From: Meynell, Charlotte
Sent: 13 April 2021 20:09
To: Planning
Subject: FW: Planning Application 2020/3461/P Chester Road Hostel - Consultation response to be uploaded

Hi,

Please can the below email be uploaded to M3 and Trim as a consultation response to the above app.

Thanks,

Charlotte Meynell
Senior Planning Officer

Telephone: 020 7974 2598
-----Original Message-----
From: Kate Calvert [redacted]
Sent: 01 April 2021 13:19
To: Meynell, Charlotte <Charlotte.Meynell@camden.gov.uk>
Subject: Planning Application 2020/3461/P

[EXTERNAL EMAIL] Beware – This email originated outside Camden Council and may be malicious Please take extra care with any links, attachments, requests to take action or for you to verify your password etc. Please note there have been reports of emails purporting to be about Covid 19 being used as cover for scams so extra vigilance is required.

I am writing to object to the above application which I believe to be both harmful and contrary to policy as well as out of date given the impact of both Brexit and the pandemic on inner London's population.

As you will be aware, up to September 2020 700,000 people left London and since then there have been further reductions in population. The main movement has been out of central London where rental rates are falling fast. Given the oversupply of buy-to-let rentals, while the stamp duty holiday is currently preventing a fall in prices, that is unlikely to last. We are therefore very likely to see a re-set in the property market which will make it easier for the borough to find suitable properties in which to provide care for those in need.

Among those in need are not least the individuals currently housed in the property on this site which LB Camden proposes to demolish. Given that this structure was purpose built to keep the vulnerable safe it is difficult to understand why their needs are being ignored. Indeed, the very process of moving them will cause significant distress.

The proposal is to use the site to house vulnerable women and their children which at first sight seems admirable, but it is not clear why that is at the expense of other vulnerable individuals, whose care is also mandated by law, especially given that the replacement building is so large and showy that it will become widely known as the place to seek out exactly those women and children who are most in need of protection.

The proposed design, prioritising quantity over quality, in practice would put the women and children involved at a great deal more risk than housing them in other, less prominent properties. Is LB Camden really so purely performative about its obligations that it is happy to simply tick the box, without thinking through the implications of its plans?

If the borough's intention is genuinely to serve the needs of the women it proposes to house here it will re-think and either seek an alternative location, so serving the needs of the current tenants, or at the very least propose something which is more in accordance with the material and appearance of its neighbours and so does not advertise its presence to those who seek to intimidate the potential residents. If that means reducing the number of women who can be housed, better to offer genuine protection to some than fake protection to many.

Accordingly, given that approval would constitute a failure to protect those in need, I would ask that in accordance with policy the committee rejects this application and either asks for the retention of the existing building and the care it provides, or for an alternative and less showy alternative designed to house women in need.

Kate Calvert