



Camden

CLLr Lorna Jane Russell
Crowndale Centre
218 Eversholt Street
London
NW1 1BD

Monday 21st January 2022

Dear Sir / Madam,

RE: Murphy's Yard planning application

I am writing to object to planning application 2021/3225/P which concerns a proposed large-scale development on the Murphy's Yard land, just to the South of Gordon House Road.

I have a number of concerns about the proposed development, including the height and density of the towers, the mix of proposed housing, the impact that construction would have on neighbouring residents, and the environmental implications of demolition.

I have set out my concerns in further detail below, and believe that the application should be refused as it fails to meet Camden's planning policy requirements. However, I would be open to supporting a future application on the site, providing it is redesigned and reflects the community's aspirations for the site.

Height and density of the towers

The planning application is for a high density development, with a series of residential towers of up to 19 storeys and a row of very large floorplate industrial buildings of up to 8 storeys.

These buildings are much higher than anything else in the vicinity and their design and character is not in keeping with the neighbourhood. They will tower over the local area and would be incredibly intrusive to residents living nearby.

I am further concerned that the towers would damage skyline views, as they will largely block the protected view of Parliament Hill from Kentish Town, while the views from Parliament Hill and Kenwood will be adversely impacted too.

Mix of housing

The majority of the proposed 825 new homes, some 88%, will be 1 and 2 bed flats. However, this is twice as many as Camden's own Strategic Housing Market Assessment says is needed throughout the borough. Disappointingly, only 14 of these new homes will be 4 bed family homes. Therefore, I do not believe that the development adequately meets local housing need.

Furthermore, Camden's Local Plan sets out a target of 50% for affordable homes on large developments, however this proposal falls short of this at a proposed 35% affordable housing units. The developer attempts to use Network Rail's ownership of part of the site to justify this lower provision, however I cannot see the relevance of this for planning purposes.



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Therefore, the application should be turned down because it fails to achieve adequate affordable housing, as well as the right balance of family homes.

Impact on neighbouring residents

The construction of the development would take place over a period of approximately nine years, which would wreak havoc in the local area for a prolonged period of time.

Gordon House Road and Highgate Road are very busy local roads that are already congested with traffic, which will be exacerbated by the significant amount of construction traffic – up to 1,500 HGVs – accessing the site each month.

I am also particularly concerned that this proposal involves complete demolition of the existing buildings on the site. Such a demolition, and its associated construction work, would cause undue distress to residents currently living nearby, and is therefore inappropriate.

Environmental considerations

The objection submitted by Climate Emergency Camden sets out how the planning application is not in line with Camden's Local Plan, which requires the highest feasible environmental standards.

This is because the Whole Life-Cycle Carbon Assessment shows that initial construction of the development will result in 1.9m tonnes of CO₂ emissions – more than double Camden's entire Scope 1 and 2 emissions over a year – as the majority of the site will be covered with concrete. This directly contravenes Camden's ambitious commitments to achieve net zero by 2030.

Significantly, the Environmental Impact Assessment includes no consideration of how this could be reduced by adopting a different design strategy.

Furthermore, the Environmental Impact Assessment does not consider the impact that the development would have on surrounding nature sites, including Mortimer Terrace Nature Reserve, while there are also insufficient measures to protect the biodiversity on the site and adjacent to it.

Conclusion

In conclusion, I urge Camden to reject the application because it fails to meet the Council's planning policy requirements.

However, I would be open to supporting a future application on the site, providing it is redesigned and is much more reflective of community interests.

Kind regards,

Councillor Lorna Jane Russell

Green Party councillor, Fortune Green