

06.02.2020

Dear Ms Smith,

I write to comment on the proposals for the redevelopment of the London Irish Centre (also attached).

I have been a resident of Murray Street for over 32 years, living directly opposite the Irish Centre. I oppose the current large-scale plans for redeveloping the London Irish Centre. Due to the following reasons:

1. They are not in keeping with character of what is primarily a quiet residential street – particularly in relation to proposed usage, the radical expansion of the venue, and the character of the proposed building on Murray Street, including the change of entrance and purpose.
2. The plans / undertakings on the demolition of the existing building and construction of the proposed venue, will have a heavy impact on surrounding properties, residents, traffic - and air quality.
3. Since the closure of The Murray Arms, Murray Street has been a residential street with a school and traffic calming measures, including speed bumps, restricted entrance and bollards.
4. The recent increase in "heavy" traffic (coaches, skip haulage, cement mixer lorries, heavy goods traffic) on and around Murray Street and Agar Grove has already caused damage to buildings and road surfacing, contributed to in part by heavy vehicles driving over speed bumps at speed.
5. Murray Street and Camden Square is zoned as a conservation area – and that it has itself, on a number of occasions, blocked the installation of double glazing as a replacement for sash windows on Murray Street. How can they support the installation of a new 3+ story building with a bar, with all the attendant noise and social issues that this will bring.
6. The new LIC building, in particular the modern-looking building and frontage for Murray Street, looks decidedly out-of-keeping with the rest of the architecture of the area (a residential conservation area).
7. The council has previously rejected plans to use a local restaurant (Temptations) on Murray Street as a live music venue – it is odd then that it should now be considering the erection of a large modern-building with vastly-increased capacity for a bar, roof terrace and large entrance, causing crowding and noise on a small residential street with existing parking and traffic issues.
8. The new frontage and expanded commercial venue threaten to dominate and obliterate Murray Street as a residential area. In particular, the proposed roof terrace / bar on the upper floors / roof would also lead to an increase in noise levels and nuisance from antisocial behaviour, bringing hundreds more people to a small street with infrastructure ill-suited for the purpose - and in conflict with the primary residential setting.

9. Currently, on evenings when the LIC is hired out events, there have been issues with parking and late-night noise. There are recorded instances of antisocial behaviour extending into the early hours, resulting in police action. Such a marked increase in capacity is only likely to exacerbate these issues, causing conflict - and disruption to residents.
10. There are other more suitable areas like, Camden High Street and nearby Kentish Town, much busier commercial areas, have considerable empty capacity in established commercial areas more in keeping with the proposed (much changed) usage of the LIC as a large commercial business, social drinking spot, concert venue and bar.
11. As well as issues with traffic, there are already subterranean problems relating to water drainage to the railway which runs under Murray Street and Camden Square – and the council will be aware of the subsidence issue further up Agar Grove which has been exacerbated by traffic and subterranean development from new building works and the nearby railway.
12. This very large construction project will significantly change the character of both the LIC and blight the local community for years to come - in ways which have not been fully explored or consulted on. I ask the council and the LIC to consult further and to amend the plans to develop something more sympathetic, which is more in keeping with the character of the area.

I thank you for this opportunity to comment and the chance to quell the proposed project in its current form. Please confirm receipt of this letter and that it has been submitted for consideration to the planning process and notify me of any further updates to this plan and the consultation.

Yours sincerely,

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