

OBJECTION TO PLANNING APPLICATION 15/AP/3137 FROM TRINITY NEWINGTON RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

I am writing in my capacity as Vice-Chair of the Trinity Newington Residents' Association (TNRA) in the absence on holiday of our Chair, Edward Heckels.

TNRA was formed in 1976 for the residents of the Newington Trust Estate in London, SE1 (now rebranded as Trinity Village). The Estate consists of Trinity Church Square, Merrick Square and Bedford Row, and parts of Cole Street, Falmouth Road, Swan Street and Trinity Street. TNRA's current paid up membership is over 200 households, comprising around 400 individuals. Please see our website - www.tnra.net – for more information about us.

TNRA wish to register a formal objection to the above application for the demolition of the Gladstone Arms on Lant Street and its replacement by a 10-storey (principally residential) building.

We would like you to carefully register and consider the following two key points when you come to review this application:

1 The place of local pubs in the community

(a) Good pubs are important: they help to create a sense of place and community. The Gladstone Arms is par excellence a living hub of our local life. People of all types go there to meet their friends and neighbours, enjoy good food and drink, and listen to excellent live music. Many people who live on the Newington Estate (whether they are members of TNRA or not) frequent it.

(b) Last year the London Assembly unanimously agreed with the principles set out in the paper Keeping Local: How to Save London's Pubs as Community Resources prepared by one of its members, Steve O'Connell. A key recommendation in this document is that all London boroughs should adopt stringent criteria whenever they are required to consider the redevelopment or demolition of pubs in their catchment areas.

(c) To underline this point, the March 2015 edition of the London Plan specifically encourages boroughs to develop, implement and pursue policies to protect, retain, manage and enhance public houses.

In particular, Paragraph 4.48A of the Plan reads as follows:

“ The Mayor recognises the important role that London’s public houses can play in the social fabric of communities (see also Policy 3.1B) and recent research highlights the rapid rate of closures over the past decade and the factors behind these...where there is sufficient evidence of need, community asset value and viability in pub use, boroughs are encouraged to bring forward policies to retain, manage and enhance public houses.”

(d) The Gladstone Arms has a vital, real and specific character of its own: this is precisely the reason why it is frequented by such a large number of local residents. The proposed A3/A4 use of the ground floor space in the redevelopment can in no way recreate or replace this popular and entirely commercially viable pub in its present form.

(e) It is also important to note that if the Gladstone Arms is demolished it will, along with Ruse (at the corner of Borough High Street and Great Suffolk Street, now being sold to a developer) and the Trinity Arms (on the corner of Trinity Church Square, turned into apartments in c. 2002) thus become the third local pub within a radius of not more than 500m to cease operations in recent years.

B The heritage value of the Gladstone Arms

(a) The existing pub is an aesthetically pleasing early to mid-nineteenth century building with attractive detailing and traditional features of special interest which fully warrant its retention.

(b) Southwark Council's own South of Union Street and North of Borough Road Character Area Appraisal (2007) specifically recognises these aspects, as evidenced by these two quotations from their Appraisal:

Page 6 - " **Buildings that should be listed individually include... the Gladstone Public House.**"

Page 14 - " The southern side of Lant Street is characterised by a mix of buildings of varying architectural merit. **Buildings of special interest include** Charles Dickens Primary School, **the Gladstone Public House** and the warehouse buildings located at 8-10 Lant Street."

NB Lant Street itself is mentioned in Dickens' Pickwick Papers, thus:

" There is a repose about Lant Street, in the Borough, which sheds a gentle melancholy upon the soul. There are always a good many houses to let in the street: it is a by-street too, and its dullness is soothing. A house in Lant Street would not come within the denomination of a first-rate residence, in the strict acceptation of the term; but it is a most desirable spot nevertheless. If a man wished to abstract himself from the world - to remove himself from within the reach of temptation - to place himself beyond the possibility of any inducement to look out of the window - we should recommend him by all means go to Lant Street."

(c) Inter alia the Appraisal states that the lower section of Borough High Street has suffered from the intrusion of modern development and describes the Gladstone Arms as a building of special interest with real architectural merit that contributes to the character and appearance of the area.

(d) The proposed replacement 10-storey building would very significantly overbear the existing small scale buildings along Lant Street.

TNRA therefore strongly objects to this application being approved on the grounds that the Gladstone Arms is not only a key community asset but also has significant heritage value.

TNRA in addition calls for the Gladstone Arms to be formally listed as an asset of community value.