

PA/15/01474

Dear Mr Gwynne,

Spitalfields Community Group objects to the above planning application for the demolition of the existing building at 66-68 Bell Lane and the erection of a new single dwelling house set over five floors. Spitalfields Community Group was formed in September 2011 with the aim of promoting and protecting the quality of life of people living and working in the ward of Spitalfields and Banglatown. We have over 200 members and are growing.

The existing dwelling at 66-68 Bell Lane has significant architectural merit. The building is of the Arts and Crafts movement and is the sole surviving building of this era in the immediate vicinity. It is locally listed in a Conservation Area and occupies a prominent position. As such makes an important contribution to the character of the area and to Spitalfields as a whole. To demolish the building would detract from the interest and variety of the Artillery Passage Conservation Area. The proposed new building is incongruent with the local architecture and would detract from the significance of the Conservation Area.

The existing building also has historical significance, it bearing the last remaining evidence of Shepherd's Place archway, built c. 1810, formerly the main access to the Tenter Ground estate. The demolition of the building would remove this final link with a most important part of the heritage of the area.

In addition, there is no sensible justification for the destruction of the existing building. The applicant already has planning permission (PA/12/00434 and PA/12/00435, approved 2012) to extend the building south and vertically, representing a total increase of floor-space of some 160%. The proposals within this permission are sympathetic to the existing building and retain the architectural and heritage features cited above. Contrary to section 2.11 of the applicant's Planning Statement, enactment of the 2012 permission would not "result in the total demolition of the existing building with the exception of the northern and western facades." Instead it allows for the demolition of two unsightly, blank facades and retains all of the floors and historic elevations. This was one of the primary reasons that permission was granted. By contrast, under the proposed scheme, all historic features would be lost.

For these reasons we ask that you reject this application. Many thanks for your help in this matter.

Yours sincerely,

Matt Piper

For and on behalf of the Spitalfields Community Group.

c/o 11½ Fournier St, London, E1 6QE