

Crediton Hill Residents Association
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07 January 2016

Ms Josleen Chug
Planning Solutions Team
London Borough of Camden
2nd Floor
5 Pancras Square c/o Town Hall
Judd Street
London WC1H 9JE

Dear Ms Chug

Re: Application Number 2015/6455/P – 156 West End Lane, NW6 1SD

I am writing in my capacity as Chair of the Crediton Hill Residents Association (CHRA) of which I have been a member for over 12 years and chair for the past 8 years. I have been a Camden resident for almost 40 years and resident on Crediton Hill for over 25 years.

Crediton Hill residents are all impacted by the proposed development at 156 West End Lane (156WEL), both directly and indirectly.

In the most direct way, Crediton Hill residents, especially those living at the bottom half of the road, will find themselves at street level facing a massive overbearing mass looming high above the Lymington Road Victorian houses. This will remove significant skyline views and cause considerable overshadowing across the entire bottom half of the road.

We note with concern that none of the submissions by the Applicant, particularly those dealing with light and overshadowing, address the impact on Crediton Hill and its residents at any point on the Street. We believe specific photographs are missing from these submissions.

We have also considered the impact on the views from various parts of Crediton Hill. In the photograph below – a view from a first story window on the upper half of Crediton Hill looking south – one can clearly see the rooftops of the houses on Lymington Road, and beyond that, the top of the student housing accommodation on Blackburn Road. This demonstrates that what is now a clear outlook over a considerable vista of London, will be completely obscured by the additional 3-5 stories of this proposed development looming over the Lymington Road houses. Every building in the horizon and the vast skyline, would be obliterated.



The proposed project is located on the immediate border of a conservation area. A conservation area is defined in Section 69 (1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as an area of “special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance” and that the project is irreconcilable with the Council’s duty to ensure such preservation.

Also at the centre of this particular point is Section 7.2 of the February 2011 West End Green Conservation Area Appraisal Plan (Control over New Development), which document notes that **“Development proposals must preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the West End Green Conservation Area. This requirement applies equally to developments which are outside the Conservation Area but would affect its setting or views into or out of the area.”**

It is clear in every respect that this project contravenes these principles.

The following additional photographs were taken in the past week, when, unlike in the developer’s presentation, the trees are not in full leaf and are in fact bare. They show, and no explanation is really necessary, the views from various angles on and around Crediton Hill looking south towards Lymington Road. In every instance it is obvious how a further 3-5 stories looming behind, over and above the Lymington Road properties would obscure and blot out the skyline views from Crediton Hill, as well cause a significant reduction in light across the entire bottom half of Crediton Hill.

View from top of Crediton Hill



View from middle of Crediton Hill



View from bottom of Crediton Hill



View from corner of Crediton Hill & Lymington Road

To clearly reiterate, imagine a solid series of buildings some 3-5 stories above the rooflines of the properties along Lymington Road at the bottom of Crediton Hill. The pictures demonstrate that every view of the skyline and horizon from within the Conservation Area looking southwards would be obscured at best and obliterated at worst.

Indirectly, and with respect to the wider issues impacting West Hampstead, Crediton Hill residents are deeply concerned about the following issues arising from the development:

- The plans are completely out of step with the existing character of the properties in the West End Green Conservation Area.
- The proposed development is completely out of character with the surrounding built environment. It completely disregards the architecture around it and the character of other buildings. In particular, the houses in Lymington Road are three story Victorian properties and the proposed development in its existing form will tower over these properties impacting their light, their views and the use and enjoyment of their properties. The height of the proposed development will overlook other buildings and significantly impact on residents' right to light and privacy, the impact will be particularly severe over Lymington Road where residents will be overlooked when in their gardens and main living areas of their property.
- The proposed development includes a proposed private road for which it is envisaged residents of the proposed development will use as an access road. It is proposed the access is situated immediately behind the garden walls of the Lymington Road properties. The obvious consequence of this will be a substantial increase in dust, pollution, noise and damage to the general conservation area. The impact on the Lymington Road residents will be substantial but generally this increase in pollution will also have an impact on the wider population.
- West Hampstead has benefited from an influx of young families, the population of children has steadily grown in recent times. The proposed development and its impact on the environment will be have a detrimental effect on the well-being of those in near and surrounding areas.
- The proposed road between the Lymington properties and the proposed development is an obvious security risk. It will allow easier access to the gardens and properties of Lymington Road.
- The development proposes to house between 600 – 800 residents. There is simply insufficient infrastructure to support this number of additional residents into West Hampstead; there is already one development due to complete later this year, West Hampstead Square – the impact from this development is yet to be seen alongside other developments in Blackburn Road, Iverson Road, and Liddell Road. Thames Water has already filed significant objections to this development on the grounds that there is insufficient water and sewage infrastructure in the area to support the development.
- The development will result in a substantial increase in footfall in what are already overcrowded surrounding roads.
- The footfall on the underground, trains and buses – without yet taking additional traffic from West Hampstead Square into account – is already at close to maximum level.

- Another new development will shunt public transport levels on the tubes and trains to dangerously high levels, thereby putting public safety at risk.
- The narrow pavements over the bridge between this proposed development and two stations is already heaving with pedestrians in the mornings and evenings.
- The current lack of primary and secondary school places, along with the impact on already overstretched GP services, of which there are fewer in the area than in living memory, has not been properly examined or considered by this plan.
- The development plan appears to have dismantled two walls, one along Potteries Path and one currently at the end of Travis Perkins' yard which form the walls of the football pitch, currently the only recreational space available for young people in the area. No development plan should threaten or encroach upon this valuable public space.
- The proposed blocks will overshadow and deprive of light the green space and children's playground at the Lymington Road Estate, which is closest to the 156 West End Lane site, as well as to the homes and gardens on Lymington Road Estate.
- The developer's Daylight and Sunlight report is probably one of the most specious documents I have ever read in respect of this issue and one which completely ignores the reality of loss of light in the context of this development. Lymington Road residents generally are already aware that the loss of light will impact almost every home on the Street and will take many homes below the minimum BRE acceptable levels. We would ask that Camden, who will profit massively from any development on this site, carry out its own independent assessment. It is patently obvious from the report that the only reason the height and mass has been slightly reduced during the early consultation process is to mitigate against even more massive overshadowing and loss of light.
- The plans are also in direct contravention of the policies outlined in the Neighbourhood Development Plan for this area.
- We must reiterate again that the proposed project is located on the immediate border of the West End Green Conservation Area. It goes without saying that this proposed development would never be permitted within the Conservation Area, so we have to ask why it is being considered when it sits right on the edge of the Conservation Area. The damage this development would cause to the Conservation Area and to the lives of those residents living in the area is incalculable. If this development were to be permitted it would set a very dangerous precedent within the Borough generally regarding developments adjacent to Conservation Areas.

We would ask, quite firmly, that the Planners and the Committee should carefully consider all of the objections raised in this letter and also to respect the sanctity and authority of the Conservation Area policies and principles that apply in this case and refuse this application.

Yours sincerely

Larry Trachtenberg
Chair
Crediton Hill Residents Association