

Peter Clapp RIBA FCSD



*Ben Farrant
London Borough of Camden
Development Management
Camden Town Hall
London
WC1H 9JE*

Dear Ben Farrant

Re: 2018/2081/P – 7 Jeffreys Place NW1 - OBJECTION

As a local resident passionate about the built environment, I am writing to OBJECT to yet a further proposal to build a penthouse flat above this already massive existing building for the following reasons:

- 1. The building at 7-8 Jeffreys Place, was for many years an office building providing much needed small units of office accommodation for small businesses.*
- 2. The owners, being very astute property developers, took advantage of ill-conceived Central Government Legislation, which allowed them to evict the longstanding office tenants and receive planning approval to change the use from offices to 6 No. two bedroom flats.*
- 3. Camden subsequently introduced an Article 4 Direction, preventing such a change of use.*
- 4. No consultation has ever been attempted with local residents to any of the proposals, for either flats, or the grit blasting of the façade, which caused excessive dust for several weeks, or an additional "penthouse".*
- 5. The building lies within the Jeffreys Street Conservation area, an area, which consists predominantly of modest two and three storey terraced houses.*
- 6. The existing building also overshadows Nos. 8-10 Ivor Street, two storey houses, which are Grade II listed buildings.*
- 7. The existing building is already even higher than the substantial brick railway viaduct, which sub-divides the Conservation Area.*
- 8. The existing block at 7- 8 Jeffreys Place is an industrial building which already dominates the area, as the applicants photographs clearly demonstrate. To add a further floor, however designed, cannot enhance either the existing building or the Conservation Area and the proposals must therefore be detrimental to the character and appearance of this Conservation Area.*

9. *The earlier planning application was for a 90 sq. m 2 bedroom flat at 3rd floor level, set back 1.5m. from the external parapet walls. This application was refused by Camden and the subsequent appeal was dismissed by the Planning Inspectorate, largely for environmental reasons.*
10. *The current application is for a three bedroom flat of 115 sq. m, represents a 25% increase in floor area, and sets the external walls back only 500mm from the external parapet walls. Both Bedroom 1 and Bedroom 2 have been increased in size, in addition to a Bedroom 3. The Kitchen/Dining/Living area has been increased from 34 sq.m. to 40 sq.m. a 17% increase. The original terrace measured 9 sq.m., whereas the current application has increased this to 16 sq.m., a 75% increase.*
11. *Why, when both Camden Development Control Committee and an independent Planning Inspector reject a considerably smaller scheme, would an owner/developer submit an application for a substantially larger scheme?*
12. *The building owners/developers have always anticipated receiving planning permission for a third level flat, and have left service and drainage connections for this purpose. Therefore to claim that it is not possible to provide a lift to the third floor is being economical with the truth. A lift could easily have been accommodated had the owner/developers full intentions been made public at the outset. The strategy from the outset has been development by stealth.*
13. *It is not acceptable to deliberately provide a three bedroom, two bathroom flat at third floor level without lift access, and thus be unable to provide for wheelchairs etc required by Lifetime Homes.*
14. *The applicant has chosen not to show the cycle and bin storage at ground floor level. Nor incidentally is this ground floor plan available to view on the the Camden Planning site. The former omission is probably deliberate because the cycle storage is already sub-standard for the existing 6 No. flats and cannot possibly accommodate any additional cycles.*
15. *Similarly the existing bin storage at ground level is already inadequate for the existing 6 No. flats, frequently resulting in material being left outside the store on the pavement for days at a time.*
16. *The proposed roof terrace would overlook adjoining houses in Jeffreys Place, Prowse Place and Ivor Street. The 8 No. houses at Nos.12-19 Jeffreys Place, having their living rooms at 2nd floor level would be particularly overlooked.*
17. *This terrace would also overlook the first floor roof terrace of the house at No.6 Ivor Street, and all the rear gardens, in Ivor Street.*
18. *The proposed dark metal pitched roof, similar in colour to that recently erected at No. 9 Jeffreys Place, would have a greater effect on the outlook from the "upside-down" properties at 12-19 Jeffreys Place than the previous proposals. The living rooms of these eight houses are at second floor level. The houses at 16-19 Jeffreys Place would be particularly affected by this tall dark pitched roof, simply blocking out the sky.*

19. In terms of housing supply, this area has already benefitted from very substantial developments at: Twyman House, recently completed; Hawley Wharf, currently under construction; 140-146 Camden Street, shortly to be constructed; Morrison's development, recently given planning approval; shortly to be followed by Gilbey's Yard and Juniper Crescent. These together provide many hundreds of housing units of all types within the immediate vicinity. There can therefore be no justification in providing one sub-standard flat which harms both the host building, the Conservation Area, and the peaceful enjoyment of existing neighbours, simply to profit one greedy developer.
20. In the applicants Design and Access Statement, Part 2.4 – Material Precedents, they choose not to show the context of Fig. 13 – Metal Roof 01. Furthermore, this dusk time photograph of a lightweight roof illustrates how the top floor of this existing industrial building has been given addition light and volume by this treatment. It does not show a dark form being added to an already very high building.
21. It is obvious to me that virtually all of the Planning Inspectors reasons for dismissing the appeal on the previous scheme are still valid. Some of these are quoted in full as follows:
22. "The scale, bulk, proportions, fenestration and contemporary design of the extension would introduce a harmful contrast at odds with the traditional architectural composition of the existing building. **The development would therefore be viewed as an incongruous addition to the roof of the building**".
23. "The extension would remain visible and unduly prominent along Jeffreys Place and from Ivor Street, given that it would further increase the height of a building which is already taller than surrounding properties. That would be further emphasised by the use of substantial glazing to its western elevation facing towards Prowse Place. **The development would therefore be viewed as an overly dominant feature in the townscape and would fail to preserve the character and appearance of the Jeffreys Street Conservation Area**".
24. "The additional height and bulk of the proposed extension would significantly increase the prominence and visibility of the building above 8-10 Ivor Street. The resultant dominance of the extended building within the skyline and the townscape would overwhelm the modest scale of 8-10 Ivor Street, particularly when viewed from the opposite side of Ivor Street and towards the junction with Prowse Place. **The development would therefore detract from the setting of the listed buildings**".

For these reasons I would implore the Council to refuse this application.

Yours sincerely

