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[REDACTED]

Ms Bethany Cullen,
Head of Development Management,
Camden Council,
5, Pancras Square,
London, N.1.C. 4.A.G.

For the attention of Mr Gideon Whittingham, Senior Planning Officer and Ms Elizabeth Martin
Planning Officer (Conservation)

31st May, 2018

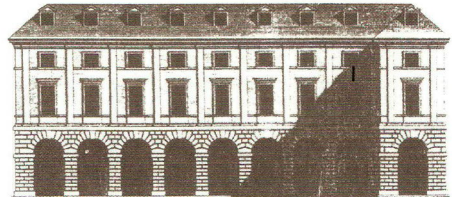
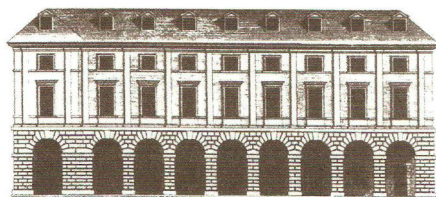
Dear Ms Cullen and colleagues,

NOS. 39, 41-45 and 47-49, NEAL STREET, LONDON, W.C.2, APPLICATION REFERENCE
2017/5659/P

**OBJECTIONS TO THE ORIGINAL AND MODESTLY AMENDED PROPOSALS FOR
DEVELOPMENT, COMPRISING WORKS FOR THE PART-DEMOLITION AND PART-
RECONSTRUCTION OF NOS. 41-45, NEAL STREET AND THE ALTERATION AND
EXTENSION OF ALL THREE BUILDINGS**

I am writing on behalf of Ms Anja Saunders, the owner and residential occupier of [REDACTED] Neals' Yard, [REDACTED] to the rear of the application site, in response to the e-mailed advice of Mr Gideon Whittingham of the 23rd May drawing attention to the submission of amended proposals, and his further e-mailed advice of the 31st May drawing attention to the intention of a decision on the application being made this coming Monday – the 4th June. I am writing convey my client's strongest objections to both the original and the modestly amended proposals given:

- The demonstrable inadequacy of the documentation submitted in support of the proposals in relation to both national and local requirements, and, in part, to the errors contained in that documentation;
- The demonstrably adverse impact of the proposals on the amenity – including both daylighting and privacy – presently valued and enjoyed by my client as a residential occupier of three floors of the property fronting Neal's Yard to the immediate rear of the application site, contrary to the relevant local planning policies; and



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- The demonstrably adverse impact of the proposals on the amenity – including both daylighting and privacy – presently valued and enjoyed by my client as a residential occupier of three floors of the property fronting Neal's Yard to the immediate rear of the application site, contrary to the relevant local planning policies; and

- The demonstrably harmful impact of the proposals on the character, appearance and significance of the Seven Dials Conservation Area, contrary to the relevant national, London-wide and local planning policies and guidance.

I would further note with concern that a site inspection by the case-officer a few days ago – on the 24th May - despite a specific request being made by me on the 4th January.

I would also note with concern that the copy of my client's original letter of objection as it appears on your web-site has been savagely cut – only the last one and a half paragraphs of the original six paragraphs appear.

I note that the recently submitted amendments to the original application are minimal and do not address to any meaningful degree the issues raised in my client's original letter of objection or my own e-mail of the 4th January. I would observe that such amendments simply comprise:

- The provision of a very basic 'as existing' and 'as proposed' long-section – merely a diagram - through all three buildings (section A-A), which fails to distinguish between existing structure to be retained and proposed new structure, three CGIs, which lend little if anything to the potential acceptability of the proposals.
- 'As proposed' plans at ground floor and basement levels showing amended locations for the two, proposed staircases linking the two floors. However the two, amended drawings do not carry any revision suffix.
- 'As proposed' plans at first and fourth floor levels showing people and furniture. However the two, amended drawings do not carry any revision suffix.

Still missing from the submission are:

- The essential 'as existing' and 'as proposed' cross-sections through each of the three buildings showing their relationship with the existing properties immediately to the rear – in particular, with my client's property at no. 15, Neal's Yard - and the extent and nature of proposed internal works of reconstruction.
- Any explanation of how it is intended to maintain the structural integrity of the three existing buildings given the proposals to remove and reconstruct the entire frontage wall of nos. 41-45, Neal Street and to remove the party-walls between nos. 39 and 41-45, Neal Street, and between 41-45, Neal Street and 47-49, Neal Street.
- Any amendment to the incorrect and incomplete information contained in the submitted *Daylight and Sunlight Assessment* in relation to the potential impact on the daylighting of my client's property, as noted by my client in her original letter of objection.
- Any proper assessment of the potential overlooking of my client's property from the proposed development.

You will be aware already of my client's concern regarding the potential adverse of the proposals on her existing amenity as conveyed in her original letter of objection writing as the residential occupier of the apartment at second, third and at part-fourth floor levels above nos. 14 and 15, Neal's Yard, the rear elevation of which face directly on to the rear existing elevations of the nos. 47-49, Neal Street, and her having lived at the property for many years and having valued and enjoyed natural daylighting and ventilation through the windows at the rear of her apartment at each floor level across that time, as well as the views of the sky and across the rooftops of nearby buildings within the Seven Dials Conservation Area from the windows at third and fourth floor levels.

In her letter, Ms Saunders expressed concern about the potentially serious and damaging effects of the proposed development on the residential amenity of her apartment which she has valued and enjoyed over past years and about the potentially substantial and harmful effects of the proposed development on the character, appearance and significance of the Seven Dials Conservation Area.

Despite the passage of five months and the submission of modestly amended proposals, the situation remains wholly unchanged.

THE ADEQUACY AND VERACITY OF THE INFORMATION SUBMITTED IN SUPPORT OF THE APPLICATION

In her original letter of objection, Ms Saunders noted with particular concern, the complete absence of 'as existing' and 'as proposed' cross-sections through each of the three application properties, and along the length of the three buildings, suggesting that no decision to grant Planning Permission could be properly made by the Council in the absence of such drawings demonstrating the potential effects of the proposals on the amenity of adjoining properties such as hers - most importantly, on the daylighting presently valued and enjoyed from within habitable rooms in her apartment - and on the particular architectural and historic interest and significance of the application properties and on the character, appearance and significance of the conservation area. She expressed the view that she found it extraordinary that Council officers should have accepted and validated the application in the absence of such critical sections.

Despite the passage of six months and the submission of amended proposals, the situation remains wholly unchanged, save for the submission of a wholly inadequate long-section – Section A-A - and the submission of three CGIs, which lend little if anything to the potential acceptability of the proposals.

Importantly, too, the submitted *Daylight and Sunlight Assessment* still fails to include the results of any assessments of the potential impact on the daylighting of habitable rooms within my client's property in Appendices B and C (or of the potential impact on the sun-lighting of habitable rooms in Appendix D) despite the claim made in paragraph 8.10.3 that 'the results set out in the table attached at Appendix C demonstrate that all except one window will

achieve either a VSC of at least 27%. However, the report is right in stating in paragraph 8.10.3 that 'This property is located in very close proximity to the site and therefore the proposals will have a disproportionate effect of (sic) the daylight enjoyed by any windows it is assumed serve habitable rooms'. It should be noted, too, that the entire 38-page daylighting and sun-lighting report has been produced without any assessment whatsoever from the properties adjoining the application site. As clearly stated in paragraph 6.2: 'Access was not available (sic) to the surrounding properties, so we have made reasonable assumptions as to the internal room sized, layouts and uses'. Finally, it is difficult to see how it was possible for the consultants to produce the three-dimensional diagrams shown in Appendix B in the absence of the essential cross-sections. In addition, none of those diagrams show the potential impact on my client's property at no. 15, Neal's Yard.

In her original letter of objection, Ms Saunders noted with particular concern that in the *Heritage Statement* submitted in support of the original application it was stated entirely incorrectly and misleadingly that nos. 41-45, Neal Street 'appear to date from the mid-20th century' and is 'a plain and undistinguished mid-20th century building (that contributes little to the area's character)', whereas closer inspection would have revealed that the building, like nos. 47-49, Neal Street adjacent, is a late-19th century warehouse with largely original, slated roof-slopes and original but altered front and rear elevations, and surviving free-standing cast-iron columns internally. Closer inspection of the front elevation of nos. 41-45, Neal Street, would also have revealed that the brickwork is laid in traditional English Bond – and not Stretcher Bond as stated incorrectly - and that the patching to which attention is drawn indicates the positions of the original, arched heads of the window-openings of the upper floors, which were removed when the present pre-cast, window-opening surrounds were installed.

Despite the passage of six months and the submission of modestly amended proposals, the submitted *Heritage Statement* has not been corrected.

In her original letter of objection, Ms Saunders noted that importantly, the absence of sections meant that it was impossible to determine whether or not the existing floors within each of the application buildings are to be retained *in situ* – not least, given the desire to establish common floor levels across all three buildings at first, second and third floor levels in conjunction with the proposed removal of the party-walls between no. 39 and nos. 41-45, Neal Street, and between nos. 41-45, Neal Street and nos. 47-49, Neal Street at all the upper floor levels, and between no. 39 and nos. 41-45, Neal Street at ground level.

Whilst an 'as existing' and 'as proposed' long-section (Section A-A) has been submitted, the critical 'as existing' and 'as proposed' cross-sections through the three application buildings and the light-well behind them have still not been submitted, nor any clarification of whether or not the existing floors are to be maintained.

THE POTENTIAL IMPACT OF THE PROPOSALS,

The proposed removal of the original, matching, shallow-pitched, slated roof-slopes on nos. 47-49, Neal Street and the substitution of a vast, upward extensions of very different and much bulkier profile on the building (insofar as can be determined from the submitted plans and elevations in the absence of relevant cross-sections) will have a serious and damaging impact on the residential amenity of Ms Saunders' apartment which she has valued and enjoyed over past years - in particular, upon natural daylighting through the windows at the rear of her apartment at each floor level, including those serving her principal living area at third floor level, as well as on the views of the sky and across the rooftops of nearby buildings within the Seven Dials Conservation Area from the windows at third and fourth floor levels.

In addition, the diverse windows in the proposed, upward extension shown in the submitted elevation will pose significant loss of privacy to Ms Saunders' apartment at all levels, unless they are permanently fixed shut and permanently glazed in obscured glass.

The submitted drawings continue to show an entirely unresolved and non-traditional external design for the proposed, upward extensions to each of the three, application buildings which will have a substantial and harmful impact on the character, appearance and significance of the Seven Dials Conservation Area – contrary to relevant, national, London-wide and local planning policies. In particular, the height and design of the proposed upward extension on no. 39, Neal Street is wholly misconceived in both urban design and architectural terms and will have the most damaging impact on the character, appearance and significance of the Seven Dials Conservation Area - fundamentally in conflict with relevant, national, London-wide and local planning policies. The proposed use of charred timber/dark cladding for gross upward extension of no. 39, Neal Street; of vertical copper 'tone' (sic) sheeting for the upward extension of nos. 41-45, Neal Street; and of gold shingles for the upward extension of nos. 47-49, Neal Street, has no possible justification in this particular conservation area context. Similarly, the proposed upward, sheer extension of the brick, front façade of nos. 47-49, Neal Street by an additional storey at third floor level will severely disturb and damage its architectural integrity, and possibly its structural integrity too.

Importantly too, no information is submitted with the either the application as submitted, or as now amended, as to the means of preserving the greater part of the existing buildings given the proposed demolition and reconstruction of the entirety of the existing street-elevation of nos. 41-45, Neal Street and the proposed demolition of the existing party-walls between no. 39 and nos. 41-45, and between nos. 41-45 and nos. 47-49. It is reasonable to suggest that such extensive works of demolition are most likely to put at considerable structural risk the survival of the interiors of the three existing late-19th century warehouse buildings.

On a final, fine point, the submitted plans and elevations show the retention of an entrance doorway into no. 39, Neal Street at the splay corner of Neal Street and Short's Gardens whereas one of the three recently submitted CGI's shows it entirely eliminated. It is reasonable to ask for clarification of the prospective developer's intention.

CONCLUSION

It is difficult to see how the proposed development can be described as 'collective refurbishment and associated external works' in the application-form and as 'the renovation and re-use of the buildings' and as 'a creative reuse of buildings of character' in the supporting *Heritage Statement*, given that it clearly involves the total demolition and reconstruction of the front elevation of nos. 41-45, Neal Street, major alterations to the rear elevations of nos. 41-45 and nos. 47-49 Neal Street, the near total demolition of the party-walls between the properties, the removal of the original roofs of each of the three buildings, the removal of the existing top storey of nos. 47-49, the addition of two storeys on no. 39, the addition of one storey on nos. 41-45, Neal Street, and the replacement of one storey and the addition of another on nos. 47-49, Neal Street, and possibly involves the loss and replacement of the existing floors and the original, free-standing iron columns internally.

Given the significant deficiencies of the documentation submitted in support of the application, and the potentially damaging impacts of the proposals, the application clearly runs contrary to relevant national, London-wide and local planning and conservation policies and published guidance, and as such should be firmly rejected by the Council. It is very difficult to see how the present application could be properly put forward for officer-level decision on Monday other than for refusal, given the manifest and damaging, potential impact on my client's amenity and on the conservation area. Indeed, were the application to be approved, there would be a *prima facie* case for a initiating a searching investigation into the handling of the application by the Planning Department.

In this context, I would value your immediate assurance that unless the application is to be recommended for outright refusal on Monday, the application will be referred to the full Planning Committee for decision, and that there should be no question of its being recommended for approval in its present state.

(Without prejudice to the above, should the Council in due course be minded to grant Planning Permission for the proposed development, I would urge the incorporation of one or more conditions relating to construction, restricting deliveries to and from the site and works on site to between 8.00 am and 6.00 pm on weekdays, 8.00 am and 1.00 pm on Saturdays and not at all on Sundays or Bank Holidays).

Yours sincerely, Paul Velluet.

PAUL VELLUET, M.Litt, RIBA, IHBC, CHARTERED ARCHITECT

Copies to Mr Gideon Whittingham, Senior Planning Officer and Ms Elizabeth Martin, Planning Officer (Conservation); Councillor Adam Harrison, Cabinet Member for Improving Camden's Environment; local councillors Sue Vincent, Julian Fulbrook and Awale Olad; Councillors Heather Johnson, Flick Rea and Andrew Parkinson; Mr Mike Cooke, Chief Executive, London Borough of Camden Council; and local organisations.