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Attn: Sofie Fieldsend via email: Sofie.Fieldsend@camden.gov.uk ; planning@camden.gov.uk

13 April 2021

RE: Objection to proposal 2021/0911/P for Grand Union House, 16-20 Kentish Town Road, NW1 8NH

Background

In principle we welcome the redevelopment of the existing Grand Union Walk site in Camden Town and in particular the ground floor area. However, we object to the proposed scheme submitted by the applicant on a number of points.

Height and Massing

The proposed height of the building seems both excessive and oppressive from street level. The additional off set units on the new top floor add excessive height and massing.

Local Planning Policy: Townscape, Heritage Assets and Visual Impact

Camden Councils Local Plan policies D1 and D2 require that development is of the highest standard of design and that it respects local context and character. It also ensures that Camden's heritage assets and their settings, including conservation areas, listed buildings, archaeological remains, scheduled ancient monuments and historic parks and gardens are preserved and enhanced and promotes high quality landscaping and works to streets and public spaces.

The roofline is not in keeping with the buildings surrounding the site. The roofline negatively impacts the view of the listed St Michaels Church from Buck St and Stuckley Place.

The height of the building, including the escape stair to the canal side, negatively impact The Elephant House when viewed from the Regent's Canal towpath and Kentish Town bridge.

The façade design appears light and transparent which looks good on architectural visuals but fails to capture a building in use. The reality will be a visual mess. We would like to see some form of treatment to the glazing to obscure the view into the office space between finished floor level and desk top c.750mm.

The proposed façade materials should also be a condition of planning to avoid the visual impact of the scheme being downgraded to metal cladding when the developed design is fully costed.

Public Realm and ASB

There is anti-social behavior around the existing car park and street area. We are concerned that this will be pushed further along the road impacting Camden Garden residents.

We support the inclusion of planting and greenery but anticipate vandalism as has happened in Hawley Crescent (Open University building) and along the towpath of the new Hawley Wharf development. What conditions can be put in place to ensure any new planting / soft landscaping is maintained and robust enough?

We want assurances that the open areas and building frontages at street levels have design out anti-social behaviour. I.E. recesses where people can urinate or deal/consume drugs etc

The materials used at ground level must deter graffiti and be able to be properly cleaned when the inevitable graffitiing occurs.

Housing Quality

The quantity of residential unit (only 6 units) of new housing seems extremely low given the desperate need for housing and the proposal to vastly increase the NIA of the building. There is no indication that any of the housing is 'affordable' or key worker housing and there is zero social housing. These are desperately needed in Camden Town. We would like to see the housing change to key worker housing or social housing as a condition of planning approval. We would also like to see some access to a green space on the roof and not just limit residents to a small balcony. This has become increasingly important in recent times.

Impact on Neighbouring Amenity

There will be a negative impact on daylight/sunlight and overlooking to a number of habitable rooms in several properties.

- Barnes House, 9-15 Camden Road
- 11-19 Kentish Town Road
- Mansion Lock House, 13 Hawley Crescent
- 33 Kentish Town Road
- St Michael's Church

Whilst the applicant suggests the site is currently under developed or of lower height than other surrounding buildings, it remains a fact that the proposed height and roof design will cause a negative impact in terms of daylight/sunlight. A reduction in the level 4 floor length and height would mitigate the impact on a number of the above properties. ¹¹~~12~~

In addition there will be an increase in overlooking of a number of properties from the additional height and windows proposed.

Camden Town Cumulative Impact Area

We would like it to be a formal condition of planning that no licensed premises (bars or night clubs) are to be allowed within this development at any time.

Conclusion

We object to this development as currently proposed and urge you to refuse this application as it is currently presented. We believe a community group should be formed to work with the developer to resolve any issues.

Yours sincerely,



Kathryn Gemmell

On behalf of TRACT