

20 New End Square, London NW3 1LN. [REDACTED]

Dear Sir

Murphy's Yard Development ref 2021/3225/P

I am writing this as a lover of Hampstead Heath and supporter and member of the Heath and Hampstead Society.

I have looked at the application on Camden Council's website and it seems to me that the outline format really is of no assistance here, and that what has been submitted is not more than a proposal for as much floorspace as the applicants thought they could achieve on the site.

The resultant development would cover too much of the site and would be woefully short of ground level open space on site. There is too much reliance on rooftop space, which can provide some additional open space relief, but is generally too exposed and is not a substitute for ground level space. The space that is proposed is really no more than the interim space required to give light to the buildings fitted onto the site.

Moreover, there is no justification for buildings of this height at this location. They do not mark anything in the urban landscape, and are not waypoints to anywhere of significance in this part of London.

The site will essentially remain a backwater, as it is now, behind the frontages on Highgate Road, and the proposals depend too much on the principle of unspecified active frontages to enliven it. It is certainly not clear that in the new post Covid retail market, significant frontage lengths of new cafes and restaurants can be expected to prosper.

The proposed intensity of development on the site and their height will undoubtedly increase the sense of enclosure of the south part of the Heath at the bottom of Parliament Hill, where at present the tall buildings that exist are well separated by green and lower development. This proposal would introduce a monolithic mass comparable to the Royal Free Hospital, but without any of the public interest justification which the hospital enjoys.

The Heath and Hampstead Society is right to be concerned about the potential effects on this southern part of the Heath, which could be targeted by very large extra numbers, seeking relief from the over-densification of the site.

It seems to me that the Council should not encourage this application, and that before any of the normal negotiations on amount and type of affordable housing and workspace take place, the applicants should be asked to go back to consider a lower density development with less buildings, buildings that are less obtrusive and tall, and open space at ground floor level that is both increased and designed for practical use by a variety of age groups.

Yours faithfully

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Madeleine Trehearne