

From: Jason Peacock

Sent: Sunday, March 5, 2023 5:18:45 PM

To: Heather Johnson (Cllr); Edmund Frondigoun (Cllr); Lotis Bautista (Cllr); Danny Beales (Cllr); Nasrine Djemai (Cllr); Lloyd Hatton (Cllr); Liam Martin-Lane (Cllr); Andrew Parkinson (Cllr); Will Prince (Cllr); Tom Simon (Cllr); Sue Vincent (Cllr)

Subject: RE: Objections to Landsec's O2 redevelopment plans

Apologies, now with my details:

Jason Peacock
137 Broadhurst Gardens
NW6 3BJ

From: Jason Peacock>

Sent: Sunday, March 5, 2023 5:05 PM

To: Heather Johnson; Edmund Frondigoun; Lotis Bautista; Danny Beales; Nasrine Djemai; Lloyd Hatton; Liam Martin-Lane; Andrew Parkinson; Will Prince; Tom Simon; Sue Vincent

Subject: Objections to Landsec's O2 redevelopment plans

Importance: High

I wish to register with each of you my very strong objections to this development, for the following reasons:

Overbearing height: There are 11 tower blocks of 12-15 storeys, 10 blocks of 8-11 stories, and three buildings of 3-6 stories. The Greater London Authority says tall buildings are “not the answer to our housing needs”. “Direct access to external space for families is absolutely crucial to the successful and healthy functioning of that household and that becomes incredibly difficult with tall buildings.”

Crammed layout and **extreme density:** The site, at 315 dwellings per hectare, is officially “superdensity” and almost “hyperdensity” (350 homes per hectare). The design IGNORES planning rules from The National Model Design Code (3-5x denser), the Fortune Green and West Hampstead Neighborhood Plan, the National Planning Policy Framework, the 2016 London Plan SRQ (2x denser), and London Plan policy D9. An independent planning consultant hired by community groups found **Landsec’s plan fails ALL requirements of the Camden Local Plan**, bar one. The planner concluded: “Such high and closely-

packed buildings are Soviet in concept – except most Soviet developments would be further apart and with more green space.” (His report is below)

The scheme will **swamp local Infrastructure**, utilities, and community assets. Local GP surgeries are already in short supply, NHS England says. What will be the effect on rubbish collection (already inadequate), police, the fire station, schools, recreation centres, cafes, and shops? It will be a horror show for local residents. Landsec is offering nothing to compensate for all this, except for “promising” a small “health centre”. Camden has given no reassurances on any of these concerns.

West End Lane and Finchley Road will face **dangerously overcrowded pavements** and roads, with some 5,000 new residents in the area. Landsec plans no parking for its residents, but will people living in £1 million+ flats not own a car? Where will they park it? Deliveries to 5,000 new people will cause massive congestion at site entrances.

Public transport will be overwhelmed. Pre-Covid, the Jubilee line was already running at 115% capacity, the Metropolitan at 97%. At rush hour, pavements and platforms and buses are already crowded. Landsec has ignored pleas to create new entrances to the West Hampstead tube, not that that would solve the problem.

Water, sewage and flooding dangers: The area is already subject to flooding. From Camden’s ‘public consultation’: “Thames Water has identified an inability of the existing surface water network infrastructure to accommodate the needs of this development proposal”. Thames warns of low or no water pressure unless the network is upgraded. The O2 development will create an additional 260 litres of waste water per second. Thames Water wants this reduced seven-fold to 36 litres per second. Thames is trying to get Landsec’s cooperation and to get “tankage” introduced. It is unclear how many of Thames’ concerns have been addressed. Again, no assurances from Camden.

Insufficient usable green space. The **open space is HALF of that outlined by Camden’s Local Plan.** Camden admits it is TAKING CASH in lieu of meeting that target. The independent planner found actual public green space is about 12%, not the 50% Landsec claims. One “park” is a narrow corridor and much of the “open space” is paved. The crammed and dark areas between buildings are not conducive to children playing outside.

The people in the towers will live in an oppressive, lightless, airless, and heartless environment. Many families will have only walls to look at, with loud

trains passing on both sides. Going out will mean walking down narrow, often dark, corridors. Many flats will get no direct light at all. **One third of the flats do not meet standards for daylight/sunlight.** Many occupants will be transient renters.

The **local police** expressed concerns that the narrow pathways, dark and poorly overlooked spaces, and lack of traffic on site (no parking for residents) pose a crime risk. Studies have shown that tower block environments are conducive to poor behaviour. What does that mean for the people who live there?

Impact on Conservation Areas and heritage assets. **The site is surrounded by five Conservation Areas**, which will be blighted by the intrusion of towers blocks. National Policy requires “great weight be given to harm to heritage assets”. West and South Hampstead will have an overbearing skyline of towers. West End Lane will lose its “village” feel. West Hampstead has already had more than 10 tall buildings go up near the tube and, now, on the main street. Each tower block is used to justify the next. **The Greater London Authority says councils must require that developments “respect local context and character.”** Can Camden ignore everyone? Who did we vote in?

Loss of the O2 Centre, which will be razed. The large Sainsbury, the parking lot, Virgin Gym, swimming pool, cinema, bookstore, and shopping and entertainment will all go. Landsec promises a small gym and an estimated 80% smaller supermarket. There will be no parking, so visitors will have no means for a large, economical shopping trip.

Camden is allowing Landsec to have just 35% of homes as “affordable”, despite its target of 50%. There was no independent review of Landsec’s claim it could not afford more. Of the 1,794 flats, **only 18% will go to people eligible for welfare.** The other “affordable” units require an annual household income of £50,000. The 1,228 private homes will be sold for “£1 million plus” and largely be rented out. There is strong resistance by Building Depot and other landowners to selling their land to Landsec. (Landsec only owns the O2 Centre.) If phase 1 alone is built, this would leave just 107 low rent flats in the development.

Some 87% of the Landsec plan is 1 and 2 bed flats, double the need Camden has identified, while 3-bed is 13% and 4-bed is zilch. And Camden claims it is trying to find homes for “families”. Many of these flats will be bought by overseas investors and rented out. So a huge transient population will move into the area, **not needy families desiring a permanent home.**

The plan conflicts with Camdens' Climate Change and Clean Air Action Plan. Landsec plans **15 YEARS of construction**. Construction can have a significant negative impact on local air quality and potentially on public health. As residents at the 3-crane development on Liddell Street can testify, builders flout regulations about damping down dust and traffic regulation. Camden does nothing.

Despite the Camden and London Plans calling for "mixed use" for this area, Landsec plans 89% homes, 11% commercial, and **0.1% community use on the built areas**. (Last available figures)

Overshadowing and loss of light to neighbouring homes. The 'right to light' of nearby neighbours to the north is protected by the Rights to Light Act 1959. This, too, is being ignored. Who can afford to sue?

CONCLUSION by the independent planner hired by community groups: "It is clear that this is a plan which is entirely guided by commercial interests, and is **basically 'human warehousing'.**"

His report is here:

http://www.southhampstead.info/uploads/1/3/7/5/137534388/o2_centre_-_representations_on_behalf_of_the_confederation_of_local_community_groups_final.pdf

Daniel Pope, chief planning officer at Camden, told a public meeting in Feb. 2022 that: "Planning law requires that applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with 'the development plan', unless material considerations indicate otherwise."

He then names five plans (London Plan, Camden Local Plan, Camden Site Allocations Plan and two neighbourhood plans) as 'the development plan'. **Yet according to the independent planner and official documents, Landsec's plan grossly ignores many of these "required" UK planning guidelines.**