

Ms Laura Hazelton
Camden Planning Department
Development Manager
Camden Town Hall
Judd Street
London WC1H 8NP

1 February 2018

by email and post

Dear Ms Hazelton

Re: 27/29 Whitfield Street W1T 2SE Planning Ref 2017/6922/P

I see that yet another application has now been submitted for this site that presumably is running concurrently with the scheme that I had previously lodged an objection at the end of last year.

I am writing to object to this new application. If granted it will irrevocably damage the setting of a very significant modest listed modern building adjacent and seriously damage the Fitzrovia Conservation Area.

The development is a gross overdevelopment; the modest three storey property is proposed to be increased in height by two storeys the top floor containing a very large plant room and includes a staircase enclosure; the two additional floors will overwhelm the listed building adjacent and be extremely damaging to the aspect and visual appearance of very pleasant domestic Colville Place adjacent and will erode the quality of the conservation area.

National Planning Guidance is quite clear that where a scheme causes substantial harm to the setting of a listed building and to the conservation area then unless there are overwhelming advantages that can be demonstrated, the presumption is that planning authorities should refuse permission. Plonking on an additional two storeys on 27/29 Whitfield Street will clearly damage the scale of the Whitfield Street terrace and be overbearing and damaging to 1 Colville Place that is adjacent and is listed building.

If the Council consider that the damage is not substantial, a stance which will discredit the credibility of the department, demonstrably is still harmful, there is still the fact that this harm has to be shown to be balanced by some meaningful public gain.

The building is in good condition; it is currently partially occupied and has been for the past two/three years while the plethora of various planning applications have been submitted; there is nothing to stop the full occupation of the building. The

landlord chooses not to do so but this not a reason to justify the harm to the listed building and conservation area. In addition the suggestion that a commercial art gallery at basement and ground floor level is a public benefit is preposterous. There are many art galleries in the locality and one more is no gain that can outweigh the harm the scheme will demonstrably do to the the listed building and the conservation area. Since when has a commercial use (that can change as multiple use classes have been applied for), justify damaging permanently the setting of an adjacent listed building and a very strategic view within the conservation area.

The Council should make it clear to the applicant that a scheme with an additional floor at third floor level is not acceptable; the existing roof plan has a very modest 2 sq.m water tank housing that is not visible from Whitfield Street whereas what is being proposed is two additional floors that will completely dominate the street scape and swamp the current delicate relationship with the three storey modest residential Colville Place terrace and the current polite relationship with the adjacent listed 1 Colville Place.

This is the fundamental flaw of the proposal and the Council needs to come to grips with this point; all the problems of overlooking, failure to respect the conservation area, damage to the setting of the adjacent listed building follow on from the fact that the scheme is too big, too greedy, too crude and mediocre for such an important corner site and whatever small amendments and revisions that might be offered unless this major defect is addressed then the consequential defects will always remain.

The roof terrace at fourth floor level designated for amenity use by the occupants of the offices will cause serious noise disturbance over a wide area in this concentration of residential uses, and will directly overlook the terrace of it's neighbour.

The scheme is dreadful is should be refused and the refusal notice should make it clear that the proposed two storey extension is unacceptable. The scheme falls foul of national planning policy as regards to protecting listed buildings, Camden's planning policies concerning protecting and enhancing conservation areas, Camden design standards and not least Camden's planning policies concerning the protection of visual and physical amenity of existing residential accommodation from new (commercial) development.

Yours sincerely


Jim Monahan