



To: London Borough of Camden /Development Control Team

Type of comment; Draft **OBJECTION**

Planning Reference no: 2022/0528/p

Address:O2 Master plan,255 Finchley Road, NW3 6LU

Description: 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.

Date: 21 March 2022

Planning officer in charge; David Fowler

Dear Sir

Sorry in delayed response to this application.

HCAAC objects to this application for the following reasons;

- 1. Demolition;** Objection to the proposed master plan based on the premise of demolition of the main Building at O2 centre to the East and the Homebase industrial unit at the west of the site. The demolition of either of these buildings is not sustainable and would cause harm to the aspirations of the 4 conservation areas (few adopted Neighbourhood Plans) surrounding it. HCAAC which participated in the early workshops / consultation had noted that the embodied carbon and energy in the build, construction, materials and labour etc in both buildings would



make demolition an unacceptable option. Recommendation of refurbishments and further creative new usages may be a more agreeable starting point. ***'Quote from Green Building Council ' ; Measurement and reduction of embodied Carbon in Construction is currently voluntary. These type of emissions which total aviation and shipping combined; must be slashed by more than half in the next decade for the UK to keep its target for becoming net zero by 2050 on track.***

2. **Life span;** The current 1998 O2 centre is only 24 years old and it was designed to last 30 years or more. Both buildings currently existing as parts of the O2 centre are recognisable and identifiable by the community. The copper barrel roofing on the main building; and the industrial home base unit one of the largest of its kind have weathered extremely well. Their original life span could be adapted and extended for at least another 20-30 years. Their extended life span by alteration and update is encouraged. Their original use of materials in their external envelopes have been well maintained during the years. Both buildings have attained a respectful recognition; with a much more subtle historical community sense of ownership that exists today. They do not need renewal. They can evolve with the site and extension of their life spans and continue their use with clarity and acceptance.
3. **Identity and Use;** The O2 Centre construction and eventual opening in 1998 was welcomed by the community. Ever since its original opening It has become a highly accessible destiny centre in the heart of our communities. It has become an attraction in the local Borough of Camden and further afield to the wider adjoining Boroughs in general. There are many anecdotal recognition and use of this facility that extends to further adjoining boroughs; Haringey, Barnet, Brent and even the far reach of Harrow. Any destructive demolition or disruptive alterations to its use as a centre; such as the omission of its well established multi- screen Cinema will be unacceptable and cause harm to the local community and further communities which use this destination. The large industrial unit located to the west of the site;(home base retail unit) also serves the wider community and their aspirations for home and garden improvement. This unit and the large retail shop in the lower level of the main O2 building are two existing and very active uses that serve and form the local community well; self-build and home improvement of the local and wider borough plus provision of groceries and basics essential to the community. Their disruption by either total demolition or change of use of any kind will be very disruptive and detrimental to our current community. The proposed will harm the idea of a destination centre; its identifying use and community facilities that would be irreplaceable.

These buildings must be retained and adopted creatively; enhanced and strongly incorporated within further creative public / community usage if any master plan is



to succeed. We note that this application does not relate to the context at all, it could be located anywhere in London; but here in this confluence of 4 surrounding CA's. The identifying local character of a destination site is lost in this application . please note this application is contrary to; National Design Code- 10 Characteristics - C1- relate to the site / local and wider context. Identify; Respond to existing local Character and identity.

4. **Open green space; Amenity;** The current site boundaries are two railway lines, a major arterial route to North London(A4), and industrial units to the west. The carpark open space sits in the middle of this site. This parking lot in the middle of the site must be seen the only unsustainable section of the site ready for development. A Long term and future proof recommendation for this site will be to use specifically to residential use. This should adhere to the required 50% social housing in the borough and to comply with National and local plans; it must be planned to become a garden suburb type housing; typical of housing in the 4 surrounding conservation areas of 60-120 dwelling per hectare of 3-4 storeys heights(Reference; National design code and Guidance) may be more characteristic of this part- redevelopment. Provision of green open space and amenities of at least 50% of the car parking site must be part of this redevelopment. **Reference; National Design guide; Nature- provide a network of high quality green spaces with a variety of landscapes and activities including play.** The proposed masterplan with 18 towers of 8-11 storey and 11 towers of 12- 16 storeys with total 312 dwellings/ hectare does not allow such provision (The proposed token of community garden of 3000 sqm, linear park of 5,250 sqm and Finchley sq. of 3000 sqm is inadequate and do not comply with the aspirations of the National design codes or the local adopted plans. The proposed inadequate green open space should be condemned and this application must be refused as the site cannot tolerate 1800 units /dwellings result a huge increase in the surrounding population. The increase of such large numbers of occupants eradicates any beneficial omission of cars on site, and would do unlimited harm in a missed opportunity of affordable social housing for this site and all its surrounding conservation areas.
5. **Scale; Massing and design;** The existing site should be considered a typical garden suburban site; being surrounded by a number of listed buildings and at least 4 Conservation areas; West Hampstead CA, Netherhall and Fitzjohns CA, Mansfield CA, and Redington Frogna CA. To enhance this current setting maximum sustainable heights similar to those mansion blocks surrounding/ lining parts of Finchley Road of maximum 5-7 storey should be designed; mostly away from Finchley Road near to the railway lines rather than the current overdevelopment proposed with 18 towers of 8-11 storeys and 11 towers of 12-16 storeys. This site is unlike Kings-cross or

HCAAC



Hampstead Conservation Area Advisory Committee

Canary wharf where land values dictate such large dense massing and scale and heights proposed. The proposed blocks to be built in the different phases of construction sit so close to each other that their fire safety, future adaptability and even long term sustainability is questionable. The heights would likely create a barren ground level; a windswept series of corridors and tunnel effect overshadowing anyone daring to step outside their blocks. The human scale design, presented on pre-application , or was a more considered master plan evident at early stages of consultation but nowhere noticeable in this application. Please refuse this overpowering overdevelopment application proposed; it will have the greatest damage on the sense of ownership that the community currently has for this site.

Best Regards

Mojgan Green- Co Chair of HCAAC