

**OBJECTION TO PLANNING APPLICATION: 2021/2676/P**  
**CAMDEN COUNCIL – 1 NORFOLK ROAD LONDON NW8 6AX**

This objection is submitted in reference to London Borough of Camden Planning Application **2021/2676/P** (an amendment to planning permission **2015/6061/P** to change the location of the bicycle shed on the west elevation and replace with a new Air Conditioning Compressor Equipment Plant Room.

1. My wife and I purchased the neighbouring property, **2 Norfolk Road London NW8 6AX**, on 21<sup>st</sup> April 2020 and moved in that week. At the time, the neighbouring property of **1 Norfolk Road NW8 6AX** was still under construction that started in 2012. The owners finally moved into the property in June 2020, but noisy and disruptive work continues at the front of the house and to the garden area at the back.
2. The original planning application, **2012/2720/P**, was submitted in 2012 and the subject of an appeal on 15 May 2012. Planning Permission was granted on appeal on 18 July 2013 and a further Planning Permission issued, **2015/6051/P**, that has been substantially implemented up to now. None of these applications mentioned Air Conditioning Compressors intended to be sited in the West Elevation passageway, which has always shown a bicycle shed in that position.
3. Our pre-purchase investigations conducted in February 2020 of our property and the search for planning applications relating to the surrounding properties did not reveal a plan to site these A/C Compressors near to our Front Door and Kitchen.
4. The Owners of the property are now applying for what they refer to as a “non-material” amendment to allow the location for the bicycle shed to be replaced with Air Conditioning Compressors and a Plantroom to serve the entire property. There is now in place an empty enclosure to house the larger Compressor awaiting the unit to be installed. The smaller compressor unit has recently been installed in place next to the enclosure but without any acoustic structure around it.
5. My objection is that these units are intended to be installed under this Planning Application on the West Elevation side passageway close to our Front Door and Kitchen and in line-of-site of our East Elevation first-floor windows. Clearly, there must have been a reason why the Owner never made such an application until now. It obviously is not a “non-material” change to the Planning as it substantially impacts our home’s amenity value and increases sound levels substantially for us compared to a Bicycle Shed.
6. We were approached by the Owner of 1 Norfolk Road who explained the change they were going to request and furnished us with an Environmental Noise Measurement conducted on 4<sup>th</sup> September 2018 starting at 08:30 am for

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24 hours and the report dated 19 November 2018, but never acted upon. We were concerned because whilst the original noise survey took place, there was considerable construction noise taking place from 07:00 am to 16:30 pm, which raised the ambient noise levels considerably and which are no longer applicable.

7. In response, I commissioned our own Environmental Noise Measurement from KP Acoustics Ltd which was conducted on 4<sup>th</sup> January 2021 for 24 hours starting at 11:27 am for 24 hours. This date was selected as on-going exterior work at 1 Norfolk Road was suspended that week. It is therefore far more representative of the natural ambient noise levels of Norfolk Road than the one conducted in November 2018.

Our Noise Measurement report concludes that the ambient noise levels would be lower and the actual noise levels would be higher than suggested in the 2018 report, especially at night.

In response to our report, the Owner of 1 Norfolk Road commissioned an updated report from EEC dated 22 March 2021, but still based on their 2018 survey, that suggested the noise levels would come within Camden's "GREEN" levels, which is at variance to our report.

I note that in this report it states:

*4.01 This survey was taken less than three years prior to this report which is considered within the typical validity period for the background noise survey data. Ideally, more recent background noise data would be used for the purposes of this assessment, however, in-light of the on-going Covid-19 Pandemic and Government lockdown restrictions active at the time of writing this report, it is considered that any noise data collected during this period is unlikely to be representative.*

I would strongly dispute this assumption and the citing of Covid-19 effects for the following reasons:

- a) The main amenity value of Norfolk Road is that it is considerably more quiet than other roads in the area as there is no entrance for cars from Avenue Road, just an exit for cars from houses in the road. As it is not a through-road, the post-Covid traffic levels would be more like that found on the 4 January 2021, especially as there were no contractor vehicles for 1 Norfolk Road parking or unloading that day.
- b) The owners of properties in our end of Norfolk Road mostly have Electric vehicles which are substantially quieter than petrol or diesel vehicles.

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- c) On the day of the survey, Avenue Road was heavily used by vehicles of all sorts and therefore the "*local and distant road traffic*" noise levels resulting from Avenue Road were typical and being recorded correctly.

I also note that in the same paragraph it mentions:

*Subjective impressions on site, as well as interrogating more recent noise data collected in the vicinity by other acoustic consultancy practices, verify that the noise climate has not changed significantly, and the use of data presented in this report remains robust.*

This clearly refers to the noise survey my consultants conducted on 4 January 2021. However, our survey does not "*confirm that noise conditions have not changed significantly*", hence the mention of Covid Lockdown conditions.

Clearly, neither the November 2018 nor the 4 January 2021 noise assessments were conducted in accordance with *The Joint Guidance on the impact of COVID-19 on the Practicality and Reliability of Baseline Sound Levels* issued by the ANC and IOA *Version 6* dated 12 January 2021, as they pre-date this Guidance.

As mentioned above, the survey conducted on 4<sup>th</sup> January 2021 was able to determine a far more *Reliable Baseline Sound Level* than the one in November 2018 for Norfolk Road.

### **CONCLUSION:**

Having read through the March 2021 Noise Impact Report, I strongly suspect that it is rather optimistic about the acoustic deadening effectiveness of the reduction ability of the acoustic dampening, and that the actual sound levels will be higher than the Daytime and Night-time GREEN Ratings predicted by the Owner's March 2021 report.

I would have thought that the Air Conditioning Plant would have been better sited at the end of the garden at 1 Norfolk Road, away from all houses in the area. But it appears that they have decided not to do this to maximise their garden but at the expense of our amenity value.

Our own Noise Survey conducted in January 2021 has enabled a more realistic and representative background noise level to be set. The manufacturer's noise data of proposed plant has been used to obtain a Specific and Rated Noise Level at the nearest noise sensitive receiver in accordance with BS4142:2014. The rating level was compared with this representative background noise level to assess the likelihood of impact considering the environmental noise context of the area as per the requirements of BS4142:2014.

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The Report concludes that Night-Time Noise Levels are likely to exceed the London Borough of Camden's "GREEN" rating by around 12dB, which is the basis of our objection to this Planning Application.

I also note that one of the two basement levels houses an Indoor Heated Swimming Pool that will need the Air Conditioning to remove humidity and keep the temperature of the air at comfortable levels. Therefore, this load on the Air Conditioning will remain constant during a 24-hour day, so that there will be little, if any, reduction in cooling requirements, and therefore noise, during the night-time.

RECEIVER	PERIOD	CRITERIA FOR "GREEN" RATING	NOISE LEVEL FOR CLOSEST NOISE SENSITIVE WINDOW
First Floor Window of 2 Norfolk Road	Daytime (07:00 - 23:00)	36dB(A)	Standard Power: 36dB(A)
	Night-Time (23:00 - 07:00)	27dB(A)	Standard Power: 39dB(A)

One of the main reasons for buying and living at 2 Norfolk Road is the inherent quietness of the road compared to other roads in the area, as there is no through-traffic. This amenity value would be eroded if we now find that the next-door neighbour's Air Conditioning plant room will be sited in close proximity to our Front Door and Kitchen resulting in a noticeable increase in sound levels on our East Elevation, especially at night.

Michael Bradfield  
2 Norfolk Road  
London NW8 6AX

14 July 2021