear party wall.

It is this excavation to a depth of 5.2 metres below the level of the floor remaining under the current paving and our flanking Georgian walls (which are listed) that causes concern.

There is no Damage Category Assessment for these structures, and it is deeply suspicious that no consideration seems to have been given to them.

The presence of loose and very loose, and possibly voided, Made Ground increase our concern, as the Damage Category Assessment does not seem to take any account of their presence. If such soil conditions manifest themselves at the boundary, we imagine that there must be a risk of the total collapse of at least the rear wall, taking with it some of the party walls.

Nowhere does the most recent report address this risk, particularly in the context of the extra 1 metre of depth below our ground level to which the excavation is proposed.

Further, even in relation to the report's calculation for 23 John Street, a structure 8.5 metres further away and 3 metres deeper than our walls, the authors state that if the current proposal is implemented they would recommend a finite element analysis of the piled raft to assess more reliably the displacements at and beyond the rear of the proposed basement (paragraph 3.7). This suggests that, even at today's date, the authors do not put forward their Damage Category Assessment as a final figure upon which reliance can confidently be placed.

Now that the Chelmer Geo-Environmental Interpretative Report has been "re-discovered" on the planning file, paragraph 6.7 of revision 3 identifies a further design and construction issue that has yet to be addressed in the context of the particular soil conditions encountered. That paragraph says that, since the Weathered London Clay/London Clay strata encountered has been confirmed to possess a 'high' volume change potential in accordance with the NHBC classification system, precautions will need to be taken against seasonal swelling and shrinkage against foundation sides and beams. No solution is yet proposed.

In the circumstances, neither the design nor the assessment of the impact of the proposed development is complete. There has been no consideration of the impact of the proposals on the walls that make up our home and no calculation of the Damage Category Assessment for our property, sitting a further metre above ground level at 15 John's Mews and potentially also on unstable subsoil.

Even were there any evidence that a satisfactory engineering solution existed and that it would cause damage that did not exceed the relevant Burland Scale figure, there has been no consideration of the damage that will be caused by the construction process itself.

Although there is a document entitled "Construction and Traffic Management Plan" shown on the Planning Portal, originally dated 15th May 2014 but now changed to a new (fictitious) date of 21st July 2014, this document relates to a proposed development that has long since been abandoned and further and more importantly the document does not address the issues that are identified in paragraphs 3.37 and 4.3 of CPG 4 and paragraph 8.12 of CPG 6 (amongst others).

As is made clear in the GEA letter of 9th February 2016 (in fact not displayed on the Planning Portal until after the second Development Control Committee Meeting on 25th February 2016), "It is acknowledged that satisfying the council's requirements for this project relies on a particularly high standard of workmanship and monitoring and timing of any mitigation measures that are indicated by the monitoring to be necessary."

Plainly from the text of the remainder of their letter GEA consider that there are certain critical minimum requirements that need to be complied with in order to achieve a satisfactory outcome.

The critical nature of the quality of work and the skill and care necessary to get close to Chelmer's "best case" scenario for the damage likely to be caused just by the excavation is emphasized in the BIA.

In paragraph 10.4.3 of the BIA revision 5 Chelmer say: "A high quality of workmanship and the use of high stiffness temporary support systems, installed in a timely manner in accordance with best practice methods, are therefore crucial to the satisfactory control of ground movements alongside basement excavations."

In paragraph 10.4.5 Chelmer say: "Under UK standard practice the contractor is responsible for designing and implementing the temporary works, so it is considered essential that the contractor employed for these works should have completed similar schemes successfully."

They follow this up at paragraphs 10.4.8 and 10.4.10 with the qualification that their Damage Category Assessment is reliant upon 'best practice".

Yet nowhere is the damage that will inevitably be caused by drilling and piling and associated vibration addressed.

Given the depth of excavation (4.2 metres) and the complexity of the piling (to 5.9 metres) and underpinning processes that need to be undertaken on a constrained site between existing buildings in a conservation area, adjacent to listed buildings and opposite a primary school involving the excavation of tonnes of contaminated soil (considered below) where the services of unidentified experienced expert contractors employing best practice are required for further design and implementation, as the documentation presently stands there is no evidence to suggest that this application will minimise the harmful impacts of construction on the building and local amenities, as articulated in paragraph 4.5 of CPG 4, far less that there is any plan about how to construct it in a way that does not cause harm in excess of that predicted.

That paragraph of CPG 4 emphasises that the Council will refuse permission for plans which do not minimise the harmful impacts of construction, yet in the absence of demolition, excavation and construction management plans meeting the minimum requirements and high standards of workmanship identified by GEA, there is no evidence to suggest that this requirement will be met.

Paragraph 8 of CPG 6 also emphasizes the need for a construction management plan for a site such as this and identified specific issues that need to be addressed (paragraph 8.12), but the applicant has yet to provide any detail as to its plans.

This application is thus not in a fit state to be granted permission, even conditional on a section 106 agreement in relation to a construction management plan.

However, if nevertheless approval were being considered, the approval of the construction management plan should not be delegated to the relevant planning officer but should be brought back before the Development Control Committee.

Such a step is essential in the light of the conduct of this application to date, and in particular the circumstances surrounding the mis-handling and loss of documents that should have appeared on the planning portal and the repeated recommendation of this application for approval when plainly, on any view, no honest and competent planning officer could so have recommended it. (We refer to our complaints lodged since January 2016 and correspondence following on from those complaints in relation to the detail of these matters).

6. Contamination

Not only has the original Geo-Environmental Interpretative Report dated September 2014 produced by Chelmer Consultancy Services miraculously been reinstated on the Planning Portal on or around 25th May 2016, but spontaneously two further versions of that report ("the Report") have also now appeared.

Environmental Health ("EH") have provided observations on the latest version of the Report, but those observations seem to have been provided without any real consideration of the background and seem to relate only to the risk posed to future neighbours once any construction is complete, rather than whether there is any risk posed to neighbours during construction.

First, EH overlook conditions to address contamination that the applicant's own experts have volunteered (see paragraph 2.6, sub-paragraphs (d) and (f)).

Secondly, 13-15 John's Mews sits on a 'Secondary A Aquifer' and the proposal is to excavate and pile through the water table to London Clay at a depth of 5.9 meters. It seems that such a 'Secondary A Aquifer' amounts to 'controlled waters' within the meaning of section 104 of the Water Resources Act 1991.

Since two contaminants have been confirmed to exist on the site, there is a risk of possible downward migration of those contaminants in the course of piling. Paragraph 6.21 of the Report specifically refers to this risk and says that the recommendations contained in Environment Agency Document NC/99/73 should be followed when assessing pile design. EH does not seem to have engaged with, or considered, this issue at all.

Paragraph 3.13 of CPG 6 states that if there is any existing contamination, or potential risk of contamination, to ground water from proposed works, **the Environment Agency must be informed and their consent obtained to any works**. This is confirmed on page 5 of Environment Agency Document

NC/99/73, which identifies the Environment Agency as a statutory consultee. So far as we aware, this has not occurred, nor does EH comment on this.

Paragraph 121 of the National Planning Policy Framework states that planning decisions should ensure that:

> "the site is suitable for its new use taking account of ground conditions and land instability, including from natural hazards or former activities, such as mining, pollution arising from previous uses and any proposals for mitigation including land remediation or impacts on the natural environment arising from remediation."

Paragraph 2.1 on page 5 of Environment Agency Document NC/99/73 states that where necessary, planning permission should include conditions that include restrictions, mitigation or prohibition on the use of particular foundations and goes on to state that in practice it is common for the inclusion of such conditions to be requested by the Environment Agency where risks to the water environment are significant.

Paragraph 2.2 on page 7 of Environment Agency Document NC/99/73 sets out the Environment Agency's concern over foundations and piling as activities with the potential to cause migration of pollution into controlled waters and they then go on to identify what types of foundations are preferred and what piling is to be allowed if it has to occur in contaminated ground.

Since the Environment Agency has not been notified as a statutory consultee and since EH has apparently not considered downward migration of contaminants at all, this application is not ready for consideration.

Thirdly, EH has apparently accepted the analysis that they only have to consider the end use of the site when addressing conditions. This seems to be based on the pollutant linkage considered in paragraphs 6.37 to 6.49 of the Report and the conclusion drawn in paragraph 6.61 of the Report that the risks will be "low".

The critical point that is missed is that the "low" risk is only in relation to **future** residents, neighbouring properties and the wider environment. The report actually identifies a **moderate risk** to ground workers during construction (at paragraph 6.71). In that same paragraph it also suggests that dust suppression measures may be required to minimize inhalation by neighbours.

From this it is to be inferred that there is a **moderate risk** to **current** residents, neighbouring properties and the wider environment during the construction phase, yet EH proposes no conditions to safeguard that risk.

One might have thought that protecting the primary school children at St George the Martyr School from having contaminants tipped from a high level conveyor into an open skip sitting on the public highway (as is currently proposed)

thereby making them airborne, might at the very least be something that should be prohibited.

An alternative and safer course would be simply to refuse permission for the development of a deep basement into unstable, waterlogged and contaminated soil given the risk that it poses to neighbours, their property, health and amenity.

Revocation of existing permission

Section 23 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 provides that "If it appears to the local planning authority that it is expedient to revoke or modify any listed building consent granted on an application under this Act, the authority may by order revoke or modify the consent to such extent as they consider expedient." Section 74(3) of the same Act gives affect to that section to Conservation Areas.

The Revised Basement Impact Assessment now accepts that the structure on 15 John's Mews predates the earliest historic Ordnance Survey maps from 1875 (paragraph 2.2). Further the buildings are specifically identified as making a positive contribution to the conservation area. No justification is put forward for their loss of form.

The response of Bloomsbury CAAC pithily encapsulates the problem with the proposed development:

> "….this cannot be considered an enhancement as the original scale of the buildings will be lost and dominated by the new roof extension".

It is in these circumstances that, whilst rejecting the current application, we would also invite the planning authority to revoke the consent originally granted under 2013/4967/P, where that consent was obtained in an irregular manner.

Conclusion

This repeatedly revised application is still not in any fit state to be considered, far less granted, by the Development Control Committee.

Procedurally the application is a shambles, and even after 2 years the applicant cannot put in a coherent set of drawings for the proposal.

The conservation area and overlooking issues are not properly addressed.

Finally, and decisively, the soil conditions are so extreme that there is no realistic possibility of a basement being constructed without losing the structure above at 13-15 John's Mews and causing unacceptable damage to both adjacent properties and public amenity.

This application should be refused.

Yours faithfully,

Richard Morgan and Monica Coombs