
From: Patrick Marfleet
Sent: 13 June 2022 10:14
To: Planning Planning
Subject: FW: 2022/2019/P : Camden Highline Land between Kentish Town Road and Royal College Street

Please upload to 2022/2019/P

Patrick Marfleet
Senior Planning Officer



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Dear Mr Marfleet,

I am writing to object to the planning application lodged by Camden High Line for the proposed garden walkway on a section of disused railway between Camden Gardens and Royal College Street.

While I have nothing against the project in principle, I am concerned about the problems which could be created for those Camden residents who live along the route. [REDACTED] Ivor Street, along with those of my neighbours, backs on to the proposed development and it is vital that any planning permission safeguards us from 1) overlooking, 2) noise and 3) anti-social behaviour.

Alarming, there have been no consultations between Camden Highline and those who will be directly affected by these matters which suggests that this is not a matter to which they have given any thought.

Overlooking

The current plan shows pathways which are close to the parapet (the other side being a busy railway line used by both commuter and goods trains). This will, despite proposed planting, potentially allow highline visitors to look straight into people's gardens (and rooms on upper floors) and also allow litter (or worse) to be deposited over the parapet. Any planning permission should be subject to these issues being dealt with.

Noise

The main financial stream for the project will be sales of food and beverage and music events. The proposed venues are the arches in Prowse Place (specifically the former Warren Evans warehouse) and in Bonny Street. These are currently occupied (or could be occupied) by local businesses which would face eviction. More importantly, two small residential streets will be badly affected by amplified music and sound that will take place. Any planning permission should be subject to these revenue-generating events taking place elsewhere or for them to at least be subject to some restrictions in terms of the number allowed and the times of the day when they can take place.

Anti-social behaviour#

It doesn't appear as if any thought has been given to security or policing of the project to protect the park and its users from anti-social behaviour. Camden already has significant problems with illegal drinking and drug-taking - without regular patrols how on earth is the Camden Highline going to be a safe and pleasant place for its users to enjoy. Furthermore the lighting design suggests opening after dark, which will only exacerbate the problem.

Looking at the proposal from a wider perspective, this is intended as a major tourist destination which will attract many visitors but it is not clear whether local infrastructure can support it. Camden Town tube station is already struggling to cope with the numbers using it at weekends. A significant increase in numbers would be difficult for it to support and could lead to significant safety concerns. I was puzzled to see that the planning application suggests that the tube station will be redeveloped since there are no plans - nor the funding - to do so.

I also have grave concerns about the business plan which relies entirely on events, filming and F&B sales - in Camden Town there is intense competition on all those fronts and should these revenue streams not prove sufficient - how will the running costs be met - there doesn't appear to be a fallback position.

In short this is a lovely idea in principle but there are huge gaps when it comes to how it would work in principle. Building and planting the thing are the easy bits, the difficulty is in running it successfully and making it viable as a usable amenity and this proposal alarmingly neglects pretty much every aspect of that.

I urge the council to consider this proposal in that light and, if minded to grant permission, to insist on all the necessary safeguards as enumerated above.

Many thanks.

Best,

Alkarim Jivani