

Conservation Area Advisory Committee

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| Advisory Committee | Belsize |
| Application ref | 2022/0528/P |
| Address | The O2 Masterplan Site Finchley Road London NW3 6LU |
| Planning Officer | David Fowler |
| Comments by | 20 Mar 2022 |
| Proposal | <p>Detailed planning permission for Development Plots N3-E, N4, and N5 including demolition of existing above ground structures and associated works, and for residential development (Class C3) and commercial, business and service (Class E) uses in Development Plot N3-E, residential development (Class C3) and local community (Class F2) and commercial, business and service (Class E) uses in Development Plot N4, and residential development (Use Class C3) and commercial, business and service uses (Class E) uses in Development Plot N5 together with all landscaping, public realm, cycle parking and disabled car parking, highway works and infrastructure within and associated with those Development Plots. Outline planning permission for Development Plots N1, N2, N3, N6, N7 ,S1 and S8 including the demolition of all existing structures and redevelopment to include residential development (Class C3) commercial, business and service uses (Class E), sui generis leisure uses (including cinema and drinking establishments) together with all landscaping, public realm, cycle parking and disabled car parking, highway works and infrastructure within and associated with those Development Plots.</p> |
| Objection | Yes |
| Observations | <p>Objection</p> <p>If the redevelopment of the O2 is needed or necessary, the site provides a great opportunity for urban vision and place making. A memorable development for future generations to use and adore.</p> <p>In the last 90 years, there are only two built housing</p> |

Conservation Area Advisory Committee

developments that Camden can be proud of - the Isokon Flats and Alexandra Road. Instead of providing an inspirational design, the proposed three housing blocks in this detailed application are too high, dull in appearance and poorly planned internally.

The design is similar to 'new builds' that can be seen elsewhere, anywhere. It does not respond to its context. A linear development along the north boundary, protecting the rest of the site from the noise of the railway and with living spaces facing south, would work so much better.

What alternative solutions have been considered - like a wonderful boulevard or a magnificent urban park? The area has little open green space and Hampstead Heath is already overcrowded.

Demolition and new build will create high levels of carbon emissions and pollution, will they be within Camden's agreed targets? More effort should be made to retain and possibly retro-fit the existing buildings.

Will the existing schools, doctors surgeries, hospitals, fire and police services be able to cope with the significant increase in the number of residents?

As submitted, the proposal is a lost opportunity and would be detrimental to its surroundings and to the wellbeing of its future inhabitants. The height of the buildings is totally inappropriate and would restrict outlook from the surrounding areas and produce shadowing. The former John Barnes building in Finchley Road at eight storeys should be the maximum permitted.

The existing provision of tube trains and buses would be unable to cope with the considerable increase of users. The bus turnaround on the site would be discontinued.

There is no mention of a replacement Sainsbury's and Homebase. These are well established and essential to the area.

There is no provision for cars. Are there alternative parking

Conservation Area Advisory Committee

provisions for those who use and need cars, other than those with 'disabled permits'? Provision should be made for electric car charging.

.Assurance should be made that sufficient infrastructure should be included in the first phase of the development.

The proposed masterplan on this exposed, windswept, noisy site is confusing. The proposed pedestrian routes and roads run parallel to the railway lines and noise. It will be difficult for visitors to know where they are without looking at notice boards and maps, as entrances to these arbitrary blocks are on all four sides. Likewise, other ground floor facilities are scattered around the buildings. Cycle parking is in large dark spaces accessed through small narrow doors.

Too much emphasis has been given to maximising numbers of flats over other amenities. The dwellings are tiny and cramped. Furniture needs to be moved to gain access to balconies.

'Low cost rent' at 80% of market value is not affordable to the low paid and the unemployed, it should be set at the equivalent to true social housing levels. The affordable rent homes should be located randomly throughout the scheme, at the moment they are all in one block

Plots N3-E, N4 and N5 do not have outline approval. If they are now granted detailed approval would this improve the chances of the rest of the development gaining details approval?

This development is not in line with SPD 2021 - it does not provide higher quality outcomes for site and community, it does not integrate new development seamlessly with the wider area, and it does not deliver benefits in terms of new spaces.

David Thomas
for BCAAC

Conservation Area Advisory Committee

Documents attached

No details entered

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