

From: David Wilson

Sent: Sunday, March 12, 2023 4:24 pm

To: Sue Vincent (Cllr)

Subject: O2 Development Planning Application 2022/0528/P

Dear Councillor Vincent

I am sending this email to each member of the Camden Planning Committee to reinforce the many serious objections to the O2 Development Application and to offer my concerns as part of a large local community which the Application ignores. I am a long-standing resident and landlord of West Hampstead.

I appreciate that the documentation from Landsec is massive and, together with the more detailed objections to the scheme it must be a daunting task for Planning Committee Councillors to absorb all this critically. The Planning Committee are aware of the serious and expert objections from local community groups, the planning consultants they have engaged, London Police and Thames Water.

I don't want to burden you by repeating these, but simply to state what is obvious to the many individual residents who have submitted objections. **It is very clear that the proposed development will have a totally negative impact on everyone living in and using the surrounding area and offers no attempt to mitigate this or any positive contribution at all to the local community.**

I summarise the reasons for this view:

1. The proposed demolition of the current O2 Centre offers hardly any provision for the life of the local community in its place. The Centre was a thriving community resource, with the biggest supermarket in the area, some other useful shops such as the large bookshop, a multiplex cinema, a good range of restaurants to suit all pockets and a gym, albeit private. The proposal only offers small token gestures to placate O2 Centre users. Added to this, the demolition of Homebase deprives the area of a large, one-stop shop for all household needs.

2. The proposed development and its construction will have a major negative impact on the local community in various ways:

- i. The construction traffic over a number of years will add to the already serious traffic congestion in Finchley Road and West End Lane, with no way of alleviating this; the development will also clearly attract vehicles to service the flats and make deliveries.
- ii. For the reasons above, there will be an increase to air pollution in two of the most polluted roads in London (data published as part of London Atmospheric Emissions Inventory) and in an area which already generally suffers from the emissions caused by frequent traffic congestion, multiple bus routes and diesel trains on 3 railway routes. I understand that the proposed development conflicts with Camden's Climate Change and Clean Air Action Plan.
- iii. The extra number of people living in the proposed development will significantly add to overcrowding along the very narrow pavements of West End Lane between the three stations (Tube, Overground and Thameslink) and add to the demands on public transport. No provision has been made in the Development plans for this, presumably because it is not strictly part of the development. Even the possibility of step-free access at West Hampstead tube has, I understand, been excluded.
- iv. The extra number of people brought to the development will swamp local infrastructure, utilities and community assets.
- v. The opportunity of providing green spaces which are attractive and easily accessible for local residents has not been adequately addressed in the proposed development plans and is, apparently, half that of Camden's Local Plan. The whole area has very few green spaces for recreation - and also, of course, for helping deal with air pollution.
- vi. The overall visual impact of the tightly-packed tower blocks will be to create a long wall of buildings which completely dominate the low-rise buildings all around them in no less than 5 Conservation Areas. Apart from anything else, this ignores the GLA requirement that developments should 'respect local context and character'. It raises a question over how Camden Council views the significance of Conservation Areas.

It is clear that the overriding beneficiary of the proposed development is Landsec and their financial interests. This is entirely at the expense of the losers - the whole local community. Camden has already moderated some aspects of the plan, but it is not enough without further significant changes, which I believe it is a duty of Camden Council to impose in order to protect the interests of its residents.

Yours sincerely

David Wilson
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