

94 Mill Lane, West Hampstead, NW6 1NH 2022/5197/P

Recognising the desire of LB Camden to increase housing availability in the Borough the NDF does not object to this application for partial conversion of the ground floor and the whole of the basement, in spite of a loss commercial floorspace, which contradicts Policy 12 and Policy 14 of the Fortune Green and West Hampstead Neighbourhood Plan, as, in the words of the application “The scheme will retain a commercial use to the ground floor of the property thus protecting the viability of the Neighbourhood Centre and provide an additional residential unit of accommodation which should be supported”.

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The NDF objects strongly to this application to convert viable commercial premises on Mill Lane into residential as it directly contradicts two important policies in the Plan

Policy 14: Mill Lane Neighbourhood Centre, which states there will be :

- i. Support for proposals to improve and restore the original character of shop-fronts, including windows, signs and external fittings.
- ii. Proposals to convert ground floor retail/business space into residential use will not be supported

Policy 12: Business, Commercial and Employment Premises and Sites which says that there will be:

- i. A presumption in favour of retaining existing employment sites.
- ii. Ensuring that where the redevelopment of existing employment sites takes place, the level of employment floorspace is maintained or increased.
- iii. The provision of additional and /or new business space

In addition LB Camden has recently succeeded in securing Article 4 status for most of the commercial areas in West Hampstead and Fortune Green, including Mill Lane. The NDF presumes this is recognising the necessity of retaining retail and service activity in what is a very densely populated area to support local shopping, reduce vehicle use, and encourage walking. It also seems clear that a thriving and popular community needs to retain and increase diversity of activity if it is to survive,

There can be no justification to permit this application to proceed.