



# COVENT GARDEN COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

42 Earlham Street, Covent Garden, London WC2H 9LA

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2<sup>nd</sup> April 2018

Dear Mr. Benmbarek,

Re application no. 2018/0846/P

Please accept this letter as an objection to the application to glaze over the yard behind 25 Shelton Street and 40 Earlham Street as it currently stands.

More than 20 dwellings are directly affected by this application. The space is at the back of their properties, with bedroom and living room windows directly overlooking it. The proposed structure would attach to both these buildings.

In their current form, we believe that the plans are likely have a substantial negative impact on residential amenity. However, were the application revised in certain ways then it might no longer be objectionable.

CGCA has met with residents, and residents have met with the applicant. A number of issues arise:

1. Notice was not given by the applicant to the freehold owner of part of the land, being 40 Earlham Street Property Ltd. Nor was notice given to any residents of the 7 flats at 40 Earlham Street. Please ask the applicant to give this notice, and to allow the planning authority to re-start the consultation period.
2. The proposed structure as shown in the drawings does not include features to allow access for maintenance, cleaning and fire escape as required by the leases and as currently provided for by the open yard. Please ask the applicant to re-design the roof structure to allow a) opening panels, or some other solution, to facilitate access by ladder and b) sufficient weight-bearing points to allow scaffolding to be erected above it.
3. The plans do not show features to prevent noise emanating from the unit and disturbing residents above. The nature of the yard, being a fully-enclosed tight space with high walls, means that any sound echoes and is amplified. Please ask the applicant to specify glazing (eg: acoustic laminated glass) that will contain noise completely, and please impose a 'no noise emanating' condition in any subsequent consent. Please also ensure that no air handling equipment is placed within the space above any roof given future consent.

4. The plans do not show features to prevent smell affecting residents above. Again, the nature of the yard means that even smell from non-primary cooking (as allowed within A1) remains in the air between the buildings and enters any open window. Also, residents do not wish to view any extraction equipment from their windows; many of the flats only have windows at the back and the space over the yard is their families' entire view. Please impose a 'no extraction' condition within the yard in any subsequent consent. We believe that extraction from an A1 unit should be adequate from a concealed vent at the front of the building, if needed at all.
  
6. Light pollution is now recognised as a serious problem, and families in urban areas like Covent Garden suffer needlessly when commercial premises fail to block out the light or leave lighting on at antisocial hours. We have particular issues with cleaners coming in late at night and suddenly illuminating completely dark spaces, waking people up who are sleeping behind domestic curtains nearby. Please ask the applicant to specify features that will ensure light is blocked out from 9pm each night to 8am the following morning. This might involve blinds, or the use of high-opacity 'smartglass'.
  
7. Residents at first floor level find the roof too intrusive at the height currently planned which reaches above their window sills and is very close. Please ask the applicant to reduce the height to below the level of their window sills.

Yours sincerely,

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Elizabeth Bax  
Chair, Planning Subcommittee  
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