

**From: Bloomsbury Conservation Area Advisory Committee**

Catherine Bond  
Principal Planner, Conservation and Heritage  
Development Management  
London Borough of Camden  
Town Hall  
Judd Street  
London WC1H 9JE

cc. Andrew Hinchley, Green Space Development Officer

1.9.17

Dear Ms. Bond,

2017/4426/P Tavistock Square

BCAAC objects to this application for a memorial to be sited in the gardens at Tavistock Square.

The atrocity to be commemorated took place in the street, on the opposite side, outside the British Medical Association building, and it is entirely coincidental that it happened to be opposite Tavistock Square Gardens. It has no connection with the gardens.

The existing plaque recognises this and is correctly sited on the railings outside the BMA. Any new memorial should be placed there. Placing the memorial in the gardens would be misleading to anyone visiting the site, who would not know where the atrocity took place. The suggestion that visitors would obstruct the pavement is entirely misleading - there is no such problem at present. If it had happened elsewhere the memorial would have been in the street anyway.

Several years ago at a site meeting we first pointed this out and requested a liaison meeting with the BMA and our understanding was that this was to be arranged. We have subsequently repeatedly contacted the director of the BMA directly to request a meeting to discuss these issues. These requests were ignored. We therefore visited and were told that someone had been deputed to respond to our request. On pursuing this it was admitted that this

information was wrong. We have therefore been denied the chance to discuss with the BMA the appropriate site for any memorial, and this should be investigated.

In any case the London Squares Preservation Act 1931 does not permit any structures being erected in the gardens of protected squares except as 'necessary or convenient'. It provides that: 'no building or other structure or erection shall be erected or placed on or over any protected square except such as may be necessary or convenient for or in connection with the use and maintenance of such square for one or more of the authorised purposes'.

The proposed memorial clearly fails this test.

Camden's own policies also discourage changes to squares in ways that have no connection with them.

We have pointed this out to the applicants and to planning officers.

Entirely without prejudice to the above objection, we have also expressed our disapproval of the present design which would destroy the rhythm of the square by breaking the historic planted margin in an arbitrary position for no justifiable reason.

Yours,

Anthony Jennings for BCAAC

**Subject:**

FW: BCAAC OBS RE TAV SQ 7/7 MEMORIAL

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Dear Catherine,  
I would be grateful if you would forward this to the relevant planning case officer for inclusion in the committee report. It would also be helpful to be have an indication of the likely date that the application will be determined.

Regards  
Tony Tugnutt  
On behalf of BCAAC

**BLOOMSBURY CONSERVATION AREA ADVISORY COMMITTEE OBSERVATIONS ON THE PROPOSED 7/7 MEMORIAL TAVISTOCK SQUARE**

The Advisory Committee has done its best to have active engagement with the Memorial Trust and has met Philip Nelson, the Chairman. This was to ensure that if possible agreement could be reached on an appropriate design and location and frequent requests to meet with the architect met with no response for months, until we eventually had a site visit to discuss what is the submitted scheme attended by Catherine Bond. By that time BCAAC was faced with a fait accompli. Mr Nelson has stated that he had been working on the project since 2012 ample enough time to ensure that all interested parties, including BCAAC were fully involved regrettably this proved not to be the case.

However, this cannot deter the Advisory Committee from voicing its strong objection to the current proposal, which it considers to be harmful and wholly inappropriate given the historic context of the Square and its crucial role in the history of Bloomsbury. This is in relation to the Advisory Committee's duty to have special regard to the desirability of preserving and enhancing the character and appearance of the conservation area, one of the first to be designated in the country. This duty is shared by Camden Council.

The concept is quite wrong-headed and the reclined slab constructed in a rather menacing grey metal would have the appearance of a secondary vehicular access. It would destroy the perimeter planting, essential to a garden square, to screen road traffic from people enjoying the tranquillity of the historic space, which is a rare green oasis in central London. This proposal is functionally flawed with little or no aesthetic merit.

It is argued by Mr Nelson that an advantage of this gap is that the site of the Islamic terrorist outrage can be seen from the Square garden, but this is not accepted as a valid argument. Indeed, it could be argued that the plant screening is highly desirable. There are already memorials to Hiroshima and the Conscientious Objectors and a further memorial would transform the character of the square and overload it with grief.

Of course, BCAAC fully accepts that there should be a fitting memorial for relatives and loved ones of the deceased to visit and commemorate their tragic loss. The Advisory Committee has argued a memorial should be sited on the BMA building immediately adjacent to the bus bombing, especially as the medical staff assisted on that terrible day. Unlike the current proposal, it would not require visitors to look over their shoulders and would also be very much in the public realm as a constant reminder of the tragic event and loss of innocent lives.

**BCAAC Sept 2017**