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Hello Samir

My family and I live at number [REDACTED] with the back of our home looking onto Ching Court. We are the residents closest to the proposed changes. I am writing to you as we are hugely concerned about the prospect of the plans put forward.

So you have our background.. my family is made of our one year old, four year old and my husband and I with grandparents and cousins who visit for long periods. We are a really family oriented group, and have very much enjoyed moving to this area. We bought the house just over 6 years ago, and had Logan, our eldest, and Keshav, our youngest, with the plan of staying here until they grow and ourselves staying on through retirement for the children's use still then. We love the area and enjoy the culture and the ability to have a small family house with little noise and privacy in such an area. It was with this in mind that we purchased it.

A key aspect of our home purchase was the privacy the back courtyard and buildings of Ching Court provided our family. I wanted a space where no one looked into our house so that our children would feel free. It was a conscious decision and a decision between other apartments in parts of London where there is privacy onto squares. The proposed changes would have the new apartment residents able to look into every floor of our house. For example, the children's room is at the back of the house and they will have direct sight onto them sleeping. We leave the children's windows open for fresh air, and this is very important to me that I do not change this

The mixed use of the buildings in Ching Court, some for offices (such as the current use of the ones under discussion), is key to this privacy. When the children are bathed and on their way to bed, they have no sense they are in a vibrant area such as Covent Garden. They have full privacy and the back courtyard is completely quiet and safe. No one is looking in from the building under discussion. I do not want this "feel of security" disturbed.

The other aspect we like about the mixed usage is the constant movement and use of the courtyard doors during the day, before the courtyard is locked in the early evening. This use has on many occasions stopped the use of the courtyard and its' doorways by drug addicts. Just yesterday, I saw a drug user walk through the Monmouth Street entrance to Ching Court and stop at the first doorway of the proposed apartments in Ching Court. Once office workers came to use the doorway, the drug user had no choice but to move out of the courtyard. The drug use in the area is prolific, and these types of deterrents are key to us being able to stay here. Should that building move to a residential one, the use of the doorway and courtyard during the day will very very likely diminish, and I worry greatly about drug addicts then becoming a constant issue. The drug issue has grown over the last 2 years, and we are bearing this constant worry, but things such as the office use of Ching Court really deters it.

The other aspects I am concerned about include:

Different neighbours and changes every few months, as I understand the proposal is for rental apartments on 3 or 6 month leases.

I am also highly concerned about noise at night - the noise echoes in the courtyard, and currently with the buildings being used for offices it means that at night there are no people in the building and no open windows.

We have a quiet area behind us which would be certain to be changed - with the changing tenants, we will not only have less privacy but the issues of having to communicate the need for no noise at night from the apartments will become constant. There will be at least 3 apartment residents to discuss this with, and with changing tenants I worry this will be a big issue. Currently, the long term residents are very close in understanding the needs of each other's families

and we ensure no noise in the late evening, and very little during the weekends. The size of the proposed apartments would suggest that they are not for families as well.

I have further measured the distance of the proposed apartments. From my house, they are a mere 8 metres away.

Please do ensure that this application is rejected. I would like this precedent set against Shaftesbury, so that families such as ourselves can comfortably stay without having to continuously rebut applications. Please also let me know if I can come and speak to you - my husband and I are very happy to.

