

Application No:	Consultees Name:	Received:	Comment:	Response:
2021/5390/P	S Fernando	23/02/2022 11:33:13	OBJ	<p>Dear Sir/Madam</p> <p>I am writing to object to planning application 2021/5390/P, which has been submitted to convert the ground floor of 254 Kilburn High Road from three commercial units into 13 residential flats.</p> <p>As an existing resident, living in flat 201 at 254 Kilburn High Road, I have a number of concerns about this development, which I shall raise below:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Existing residents have not been consulted about this proposal at all, the first we heard of it was when we received a vague letter from Cluttons, explaining an application was on its way. The first details of the application we have seen, are the ones set out on this website. You would think out of courtesy that the owner and developer would have shared their plans with existing residents prior to applying for permission rather than doing it by stealth, which they have done.</li> <li>As residents, we have serious concerns that the development work, which is scheduled to take approx. six months will have serious consequences on our quality of life during the construction phase. Many people living at 254 Kilburn High Road are still working from home and many have young children. We have been given no details of how the developer plans to keep noise and disruption to a minimum or what working hours are proposed, we also have no details of how they plan to keep the courtyard and site safe for young children to access their homes via, and to play in.</li> <li>Camden Council requires there to be an affordable housing contribution made for every additional property developed in the borough, however there is no mention of affordable housing in the plans submitted. The planning statement says that a financial viability assessment was carried out with regard to an affordable housing contribution, however the results are not published, presumably meaning that the developer doesn't believe it is financially viable to provide affordable housing on the site.</li> <li>The above three points are made worse by the fact that the proposed developer are the original developers who built the original site at 254 Kilburn High Road. You may recall that this development was delayed by two years and then went into administration when Godfrey failed to provide the affordable housing promised, at a standard that any housing association was willing to buy it at.</li> <li>As a resident I am highly concerned by the plans which show balconies of the new courtyard facing flats extending into the communal courtyard area at ground level. As well as robbing existing residents of their outside space, these balconies will also be bad for privacy, for both buyers of these new flats and everyone else that has to walk past them. Most concerningly though, these balconies will be a safety hazard. At the moment, the gap between the building and the bike storage is just wide enough for a car or van, meaning that if these balconies are built as planned, vehicles will not be able to access the courtyard. This could be a disaster if an Ambulance or fire engine needed to access the site, as well as highly inconvenient for any delivery drivers or residents needing vehicle access to move in or out of their flats.</li> <li>As a resident I am also concerned that adding these new flats will put unsustainable pressure on the services in the building. Our communal hot water system is already at maximum capacity and the developer has provided no details of how they are going to improve the hot water supply to the building.</li> <li>My final point of objection as a resident in the building is the fact that some of these flats will open into our communal hallway and concierge area. These new doors will potentially ruin the aesthetic of our communal</li> </ol>

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area, but more importantly we have no details of whether these new flats will benefit from the concierge service that existing leaseholders pay for, or if their flats will be treated as a separate development. Either way I object to new flat owners being able to access our facilities, which we are paying for.

8. I also want to object to this development on behalf of the community of Kilburn and Northwest London. When the site at 254 Kilburn High Road was initially developed, it was made very clear in the planning permission that the ground floor had to be used as commercial units in order to replace employment lost on the site when it was developed to residential. Since the building has been finished, the owner of the ground floor, who is a close associate of Paul Godfrey (the original developer) has made no effort to market the three commercial units locally.

The application has been submitted with a marketing report carried out by Claridges of Hannover Square, which claims to show there is no local demand for commercial units on this site. The report is however dated from May 2020, when the site was still a building site and the commercial units were not ready to occupy, the first residents only moved into their partially finished flats in August 2020, and the majority couldn't move until spring 2021. May 2020 was also a period when the government advice was still to work from home due to Covid, so was not a time when people were looking for new commercial space. Finally, the marketing report shows that no local agent was instructed to try and let the commercial space, which is surely one of the first things you would do if you were serious about finding a tenant.

The only signs the current owners have put up are in our courtyard, behind the locked gate, meaning nobody passing by can see there is commercial space to let. Also, a Google search of terms like "commercial space to let Kilburn High Road" revealed no information at all about the site and the company that supposedly manages the ground floor (NW Commercial Ltd) has no online presence, which is very suspicious.

It is therefore fair to say that this marketing report should be considered void and that the owner should be required to instruct a local agent and generally put more effort into marketing the commercial units for their original purpose as I believe that there is demand for commercial space in the NW6 area, especially as people return to work after COVID.

9. Camden council should also be concerned that these new flats will have balconies at ground level in Kilburn Grange Park, which is locked closed at night. Should they want to, these new residents will be able to use the Park as their private garden at night, potentially causing disruption for other local residents.

10. I would finally like to object on behalf of anyone who might be unlucky enough to buy these flats if they were built. There are two major concerns with the location of these flats:

a. Safety: These flats are going to be on the ground floor, just off Kilburn High Road and facing straight onto a public park. Numerous existing residents have had items stolen from the lobby of 254 Kilburn High Road and we have had three late night break ins to the site, where bikes have been stolen, property damaged, and the police have been involved. I would therefore suggest anyone concerned with personal safety will not want to live in these flats, as I would be scared to sleep with my window open (which you need to do here because the flats are so hot).

b. Natural Light: This is a basic human right and these new flats will have none of it. On the park side of the

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building these flats will be behind a well-established line of trees which will mean they get no sunlight at any time of day and will most likely need their lights on at all times. On the courtyard side, these flats will look straight into the back of four storey townhouses, meaning they will also get no direct light.

Overall, I feel this development has not been planned out at all and is a desperate attempt by the developer to recoup some of the money they lost on this site when they went into administration. Extra flats in this building will be a serious inconvenience to existing residents and while there are still ten unsold flats in 254 Kilburn High Road, as well as in the next door new development, new flats in this location are not viable and will offer no benefit to the local area. Camden council must therefore reject this application.

Kind Regards

S Fernando

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