

FLASK WALK NEIGHBOURHOOD ASSOCIATION NW3

(representing the interests of residents of Back Lane, Boades Mews, Flask Walk,
Gardnor Road, Lakis Close, Lutton Terrace, Mansfield Place, Murray Terrace,
New Court and Streatley Place)

Attn Stuart.Clapham
Regeneration and Planning Development
London Borough of Camden

26 July 2018

Dear Sir,
Planning Application 2018/2859/P
■ Streatley Place NW3 1HL

The proposal is for the demolition of the existing three workshop & stores and the removal of six existing trees on the site and their replacement with four new self-contained flats across four floors including basement.

I am instructed by the Committee of the Flask Walk Neighbourhood Association (FWNA) to object to the above application on the following grounds.

Meeting

A meeting was held on the 4th of June to inform residents of the new plans. The FWNA did not receive an invitation nor did many residents who had submitted objections to the previous plans for the site. The report of the meeting given in the client's Design and Access statement says approximately 15 persons attended, which cannot be taken as representing the views of the large number of residents affected by the proposal. One of the rationales behind the Localism Act 2011 was the need better to involve local people in decisions affecting their locality. Unless local people are fully involved in the pre-application process, it is difficult to see how they can influence the subsequent decision-making process with well-considered comments. The FWNA suggests that no decision should be taken on the present application until such time as a properly convened meeting at which the developers' proposals can be discussed has been held. FWNA and the Heath & Hampstead Society should be invited.

Basement

This application seeks to create a basement which will require the excavation and removal of a large amount of earth. This represents a substantial increase in living area over the previous application and a substantial increase in the amount of earth/spoil that will need removing. The landlocked nature of this site should be taken into consideration and we ask that the basement be refused.

We have not had the opportunity to consider the supporting documentation in any depth. We assume that the developers have purportedly complied with the requirements of the Local Plan and the Neighbourhood Plan so far as a BIA and Basement Construction Plan are concerned. However, we invite Camden to instruct third party engineers to review both documents to ensure that they meet policy requirements and are appropriate to the proposal development.

Location of the offsite storage unit.

The construction of basements can give rise to noise and disturbance during construction, and the management of traffic, plant and equipment: see para 5.8 of the Neighbourhood Plan. The Construction Management Plan fails to meet the requirements of the Local Plan or the Neighbourhood Plan in that it fails to demonstrate how traffic and construction activity will be managed to protect the residential amenity of adjoining occupiers and the safety of pedestrians, cyclists and other road users.

The draft Construction Management Plan states: "There are great discussions from multiple residents about the location of the offsite compound. The previous draft CMP proposed introducing the compound at the crossing of Boades Mews & New End. The 2nd draft CMP application sought to propose two options as discussed with the planning & transport officer; Boades Mews & Back Lane. Back Lane is a much closer location to the site and the movement of materials will not pass in front of the school & nursery. It was viewed by the Council officers that out of all options on the previous draft CMP these two locations are most suitable."

The developers have conspicuously failed to consider a further option, for which the FWNA has consistently advocated, namely that all site compound requirements should be kept to within the site, possibly with a relaxation of the present prohibition of access from Heath Street into Back Lane in order to reduce the impact of construction traffic on Flask Walk. Once again we see a cavalier attitude to anything other than the convenience of the developers.

The bay at the top of Back Lane is in regular use by delivery vehicles to service local businesses. The suggested use some of this space for a skip is wholly impractical. Collection and delivery of skips will result in traffic back up down Back Lane and into Flask Walk. The removal of a large part of the service bay for a skip will cause considerable inconvenience to other road users looking to use the bay for loading and unloading purposes. As a result, those vehicles will have to stop elsewhere. Even at the present time, it is not unknown for vans and lorries simply to stop on Back Lane in order to load or unload.

The use of Back Lane by through traffic is constant throughout the day but is particularly heavy during the evening peak period when traffic queuing to exit Back Lane onto Heath Street can extend back as far as Gardnor Road. As the roadway is one car wide from Flask Walk Green as far as the Heath Street junction, traffic has very limited options for maneuvering. In the past, when building works have asked to close Flask Walk or limit traffic flow, this has been consistently refused by Camden Council on the grounds that Flask Walk is a vital through route to maintain traffic flow at all times through the neighbourhood.

The suggestion to create a compound at the end of Boades Mews is also unsuitable due to vehicle access problems and massive footfall to and from New End School and Nursery.

Wall to Streatley Place

The proposal to erect a building hard up against the existing narrow pathway of Streatley Place is completely unacceptable. The existing pathway is already a little intimidating with a high blank wall but to raise this will create a very uncomfortable canyon effect. Any development on this site must have regard to its neighbours by being set back from the boundaries.

Consultation process

This has been advertised at the end of the school year and when many residents are absent on holiday, thereby minimising feedback from residents and parents of children at the local school. Indeed, members of the FWNA committee who would normally contribute to this letter were unavailable for input. We therefore reserve the right to make further comments up to the date of the planning hearing.

We also do not comment on the detailed architecture of the proposal as we reserve our position to provide input on these matters once the main points of contention have been addressed and a revised proposal submitted. We accept that some development of the site is, if appropriate, desirable, but we feel very strongly that excavation of a basement should be refused.

Yours truly

Marianne Colloms (Sec., Flask Walk Neighbourhood Association)