

[REDACTED]

Thank you for your notification regarding Planning Application 2017/5798P at the above address.

I have lived here for 50 years, know the house and its layout pretty well, have chaired the Residents' Association for 1-7 Colosseum Terrace till 2012, and been involved very closely with the work the Crown Estate (Cumberland Market) carried out in updating the block in the last 30 years. I welcome the conversion, well overdue, though I and other tenants have concerns which I present below.

The Case Officer clarified that the development would be contained at 1st and 2nd floor levels only, the 3rd floor with its existing skylight area will be retained as it is.

I had checked the drawings closely, again clarifying with him that the 2 existing landing windows in the common parts on 1st floor and 2nd floor, will be incorporated into the conversion, completely walled off. It is in our interests as long-term residents here, that I put forward our view : that at least one of these landing windows should be kept within the communal area.

Ventilation

This is a large 5-storey house of 10 flats. The only other forms of ventilation will be a 4-inch vent where there is a skylight on the 3rd floor, and on the 4th floor level, a very heavy sash window which is locked to open 4 inches only. Without a lower landing window open, there is no draught to push through the house. The lack of air in summer, the chemical residues during any paint/repairs, cooking smells, and more recently the heavy acrid stench from burning pots and a near-miss with fire from a tenant (flat 15) on the 1st floor, when the Fire services attended, will help you to understand that for environmental and safety reasons, one or both of these windows must remain in the common parts.

It is essential to keep what is already in place i.e. the level of ventilation provided, as an exit for smoke and gas.

I will point out that the new conversion on the 1st floor alone will have **6** south/sth-west facing windows, including a large bay-window, north-facing. On the 2nd floor, there will be **5** windows, south-facing. There will be no lack of ventilation and light there. The north-facing landing windows will be redundant.

Fire Assessment risk

While I understand that the square meter area required is below the regulation standard for a one-bedroom dwelling, and that 2 square metres may be lost from that flat, I should emphasise that there is a duty of care to present occupants, that our safety is to be considered equally important as any requirement of that flat.

Here there is no external fire escape; there is none via the roof, and from being advised to use a 'stay-put' policy, this has now changed after the horror of Grenfell, to get out at once. This is a single-staircase house, with 10 flats of double occupancy. If a fire were to break out on the ground or 1st floor, as nearly happened, the Fire services could use the landing windows as a tenable exit, our means of escape. It would be a poor choice to deprive us of what we have already have in place, and not make our situation much worse than before.

The turning point on the landings will also be severely restrictive once the internal wall is built up. White goods, heavy appliances, furniture etc will be a struggle to move without more leeway. The Fire services will also be keen to have easy operational access.

Kind regards

