

Dear Camden Council,

I'm writing from the Fortune Green & West Hampstead Neighbourhood Development Forum (NDF) to object to the planning application for 317 Finchley Road, reference 2016/2910/P.

1. We note that the site is in the area of the Fortune Green & West Hampstead **Neighbourhood Plan** (adopted September 2015). We require that the Vision, Objectives, Policies and Recommendations in this Plan are applied in the assessment of this planning application.
2. The **height** of the proposed building (up to 10 storeys) is a major cause of concern. The planned structure would cause significant damage and harm to the streetscape of Finchley Road and the immediately adjacent Conservation Area. It makes no effort to blend in with its surroundings and is totally out of character for the area. From the drawings provided by the developer, the building would dominate the skyline in an arrogant, aggressive and disproportionate manner.
3. We note that the developer is seeking to make a **height comparison** with the tall building next to the JW3 Centre. We believe this comparison is flawed because (a). this structure was approved before the adoption of the Neighbourhood Plan and does not conform with its policies; (b). it has, on the north side, a neighbouring taller building, which somewhat lessens its impact; (c). the building was part of a scheme which also provided the much-liked and much-supported JW3 community centre - while this scheme makes no such contribution to community facilities.
4. The **design** of the proposed building is also inappropriate. We require that any new structure on this site should be predominately constructed of red brick, to maintain the positive contribution to character of existing buildings and structures. We suggest that a building designed along the lines of the neighbouring Arkwright Mansions would be far more fitting. The use of large windows is also inappropriate for this site and further damages local character.

In terms of height, design and character, the proposal is therefore in clear breach of *Neighbourhood Plan Policy 2*.

4. We believe that the **alternative scheme** for the site, which was given planning permission last year (ref: [2014/5208/P](#)), is more appropriate in both height (maximum of 6 storeys) and design (red brick, white banding). This scheme reflects the existing heights and styles of neighbouring buildings to the south, east and north of the site (including the more modern The Pulse development). We believe that the developer should bring forward any new scheme based on this approved planning application, rather than the design now put forward - which is clearly not policy compliant.

5. We are surprised that the developer has brought forward a scheme with no clear commitment on **affordable housing**. It is therefore impossible to make an informed comment on whether this scheme complies with *Neighbourhood Plan Policy 1* - as well as the policies in the Camden Core Strategy. The planning officer was clear at the Development Management Forum in March that the Council wanted to see on-site provision of affordable housing. With no commitment to on-site affordable housing in this scheme, the application should be rejected and should progress no further.

6. While we welcome the proposal to open up the entrance to **Billy Fury Way**, we are concerned about the proposals for steps on this part of the path - particularly because of the impact on accessibility (including for the disabled and those with push-chairs). We appreciate that the old part of the path is being retained, to the south of the site, but this may remain unwelcoming and unsafe for such users. As such a detailed assessment will be required to assess if the proposals are compliant with *Neighbourhood Plan Policy 9*.

7. We believe any redevelopment of this site provides an opportunity to bring forward improvements to **Finchley Road & Frognal Overground Station** - as set out in *Neighbourhood Plan Policies 5 & 6*. We note that TfL have proposals for a new station building - please see the attached image and plans, to be included as part of our response to this planning application - which both we and the wider community would very much welcome. We understand that the proposals are currently unfunded and that TfL wishes that development in the immediate area contributes to this scheme. We therefore would oppose any proposal for this site that does not make a significant contribution to improvements to the station. If it is judged that this contribution should come from the CIL money from any development, then Camden Council should make clear that any CIL money collected from this site should go towards a redevelopment of this station.

8. We support business/commercial use on the ground floor of the development. However, we note that the developer has already indicated that an M&S food store will be located here and we are concerned about how **deliveries** will be made to this site. With no dedicated parking bay, it seems that delivery lorries will have to park (probably illegally) in the bus lane. This is not acceptable and this issue needs further consideration before these plans progress any further - to ensure the consent of TfL and conformity with *Neighbourhood Plan Policy 7vi*.

9. Overall, for the reasons stated above - both individually and collectively - we believe that this scheme is in clear breach of a number of policies in the Neighbourhood Plan. It also appears to be incomplete in a number of important aspects. We therefore require that the planning application is **rejected** and that the developer works with the NDF and other groups to bring forward a scheme that is both policy compliant and has the support of the local community.

Best wishes,

James Earl  
(Chair, Fortune Green & West Hampstead NDF)  
[www.ndpwesthampstead.org.uk](http://www.ndpwesthampstead.org.uk)