

**Comments on the Planning Application for a development ("the Development")
at 31 Southern Road, London, N2 9LH ("the Site")
occupied by the Fortis Green Tennis Club ("the Tennis Club")**

Haringey (Reference: HGY/2024/0871); and
Barnet (Reference: 24/1407/NAC)

Few of the thoroughly articulated concerns raised in Haringey's Pre-Application Planning Advice Note on the Development (arising from a consultation on 28 February 2022) have been addressed or resolved in the plans currently on view.

In the opinion of this writer, the Development is **irredeemably claustrophobic**. If approved and constructed as proposed it will deliver, in perpetuity, **discomfort, annoyance, inconvenience** and **possible conflict** to all who are impacted by it: occupiers of the five houses and three apartments; members and users of the Tennis Club; neighbours in Shakespeare Gardens, Cherry Tree Road and Summerlee Gardens; service providers to the Site; and visitors to adjacent Cherry Tree Wood.

In observing that other writers have lodged expert technical objections to the Development on specific statutory, logistical and environmental grounds, this submission focuses exclusively on the scheme's **degradations to "quality of life"**.

It is hoped that the totality of the objections submitted to Haringey and Barnet will demonstrate conclusively how this flawed Development falls short on every level.

1. Occupiers of the five houses and three apartments:

- 1.1. Mere feet away from the front-facing windows of three of the houses and all three apartments, the chain link fences surrounding the tennis courts will have to rise to the stipulated height of up to 12 feet. It will be like looking out at a prison wall. (The fences depicted in the plans are not to scale—they are too low.)
- 1.2. The noise and activity generated by the Tennis Club in such immediate proximity to the eight residences will be an enduring source of nuisance and disquiet for occupiers. Balls thwacking and bouncing so close will act like a kind of Chinese water torture.
- 1.3. Five car spaces on the Site for eight residences assures denial for some—not least since there is no room to provide sheltered cycle and scooter placement.
- 1.4. It will be difficult, even hazardous, for occupiers' cars to turn around within the Site, and quite impossible for larger service, delivery or emergency vehicles. This is unacceptable design practice, arising from an overburdened Site.
- 1.5. The barricaded lightwell in front of each of the five houses will give the front basements only dreary illumination. Architecturally they are not only grotesque but passé—an embarrassing conceptual throwback to the nineteenth century, necessitated again by an overburdened Site.

- 1.6. The retaining walls that will be necessary to shore up the excavations at the western and eastern extremities of the five houses (not shown on the current plans) will force the row to be even more narrow and cramped than at present.
- 1.7. With no front gardens and only vestigial patches of rear garden for at least three of the five houses, the lots are inappropriately small and confining for occupiers, compared with the spaces enjoyed by the houses in the vicinity of the Site, and the area generally.
- 1.8. The upshot, in the view of this writer, is that if purchasers can even be found who will tolerate such severely compromised accommodations, they—and knowledgeable local estate agents—will without doubt challenge the developers' present asking prices, understood to approach £1.5m for the houses. The Development could turn out to be a financial failure, with all that that entails.

2. Tennis players and members of the Fortis Green Tennis Club:

- 2.1. The Development reduces the present four courts of the Tennis Club to three, diminishing rather than enhancing the present facility.
- 2.2. Such diminution could only be considered acceptable if by way of compensation the experience of tennis on the Site were to be improved beyond that currently enjoyed by the Tennis Club. This is not the case:
 - 2.2.1. The courts will not be expanded to LTA specifications. Players will feel inhibited and those training seriously will not be properly prepared for competition.
 - 2.2.2. The present green area will disappear, eliminating (a) playing space for children and (b) social gathering space for adults. Not including an open area such as this—an essential and revered feature of the British outdoor tennis club tradition—is unacceptable by any standards of tennis facility design.
- 2.3. As with the houses and apartments on the Development, the chain link fence required for the lower tennis court will abut almost directly on the Tennis Club House. The space available for Members to watch games and enjoy the Club will be rendered minimal by this intrusion. It is poor design shoehorned into an overburdened Site.

3. Householders of the neighbouring streets:

- 3.1. The picturesque garden area at the eastern extremity of Cherry Tree Road ("CTR") forms a "Ransom Strip", presently barricading the only potential public and vehicular access to the Site. Naturally, the Development will not proceed if the Ransom Strip cannot be purchased by the developers, and/or if the boroughs of Haringey and Barnet, which meet at this point, choose not to agree on passage.

- 3.2. Not only will the destruction of the Ransom Strip, if it occurs, diminish the appeal of CTR, but the ensuing access to the Development will increase vehicular traffic along CTR by up to 25%, significantly affecting the present tranquil experience of this street.
- 3.3. Parking in CTR is fully taken up by permitted CTR residents in this Controlled Parking Zone. There is no good reason for Barnet to cause overcrowding on CTR by extending permits to the Haringey-located occupiers of the Development for whom there will be no room to park on the Site.
- 3.4. The clean line of rear-facing elevations of the houses along the south side of CTR provides long, unobstructed views to the east. The Development's proposed five houses on the south of the Site will protrude beyond this line, not only blocking this attractive view but architecturally undermining the historically open character of this area as it abuts Cherry Tree Wood. If construction is permitted, this row of houses will jut out aggressively—enduringly reminiscent for local residents, in its own small way, of the infamous “monstrous carbuncle”.
- 3.5. Equally, the brutal overcrowding created on the Site by the Development will impose its heavy hand on more than half of the residences on the west side of Shakespeare Gardens and all four residences at the eastern ends of CTR and Summerlee Gardens.

Respectfully submitted,

Geoffrey Simon

17 Shakespeare Gardens
East Finchley, N2 9LJ

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