

**NDF Objection to 156 West End Lane planning application re-consultation
(submitted 2 November 2016)**

Dear Camden Council,

I'm writing from the Fortune Green & West Hampstead Neighbourhood Development Forum (NDF) to comment on the revised planning application for 156 West End Lane, reference: **2015/6455/P**.

We note that this is a re-consultation with some additional information, although with no substantial changes to the original planning application.

As there are no significant changes to the scheme, our detailed objections set out in our original response (submitted on 18 December 2015; as attached) still stand - as well as the alternative proposals for the site, which we also submitted.

However, we would like to take this opportunity to make the following additional points:

1. We are extremely disappointed that - despite strong and valid objections from the NDF, the Conservation Area Advisory Committee, other local groups, and many individuals - the applicant has made no changes to the overall **height of the proposed buildings**. Our strong objection to the proposed height of the 'east building' remain. We require that this is reduced to a maximum of five storeys - to avoid harm and significant damage to the neighbouring Conservation Area, Local Green Space and local views (see **Neighbourhood Plan Objectives 2 & 6; Policies 2, 3, 4, 16 & 17; and Map 2**).
2. Furthermore, legitimate concerns have been raised by local residents about how the new buildings will cause **significant overshadowing** of neighbouring properties on Lymington Road - as well as the MUGA and Crown Close Open Space (particularly in afternoon/evenings in spring, summer and autumn). Camden Council's Site Allocations Document (Site 28) states that any new building on the site should transition in height to the north and east. While the developer may be able to argue that this has been achieved on the north side of the site, there has been no attempt to do this on the east side. This should be remedied by reducing the height of the proposed buildings at the east end of the site - in order both to achieve the required transition and to reduce the loss of light/overshadowing of the immediately adjacent green/open space.
3. In terms of design, we welcome the work done to make the West End Lane frontage of the proposed building align with the neighbouring Canterbury mansions.

We have discussed the **corner treatment** at the south-west of the structure and welcome the curved design. However, we can't see why the top of this part of the development (which will be seen from large parts of West Hampstead) has now turned into an ugly, inelegant and protruding rectangular block. In order that this part of the building reflects local character, we require that a curved design (the obvious design reference being the corner turrets on Canterbury Mansions and other nearby mansion blocks) is used.

4. Our concerns about the substantial **loss of employment space** remain. Contrary to the applicant's planning statement, this is a clear breach of **Neighbourhood Plan Objective 5 & Policy 12**. We support the representations made by the GLA and Travis Perkins (as set out in the response from CgMs, dated 25 July 2016) on this point. Furthermore, we believe any approval of the submitted scheme would render Camden's planning policies on employment - both in the Core Strategy and the emerging Local Plan - pretty much null and void, setting a troubling precedent.

5. In terms of the **proposed new retail space** fronting West End Lane, we are strongly opposed to the creation of one very large unit. We believe such an approach would cause significant harm to the character of the West Hampstead Town Centre and would be in breach of **Neighbourhood Plan Policy 13**. We favour an approach based on a minimum of three units on this frontage and recommend that this is set out in the legal agreement accompanying this planning application.

6. We note that a number of concerns have been raised about aspects of the proposed new **vehicle entrance** to the site. We support the recommendations made in the Morgan Tucker report to remedy some of the issues raised. We would also like to see an assessment of this aspect of the scheme from the Council's Highways department, to ensure it is both policy compliant and adheres to health, safety and access requirements. In particular, we do not wish to see a repeat of the situation at the Alfred Court development on Fortune Green Road - where the height of the service entrance was too low for large delivery vehicles to use. In terms of the commercial and retail space, the development will need to demonstrate that it complies with **Neighbourhood Plan Policy 7** - particularly regarding deliveries and the need for safer road layouts.

7. We note that at a recent public meeting in West Hampstead, the cabinet member for housing clearly stated that the Council no longer supported **shared ownership** housing. We therefore can't see how the Council can approve this scheme which runs against stated Council policy. If the Council remains opposed to calls for new council housing on this site (see our previous objection, point 9), we favour an approach in which all 79 units classed as affordable are designated as affordable rent units.

8. An additional issue has arisen following the election of the new Mayor of London and a likely change in GLA planning policy. We note that the new Mayor has made it clear that when public land is sold for redevelopment, the **freehold of the site** should remain in public hands. In order to conform with this new approach, we believe the Council should keep the ownership of the freehold of the site in public hands (this would include the existing public footpath at the edge of the site and the proposed public open space within the development). We therefore request that the Council amends its terms of sale to ensure that the development accords with the wishes of the new Mayor - and that future residents of West Hampstead continue to retain a stake in this important site at the heart of our community.

9. Finally, we reiterate the importance that we and the rest of the local community in Fortune Green & West Hampstead attach to upholding the clearly stated policies in the **Neighbourhood Plan** regarding this development. We remain firm in our position that no planning approval should be given to the site unless it conforms with the clearly stated Vision, Objectives and Policies in the adopted Neighbourhood Plan.

Yours sincerely,

James Earl
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