

# WHat

WEST HAMPSTEAD *amenity and transport*



LBC,  
Development Management  
London WC1H 8ND

64 Hillfield Road  
London NW61QA

18 December 2015

Dear Sir/Madam,

APPLICATION NO 2015/6455/P

The following comments on the above Planning Application for the development of 156 West End Lane are submitted on behalf of the committee of West Hampstead Amenity and Transport (WHAT):

WHAT members welcome the proposed redevelopment of a site which has been left empty for the past three years and whose buildings are ugly and out of keeping with West End Lane.

We are pleased that the developer has listened to the concerns of the community during the consultation period and has amended the original proposals.

We appreciate that consideration has been given to the height and design principles of the surrounding buildings, that 47% of affordable housing units have been included and that Potteries Path, a neglected walkway, will be opened up.

We would like to raise specific points:

**1. Affordable housing**

WHAT Members welcome the provision of much needed affordable housing, particularly units that will accommodate large families. We would like assurance that the social rents will be truly affordable (no greater than 40% of net income). We have pursued this issue with the developer but have been told that rents cannot be finalised so far in advance. This should be part of the statement of viability provided with the application.

There is concern that the social housing units have been sited in the West block whilst the market housing is in the East Block. The 3 and 4 bedroom (6 person units) are sited at the far end of the West wing on West End Lane and are farthest from the open space and play area and will thereby be disadvantaged. It would be preferable if the family sized units were sited closer to the play areas and the units that are likely to be occupied by single people or couples are in the West Block and close to transport links.

## **2. Density**

The applicant has exceeded the density guidelines of the London Plan by 2%, i.e by 9 out of 457 habitable rooms This is on the basis of providing much needed housing units because of the site's excellent public transport links. There is concern this density may have a cumulative effect on local services in relation to the other nearby developments currently under construction which are not in the Council's Site Allocation Plan nor in the Growth Area. However, the Department of Communities and Local Government is currently consulting on increases in density around key transport interchanges.

## **3. Bulk and height**

Members of WHAT understand the concern of residents of the 14 houses on the South side of Lymington Road. The closest distance at 30 metres is opposite the six floor block while the 7 floor block appears to be around 32 metres away according to p. 48 of the Design and Access statement. The East Block will have a negative impact on the views from their houses which are in the West Hampstead Conservation Area . This is even after the new design has lowered the building on the northern end.

That said we note that this site has been long since between allocated for intensive development under the London Plan and Camden's Local Development Framework under successive political administrations. Members have different views on the weight to be given to the need for affordable housing as against the impact on local residents in these 14 houses.

## **4. Employment space**

Although provision has been made for some employment space and for non-residential flexible space, this will not replace the light industrial businesses that were displaced at 187-199 West End Lane and Liddell Road as well as the employment provided by the current tenant on the site, Travis Perkins.

It is arguable that light industrial use on these sites has had its day. We welcome the removal of heavy lorries from our increasingly crowded streets, West End Lane in particular.

## **5. Community space**

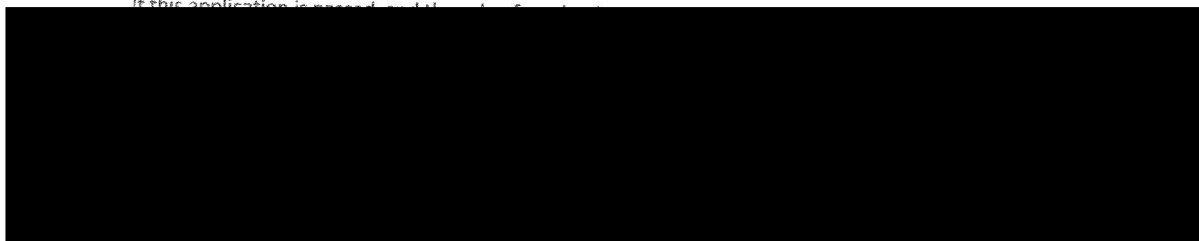
The provision of a community meeting room is to be welcomed. We would like further clarification about how it will be funded. Will this be the responsibility of the developer?

## **6. Road access**

We welcome the removal of the unsafe lorry exit from the Travis Perkins site on to West End Lane. However some committee members have expressed concern that the replacement exit on the north end of West block will also cause problems for pedestrians, even though vehicle movements will be much lower in number. It has been suggested that some form of traffic lights or barrier could be installed.

## **7. Profitability**

If this application is approved, we will be interested to know the following information:



### **8. Site planning**

Much of the heated debate on this site could have been avoided if Camden had adopted its own plan for the Growth Area . We understand that this is now under discussion for the O2 car park and would like to support this possibility and the involvement of the local community.

Yours faithfully



Virginia Berridge (Chair WHAT), Gillian Risso- Gill (Planning WHAT committee) and Mark Hutton, for WHAT committee