

Sandra Wheen on behalf of Chenies Mews Working Group, [REDACTED]
Torrington Place, London [REDACTED]

To: Robert Lester, Camden Planning.

By e-mail

From: Sandra Wheen on behalf of Chenies Mews Working Group

28 April 2017

Dear Robert Lester

Objection to Planning Application 2017/1919/A for signs to 69-75 Chenies Mews London WC1E 6HX

The Chenies Mews Working Group (of residents) would like to register our strong objection to all four of the signs proposed in the above planning application and request a rethink for the following reasons:

1. The 2 signs proposed for the archway are on the Public Highway and will be harmful to road safety.

Our main objection is that the two the signs on the archway will cause a distraction to motorists on a piece of public highway where there are serious safety concerns, particularly for wheelchair users and pedestrians, and where the only signs visible should be road signs aimed at reducing risk. The archway looks a blank canvas at the moment but additional road signs are urgently needed to improve safety and the Chenies Mews Working Group is working on this in communication with Kevin Stears of Camden's West End Project. The risk factors at the archway are the limited visibility, the narrowness of the archway and the narrowness of the pavements – too narrow for a wheelchair. The result is that there are often pedestrians, sometimes with buggies or a wheelchair on the road inside the archway. The kinds of road signs needed at the archway are: (1) a sign giving pedestrians priority over vehicles and bikes (2) a wheelchair sign to warn drivers to look out for disabled people (3) a speed restriction sign and (4) a one-way sign for when the archway becomes one-way, West to East, under the West End Project.

2. The 2 signs proposed for the archway are out of keeping with local Hospital and Street signage.

UCLH Hospital already has a style of signage guiding people to its buildings and institutes. In fact at the very entrance to the mews archway there is a blue hospital signpost pointing to the Mortimer market Centre. I don't think other hospital clinics advertise themselves in their own styles. They rely on standard hospital and street signage (and street maps) and also send maps and directions to patients to help them find their way. Admittedly the street name of Chenies Mews as seen from Huntley Street is very high up, above the archway, but I am sure Camden would be willing to add a second street nameplate lower down to help visitors identify that they have reached the right street. This would improve the visibility of the Mews for all users, not just those going to the Roger Williams building.

3. All four signs are glaringly out of keeping with the character of the Mews.

The Mews is in a conservation area. The character of the mews, at the north end, beyond the residential, is that of an old industrial backwater and Camden has recently invested expensively in this character by re-cobbling the street. The signs on the academic and health institutes which now occupy the mews reflect this industrial mood by being plain, understated, rectangular and in dark colours. The proposed black and white, swirling and, in some cases, back-lit medallions for the Roger Williams Building import a brash commercial atmosphere – that outshines Starbucks. The way the proposed signs are intended to create steps leading towards the building feels like Disneyland.

Yours sincerely

Sandra Wheen (on behalf of Chenies Mews Working Group)