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**Our Ref:** 2019/0124/PRE  
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Gerald Eve

*Sent by email*

Dear Leonie,

## **1. Introduction**

1.1 This letter is in response to the proposals in your document dated the 23<sup>rd</sup> of August 2021.

## **2. The site**

- 2.1 The site covers an area of 5.7ha (14.1 acres). The site is bounded by railway lines to the north and south, Finchley Road to the east, and the Nido student accommodation to the west, with a mixture of residential and commercial uses beyond. The only vehicular access to the majority of the site is from the north-east, where Blackburn Road connects to Finchley Road. The other end of Blackburn Road connects to the western end of the site but does not connect right through. There is a pedestrian and cycle route connecting to Blackburn Road (which connects with West End Lane) to the west, Billy Fury Way connecting to the site at its north-east corner, and Granny Dripping Steps to the south-east.
- 2.2 The site is currently occupied by (from east to west) the O2 Centre, a car park serving the O2 Centre, a Homebase store, car showrooms and a builder's merchant yard at 14 Blackburn Road. The majority of the site has an island feel, given the rail severance to both the north and the south, and the poor connections to and across the site from east to west.
- 2.3 The site is accessed via Blackburn Road, from Finchley Road to the north of the O2 Centre and there is a road running around the car park, which provides access to the O2 servicing area to the south of the main centre, the Homebase and a car dealership to the west of the site.
- 2.4 The eastern and central parts of the site are located within the Finchley Road Town Centre and the whole site is within the West Hampstead Growth Area. The West Hampstead Town Centre is located to the west of the site.
- 2.5 There are no listed buildings on site. The site is not located within a conservation area. There are four conservation areas in the vicinity of the site (South Hampstead, Fitzjohns Netherhall, Belsize Park and West End Green).

- 2.6 The site has a PTAL of 6A at its entrance from Blackburn Road/Finchley Road. The PTAL falls to 2/4 in the centre of the site (given poor access into the site). The site is located close to the Finchley Road Underground and Finchley Road and Frognal Overground Stations to the east, and the West Hampstead interchange to the west. There are numerous bus services on both Finchley Road and West End Lane. Bus services enter the site and use it to turn.
- 2.7 The site is included in the Site Allocations (Site 29). A new Site Allocation is currently being drafted.
- 2.8 The Council's Placeshaping section have prepared additional guidance and the final version of the SPD was signed off for adoption by the Cabinet member on 24 September 2021.
- 2.9 The whole site is included in the Fortune Green and West Hampstead Neighbourhood Plan Area. The policies in this plan have equal weight to the local plan policies.

### **3. Proposals**

- 3.1 The proposals are to demolish the O2 shopping centre, the Homebase store and the builder's merchant yard and build a residential-led scheme (Class C3), with flexible retail (Class E(a)/Class F2(a)), workspace (Class E(c)) and community uses (Class F2(b)).
- 3.2 The O2 Centre Car Park is a key opportunity site in the West Hampstead Growth Area of the Neighbourhood Plan, and an allocated site in the Council's adopted Site Allocations document. The Council therefore welcomes the site being brought forward for development but is keen to ensure a cohesive approach with other development opportunities in the Growth Area including Homebase, the car showrooms, 11, 13 and 14 Blackburn Road, together with improvements to the O2 Centre itself. Some of these developments will be brought forward by different land owners and design teams over different timescales and so to ensure a cohesive approach we agreed to produce additional planning guidance for the Growth Area.
- 3.3 The following issues are covered in this letter:
- Land use
  - Housing
  - Inclusive economy
  - Public realm and routes
  - Open space, trees and landscape
  - Conservation
  - Design
  - Amenity of neighbouring properties
  - Transport
  - Microclimate
  - Energy and sustainability
  - Phasing and land ownership
  - Consultation
  - Conclusion

### **4. Land use**

#### Residential use

- 4.1 Residential use is the Council's key land use priority and is strongly welcomed (see Housing section below).

#### Commercial uses

4.2 Camden Local Plan policy TC1 (Quantity and location of retail development), TC2 (Camden's centres and other shopping areas) and TC4 (Town centre uses) seek to ensure that the development of shopping, services, food, drink, entertainment and other town centre uses does not cause harm to the character, function, vitality and viability of a centre.

4.3 The eastern part (Homebase, car park and O2) of the site is located within the Finchley Road Town Centre. There are primary frontages (red) and secondary frontages (orange) at the Finchley Road end.

4.4 At the western end of the site is the West Hampstead Town Centre.



Fig. 1 Town centres and frontages

4.5 The O2 Centre contains 24,259sqm of lettable floorspace which are within Class E(a) (Display or retail sale of goods, other than hot food) and Class E(b) (Sale of food and drink for consumption (mostly) on the premises). The Homebase on the site, which is also located within the town centre, has a floorspace of 4,084sqm.

4.6 It is noted that 3,555sqm (c. 15%) of the O2 is currently vacant.

4.7 13,935sqm or 're-imagined commercial space' and community floorspace is proposed, which includes:

- 232sqm affordable maker space
- 278sqm community centre
- 929sqm health centre
- 185sqm nursery

4.8 Under the proposals there would be a significant loss of commercial uses and an even greater loss of Class E uses and we have significant concerns about the impact on the vitality and viability of the Finchley Road Town Centre. The floorspace within the O2 is currently a major draw. We have concerns that the loss of retail might impact on the town centre. Notwithstanding the above, we understand there will be a loss of retail/food and drink uses moving from the shopping centre model to the proposed outdoor/streets model. Also, we understand that the nature of town centres is changing and that the proposed land use package needs to be flexible and evolve with the changing nature of town centres and consumer patterns. The proposed loss of town centre floorspace must be robustly justified for officers to consider the proposals acceptable.

4.9 You are advised to make contact with my colleague Katrina Christoforou who works in our High Street Team ([katrina.christoforou@camden.gov.uk](mailto:katrina.christoforou@camden.gov.uk)).

4.10 The floorspace figures for the car showrooms and the builder's merchant yard have not been provided. These are employment uses and their loss must be mitigated/justified.

- 4.11 Public engagement so far has highlighted local concerns over the re-provision of some facilities, particularly the supermarket and the gym. Any re-provision of the supermarket should be a reasonable and meaningful comparison in terms of size and retail offer.

#### Community uses

- 4.12 Camden Local Plan policy C1 (Health and wellbeing) promotes strong, vibrant and healthy communities through ensuring a high quality environment with local services to support health, social and cultural wellbeing and reduce inequalities. Camden Local Plan policy C2 (Community facilities) seeks to ensure that community facilities and services are developed and modernised to meet the changing needs of our community and reflect new approaches to the delivery of services.
- 4.13 The provision of a health centre is strongly welcomed and we understand conversations are ongoing with the NHS. This must be provided in Phase 1 – since you do not own the land for Phase 2 and residents in Phase 1 will add to the existing pressures on primary care
- 4.14 Spaces for arts/local community use is strongly welcomed. We encourage you to increase engagement with the local community to understand their needs and demands for community space. The existing community space within the O2 was secured as part of a section 106 agreement. The space is not as well used as it could be and this is an opportunity to rethink what best meets the needs of the community.

## 5. Housing

#### Policy review

- 5.1 Camden Local Plan policies H1, H2, H4, H6, H7, Camden Planning Guidance 2 (Housing) and the Fortune Green and West Hampstead policy 1 are relevant with regard to the provision of housing, including affordable housing. Residential use is the Council's priority land use and is welcomed in principle.

#### Proposals

- 5.2 Circa 1,900 homes are proposed, consisting of circa 4,997 habitable rooms.

#### Tenure

- 5.3 An affordable housing target of 50% applies to developments with capacity for 25 or more additional dwellings, and the guideline mix of affordable housing types is 60% social-affordable rented housing and 40% intermediate housing as defined in Camden's Local Plan.
- 5.4 At present, you confirm you are targeting 35% affordable housing in Phase 1 (meeting Camden's 60%/40% tenure split policy) with an aim to meet 35% in the latter two phases (again meeting Camden's tenure split).
- 5.5 This will not meet Camden policies - 35% affordable housing, whilst complying with the Mayor's Fast Track Route, is well below the Camden policy requirement of 50% and is considered very disappointing. For officers to support the significant scale and quantum proposed, we consider the proposed affordable housing should be significantly increased. We note the constraints you have stated with regards to land assembly and demolition etc., but we consider this a very unconstrained site in comparison to most large development sites in the borough. We await your affordable housing viability assessment which we will get independently audited by BPS, and you should provide this as soon as possible.
- 5.6 We have discussed the Council using its compulsory purchase powers to ensure the site comes forward comprehensively. Comprehensive redevelopment is a fundamental requirement of the Council on this site, however, for the Council to

use its compulsory purchase powers there needs to be significant public benefits. This would be difficult to argue with a poor affordable offer.

5.7 We welcome your aim for tenure blind proposals. All entrances should be of equal quality across all tenures. We have some concerns that entrances to the blocks from the north from Blackburn Road could feel like back doors and its important you work hard to ensure that this northern street looks and feels like a residential street rather than a servicing route for the site.

5.8 We urge you to work with affordable housing registered providers from our [Approved Strategic Partner List](#) at an early stage. The proposed affordable accommodation must be suitable for these providers to take on. The Council's affordable housing coordinators have been involved with the proposals and we are happy to provide details of registered providers.

#### Dwelling sizes

5.9 Policy H7 requires homes of different sizes to meet the priorities set out in the Dwelling Size Priorities Table (see below). The proposed unit mix should broadly accord with this table, although the Council will be flexible when assessing development.

**Table 1: Dwelling Size Priorities**

	1-bedroom (or studio)	2-bedroom	3-bedroom	4-bedroom (or more)
Social-affordable rented	lower	high	high	medium
Intermediate affordable	high	medium	lower	lower
Market	lower	high	high	lower

5.10 The proposed residential accommodation should meet the National Space Standards which are outlined below. Floorspace figures of all the flats should be provided as part of any future application, which demonstrates that they all meet the National Space Standards. Any discrepancies should be strongly justified.

Number of bedrooms	Number of bed spaces	Minimum GIA (m <sup>2</sup> )			Built-in storage (m <sup>2</sup> )
		1 storey dwellings	2 storey dwellings	3 storey dwellings	
1b	1p	39 (37)*			1.0
	2p	50	58		1.5
2b	3p	61	70		2.0
	4p	70	79		
3b	4p	74	84	90	2.5
	5p	86	93	99	
	6p	95	102	108	
4b	5p	90	97	103	3.0
	6p	99	106	112	
	7p	108	115	121	
	8p	117	124	130	
5b	6p	103	110	116	3.5
	7p	112	119	125	
	8p	121	128	134	
6b	7p	116	123	129	4.0

Notes to Table 3 3

- \* Where a one person dwelling has a shower room instead of a bathroom, the floor area may be reduced from 39m<sup>2</sup> to 37m<sup>2</sup>, as shown bracketed.
- The Gross Internal Area of a dwelling is defined as the total floor space measured between the internal faces of perimeter walls<sup>1</sup> that enclose a dwelling. This includes partitions, structural elements, cupboards, ducts, flights of stairs and voids above stairs. GIA should be measured and denoted in square metres (m<sup>2</sup>).
- The nationally described space standard sets a minimum ceiling height of 2.3 meters for at least 75% of the gross internal area of the dwelling. To address the unique heat island effect of London and the distinct density and flatted nature of most of its residential development, a minimum ceiling height of 2.5m for at least 75% of the gross internal area is strongly encouraged so that new housing is of adequate quality, especially in terms of light, ventilation and sense of space.

Amenity of the proposed flats - introduction

5.11 All residential developments are required to be designed and built to create high quality homes. The Council will seek to ensure that residential development, in both new build and change of use:

- is self-contained and has its own secure private entrance;
- has good ceiling heights and room sizes;
- is dual aspect except in exceptional circumstances;
- has good natural light and ventilation;
- has good insulation from noise and vibration;
- has a permanent partition between eating and sleeping areas (studio flats are acceptable where they provide adequate space to separate activities);
- 3+ bed units should separate kitchen and living areas;
- incorporates adequate storage space;
- incorporates outdoor amenity space including balconies or terraces; and
- is accessible and adaptable for a range of occupiers.

5.12 The London Plan Housing SPG (March 2016) requires all flats to have private amenity space as follows:

Standard 26

- A minimum of 5sqm of private outdoor space should be provided for 1-2 person dwellings and an extra 1sqm should be provided for each additional occupant.

Standard 27

- The minimum depth and width for all balconies and other private external spaces should be 1500mm.

Quality of Accommodation

- 5.13 A focus of our pre-app discussions has been social inclusion and the impact of loneliness in society, with a view to considering this within the proposed masterplan through encouraging social interaction and access to open space in the design of the internal layouts. Conversations have included consideration into how people access their homes and open spaces, ensuring comfortable and welcoming communal spaces where everyday activities take place, including corridors, bin/cycle storage and entrances.
- 5.14 The latest proposals have shown a standard and rigid approach to layout with all internal corridors and a significant number of single-aspect homes even though our policies only allow single aspect in exceptional circumstances. Previous drawings (19/04/21) showed a larger variety of housing typologies and access and as a result provided more dual aspect homes. At the time we commented that this was a positive step and welcomed the work being done to think about social integration and how to form a community in this area. It is considered that the later drawings have taken a backward step and we encourage a return to the previous principles discussed for internal layout shown in the April plans and at the very least a significant increase in the number of dual aspect homes. We welcome further discussion on the internal layout of the blocks which will come forward for full planning,
- 5.15 We note that Socially Rented units are proposed to be located on the northern part of the block. This area would be further separated from the open space provision and lack a good aspect which much of the development would afford. Socially rented and family units should be located with consideration given to access to open space, balconies and dual aspect.

#### Daylight, sunlight and outlook

- 5.16 A daylight/sunlight report should be submitted with any future applications demonstrating that the proposed flats would receive sufficient light. A noise report should be submitted as part of any future application and should include the impact on proposed residential accommodation as well as existing residential accommodation (see 'Amenity of neighbouring properties' below).
- 5.17 With regards to light to the open spaces, we suggest you revisit the height, mass and form of the blocks highlighted below in order to provide more relief and breathing space, allowing more light into the courtyards and the play streets and improving light and outlook to units. Reviewing the two-storey set-backs, heights of the blocks and podium and opportunities for gaps and increase splay would help achieve better light into these spaces.



Figure 2 – concerns regarding open space and light

- 5.18 Our policy guideline for separation distances between residential properties is 18m. We note that there are 15m separation distances proposed. Whilst the 18 is a guideline, it is considered that 15m is insufficient in this instance, given the

height of the proposed blocks. We have particular concerns regarding the distance between homes looking east-west and the outlook of homes at the northern end of the perimeter block looking south into the courtyard. Further information regarding daylight, sunlight and outlook of these homes is required to be able to support the current proposals.

#### Noise

5.19 The proposed flats would be in close proximity to the railway lines to the north and south. Noise reports and insulation would be required to demonstrate that there would not be a material noise issue.

5.20 The issue of noise from commercial uses would also need to be addressed.

#### Accessible housing

5.21 All housing should meet Part M building regulations. We require 10% of units to be wheelchair homes or easily adaptable.

### **6. Inclusive economy**

6.1 We note there would be an increase from 600 jobs on the site to 750 which is welcomed. The provision of 150,000sqft non-c3 including 2,500sqft maker/affordable workspace is welcomed.

6.2 The provision of maker spaces, spaces suitable for SME's and affordable workspace is strongly welcomed. Further details on the affordable workspace model would be required in terms of how affordable would they be, and how they would operate. You are also strongly encouraged to work with Camden's [STEAM](#) programme which raises young people's opportunities.

6.3 Local people must benefit from the growth in their area and as part of any planning permission we would require an Employment and Training Plan for both construction and end user [phases of development (including signing up to the Camden Local Procurement Code and an a local employment, skills and local supply plan) to secure employment, training and skills benefits to local people and businesses. We would expect you to work with the King's Cross Construction Skills Centre. We would also look to ensure London Living Wage as a minimum salary for all direct and indirect on site workers and support for the Good Work Camden Programme by:

- Joining the Inclusive Business Network
- Advertising vacancies in partnership with Good Work Camden and its relevant local employment support providers to create pathways into knowledge economy jobs
- Promote employee mentoring and volunteering within Camden, and specifically through social value corporate partnerships locally
- Committing to attend job fairs to promote opportunities to local residents o
- Committing to provide supported employment opportunities – e.g. supported internships and join the Inclusive Business Network
- Join Camden Climate Change Action and support local circular economy initiatives relating to waste reduction, recycling and re-use.

6.4 You are strongly encouraged to facilitate the operation of meanwhile uses across the site during development.

### **7. Conservation**

#### Policy review



- 7.1 Policies D1, D2 of the Camden Local Plan, CPG1 (Design) and Fortune Green and West Hampstead Neighbourhood Plan policies 2 and 3 are relevant to conservation and design.
- 7.2 Sections 16, 66 and 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (“the Listed Buildings Act”) are relevant with regards to impacts on heritage assets. Section 72(1) requires that special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a Conservation Area when considering applications relating to land or buildings within that area. The effect of this section is that there is a statutory presumption in favour of the preservation of the character and appearance of Conservation Areas. The NPPF provides guidance on the weight that should be accorded to harm to heritage assets and in what circumstances such harm might be justified (section 16). You should address this issue in any future applications.

#### Site and surrounding conservation areas

- 7.3 The site does not fall within a conservation area and does not contain any statutorily listed or locally listed buildings. However, it is in proximity to a number of conservation areas, all of a residential character, which need to be considered during the development of design proposals. Particular attention should be made to setting and the impact of the proposals on views into and out of such conservation areas. The conservation areas which are closest to the site are South Hampstead, which falls a few metres to the south of the site beyond the Underground railway tracks, West End Green to the north-west is situated just beyond the Overground and Thameslink lines and straddles the northern section of West End Lane, and Fitzjohn’s Netherhall to the east, the boundary of which is just beyond Finchley Road and is situated on rising land towards Hampstead village.
- 7.4 South Hampstead is a well preserved example of a leafy Victorian suburb, almost exclusively residential in nature, and largely homogenous in scale and character. The area is characterised by large, semi-detached and terraced late-Victorian properties, in red or gault (white / cream) brick, with a particularly distinctive and attractive roofscape including turrets, gables, and tall chimneys. Houses are made special by a variety of decorative treatments including terracotta panels and brickwork ornamentation, tiled and patterned footpaths, delicate ironwork, and elaborate timber doors and windows, including some original stained and leaded glass.



Figure 3 – Typical dwelling in Cranfield Gardens, South Hampstead Conservation Area

- 7.5 West End Green conservation area is centred upon the ‘spine’ of the curving West End Lane, which is a busy route and core shopping area. The Green marks a widening of the lane around a green space with mature trees and is a relic of the rural past. To the east and west of the Lane the side streets are lined with predominantly red brick houses and mansion blocks, a coherent area that was almost all built within 50 years.



Figure 4 – Crediton Hill, West Green Conservation Area

- 7.6 The Fitzjohns Netherall conservation area was constructed over a 10 year period between the 1870 and the late 1880s. The road layout is almost a grid with Fitzjohns Avenue, which is on a north/south axis, being the prime street in terms of grandeur, scale and length. The conservation area is domestic in character with architecture influenced by the Queen Anne style and Domestic Revival. Buildings are generally of red and purple brick with decorative ironwork, rubbed and carved brick, bargeboards and roof details.



Figure 5 – Typical domestic building within the Fitzjohns Netherall conservation area.

### Massing

- 7.7 The development covers the site from east to west and is punctuated by three public open spaces, with a pedestrian and cycle route to the south. Buildings frame these open spaces in a series of blocks that are broken up by additional routes. Building heights vary across the site, rising from two to 15 storeys. The higher blocks are located to the north of the site where they are considered to have less impact on the surrounding conservation areas and townscape, and to reduce overshadowing within the public spaces.
- 7.8 It is generally felt that the building heights and massing are ambitious. The height and massing in relation to the quantum of open space, could create an overbearing and unwelcoming environment. This is particularly the case in the centre of the site where there is a more residential character. Reducing the overall height of the buildings and creating more breathing space around them could create a more 'human scale' that would improve character and a positive sense of place. The quality of the public space would also be enhanced.
- 7.9 A reduction in height would improve views from conservation areas and the general townscape – this is addressed below.

### Townscape

#### *Finchley Road*

- 7.10 Along Finchley Road the proposed buildings rise from four storeys in the south, with a central block of seven storeys, and a terminating northern block of

10 storeys. The height sits comfortably within the street in this view, however it would be helpful to view the 10 storey block from the north of Finchley Road looking south.

#### *Fairhazel Gardens*

- 7.11 The development is clearly visible from Fairhazel Gardens. Within the demonstrated view, the development does not rise above the buildings in the foreground, however whilst travelling north along the street the buildings will become more dominant, having a greater impact on the South Hampstead conservation area.

#### *Priory Road*

- 7.12 The western edge of the development, which includes a 13 storey block is visible from Priory Road. The development is not higher than the historic buildings from this view but will become more impactful when moving northwards along the street.

#### *West End Lane*

- 7.13 The view from West End Lane shows the northern side of the site which contains the tallest buildings and the most density. The development looks particularly solid within this view, with no relief from the built form. This creates a harshness that could be difficult to mitigate.

#### Architecture

- 7.14 The proposed architecture is taking inspiration from the local context, with references to surrounding mansion blocks and the various domestic buildings.
- 7.15 The overall of scale of the buildings is pleasing, with large, welcoming ground floors and rhythmical banding above. Integrated as opposed to bolted on balconies create a pleasing aesthetic, and this is demonstrated on most of the buildings. Apart from the pitched roofs facing Finchley Road, it is not clear how the buildings will be terminated, this should be given more consideration.
- 7.16 The proposed palette is pleasing, a mixture of red and yellow bricks is entirely appropriate considering the context. Using brick detail to create a secondary scale and texture is also positive.

#### Harm

- 7.17 Due to the height and massing, the development is considered to cause less than substantial harm to the surrounding conservation areas, due to the significant change in views from within them.

#### Suggestions

- 7.18 At present the site development is being maximised rather than optimised. The overall development, townscape, and views from the conservation areas would all be improved if the building heights were lower and/or the distances between blocks were increased. The impact of the height (whether lowered or not) could to some degree be mitigated by carefully considering building design, roofscape and greening.
- 7.19 Access to and from the site should be given more thought. It would be helpful to see a comprehensive plan for Billy Fury Way and Granny Dripping steps. Improvements to Blackburn Road should also be considered.

## **8. Design**

#### Policy review

- 8.1 Policies D1, D2 of the Camden Local Plan, CPG1 (Design) and Fortune Green and West Hampstead Neighbourhood Plan policies 2 and 3 are relevant to design, as well as section 12 of the NPPF. Policy D1 seeks to secure high quality design in development. The policy notes that the Council will require development that:

- a. respects local context and character;*
- b. preserves or enhances the historic environment and heritage assets in accordance with Policy D2 Heritage;*
- c. is sustainable in design and construction, incorporating best practice in resource management and climate change mitigation and adaptation;*
- d. is of sustainable and durable construction and adaptable to different activities and land uses;*
- e. comprises details and materials that are of high quality and complement the local character;*
- f. integrates well with the surrounding streets and open spaces, improving movement through the site and wider area with direct, accessible and easily recognisable routes and contributes positively to the street frontage;*
- g. is inclusive and accessible for all;*
- h. promotes health;*
- i. is secure and designed to minimise crime and antisocial behaviour;*
- j. responds to natural features and preserves gardens and other open space;*
- k. incorporates high quality landscape design (including public art, where appropriate) and maximises opportunities for greening for example through planting of trees and other soft landscaping,*
- l. incorporates outdoor amenity space;*
- m. preserves strategic and local views;*
- n. for housing, provides a high standard of accommodation; and*
- o. carefully integrates building services equipment.*

#### Height, massing and density

- 8.2 The site benefits from long views and a southerly aspect which the proposal optimises through the masterplan by locating development to the north and ensuring vistas between the buildings, mitigating some of the impact this high density proposals would have on site. However, it is considered that taller elements onto the linear open space and the eastern block next to the eastern open space should be lowered to reduce the impact and dominance the buildings would have on the open spaces and the feeling of enclosure on the site.
- 8.3 The acceptability of a large-scale, high-density development depends on the accessibility/permeability of the site, in accordance with the Site Allocations plan and the draft SPD. The site is effectively a backland site and the provision of a significant number of homes plus commercial uses could only be supported if you can demonstrate improvement to the accessibility and ensure the development would not result in an isolated enclave. Further work needs to consider rail access and improvements to surrounding infrastructure, including Billy Fury Way and Granny Dripping Steps.
- 8.4 Recent development around shaping the blocks is welcomed, however this appears to have led to some reduced distances between buildings (see 'Daylight, sunlight and outlook' above). We have discussed chamfering the block to the east of the westernmost open space, to address pinch point and respond to desire lines. We consider this should be effected.
- 8.5 Previous drawings showing a half basement, have now been replaced with no basement at all. The half basement had particular benefit in helping to reduce the overall height of the buildings, creating a closer and easier relationship between the communal courtyards and the linear open space and aided the public-private relationship for ground floor homes. We would strongly encourage reviewing the basement options to include a half basement in the development of the scheme.
- 8.6 Architecture  
Proposals to the West End Lane and Finchley Road end of the development have a fine grain that responds well to the existing context. This will need to be carefully captured through the design codes. The more central blocks have a

much larger grain and regularity that can feel monotonous and oppressive if not carefully considered. A reduction of massing of blocks as stated above would help to ease the dominance of these blocks on the open spaces and the feeling of over development on site. The view from the bridge on West End Lane needs some softening/breaking down.

- 8.7 The approach to architecture for phase one is broadly supported at this stage. However, we would welcome further consideration on the use of sustainable materials and sustainable measures to the building envelope.
- 8.8 Consideration should also be given to the liveability of homes and usability of balconies particularly ensuring inset balconies at a higher level and corner balconies where possible.

## **9. Open space and public realm**

### Policy review

- 9.1 Camden Local Plan policies A2 and A3, CPG Trees, CPG Biodiversity and the Fortune Green and West Hampstead policies 17 and 18 are relevant with regards open space, trees and landscape.

### East West Route

- 9.2 The Council's preferred approach for redevelopment of the site was to have a central linear route through the site. This is set out in the draft SPD. You expressed a preference to take the route to the south of the site and we have been accommodating to that change in order to help optimise the development potential of the site with the proposed hybrid option. The proposed linear park would have a width of 19-23m. We have raised concerns over whether this route would feel like a park or just a route. Under the proposals, the 20m wide linear park would need to work very hard, providing an east/west thoroughfare, place for tables and chairs for the ground floor uses, dwelling space and also play space. It needs to be demonstrated that all these functions can be accommodated within this width. Any opportunities should be taken to increase its width. We consider the design of where the courtyards meet the east/west link should be reviewed and question whether the podium would be oppressive. Removing the podium would allow more breathing space for the linear park and visual permeability to the courtyards.
- 9.3 The approach to locating an east-west route through the central part of the site on the southern side, whilst optimising open space and the southerly aspect, comes with challenges around safety and activation of this one sided route. Research into methods to ensure this route is safe through planting, lighting and ground floor uses is welcomed and will make up an important part of the design codes and need to be incorporated into the design approach of the first phase of building. The design and uses of the ground floor along the linear park will play a key part in the success of this route. Kiosks or small pavilions should be used to activate the southern side of the open space. The size of these needs to be balanced against the need for open space and the use to ensure these are viable and occupied units. A mix of both housing and commercial uses will be important in activating this area and it is considered the proposals are too commercially dominated along this route. Further work is needed to develop ground floor housing typologies with front doors onto the linear park.

### Public open space

- 9.4 Given the scale of the proposals and the size of the site, public open space (POS) should be provided - 9sqm of open space should be provided per occupant for residential schemes (while taking into account any funding for open spaces through the Community Infrastructure Levy). Please provide the proposed occupancy and proposed POS in future submissions. The quality and usability of the open space will be a factor. Please demonstrate overshadowing

of these spaces as part of your daylight/sunlight analyses. Significant tree planting would be expected.

- 9.5 We note and welcome the high-quality landscaped approach proposed, across the site.
- 9.6 We are concerned by the large amount of commercial uses on the ground floor along the linear route and the community open space as this would overly commercialise these areas and create dead frontages at night. Commercial uses should be clustered in particular key areas on the site to create small centres and a hub of activity where appropriate with more residential use around the eastern open space and the linear park. Family sized maisonettes at ground floor with their own front door should be maximised. This will also help activate the side streets.
- 9.7 The bus turn around area will make an important 4th open space and will be key to knitting the development into the wider area through its relationship with the Nido student accommodation, Billy Fury Way and the bus stop. This space still very much feels like the back of the site and is not well connected to open space. How this area will be used is still unclear with proposals for 'teenage use' seeming undefined and lacks thought around the needs of teenagers. Further consideration needs to be given to the use of this space and how it would connect into the wider development and open spaces. Further consideration should be given to improving areas outside the redline boundary including the Network Rail planting and Billy Fury Way.
- 9.8 We have some concerns that under the proposals, the bus turnaround area has been moved to an area of the site out of your ownership – see the 'Phasing and land ownership' section below.
- 9.9 The Blackburn Road-Granny Dripping Steps intersection will also be a key node into connecting the site into the wider West Hampstead area. Further discussions with TfL need to be had to improve the bridge and the TfL access area as it currently blights this part of the site.
- 9.10 Planting mature trees on site in the early stages would help give the site a sense of place. Your suggestions of a tree nursery to be set up soon to ensure this are welcomed.
- 9.11 Blackburn Road, to the north of the blocks, could feel like the servicing back side of the site and more work is required to ensure the public realm will be high quality. More tree planting in this area would help this as well as softening views from West End Lane.
- 9.12 Spaces for skating and scooting is welcomed. As discussed, this could be incorporated into the landscaping proposals. Young people need to be engaged in the design of all public open spaces across the site with a play strategy provided showing how the proposed play facilities respond to the needs of young people of all genders. Space for older people and families should also be provided.

#### Trees

- 9.13 A full Arboricultural Report would be required, detailing the impact on any existing trees on or around the site. Officers note there are few trees on the site at the moment, though there are mature trees to the west of the site beside the student accommodation. Significant tree planting is expected as a fundamental part of the proposals. Tree planting along Blackburn Road will help soften this street and make it feel more welcoming.

## **10. Nature conservation and biodiversity**

- 10.1 The Council has a statutory duty to consider the conservation, protection and enhancement of biodiversity when determining a planning application. Policy A3 of the Local Plan aims to support the London Biodiversity Strategy and the Camden Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) by ensuring that Camden's growth is accompanied by a significant enhancement in the borough's biodiversity. The policy expects developments to incorporate trees and vegetation wherever possible. The policy notes that the Council will assess developments against their ability to realise benefits for biodiversity through the layout, design and materials used in the built structure and landscaping elements of a proposed development, proportionate to the scale of development proposed.
- 10.2 Full details of the biodiversity credentials of your proposals must be submitted. The open space proposed should contribute towards biodiversity as should the proposed buildings. There is an opportunity to connect with the railway sidings which adjoin the site to the north and south to improve the biodiversity of the area.
- 10.3 Any formal planning application should be accompanied by an Ecology Report carried out by a qualified ecologist with relevant protected species licenses.

## **11. Amenity of neighbouring properties**

- 11.1 Policy A1 and CPG6 (Amenity) of the Camden Local Plan are relevant with regards to the amenity impact on neighbouring properties.
- 11.2 A daylight/sunlight assessment should be submitted as part of any future application to demonstrate the impact on neighbouring properties. Shadow diagrams should also be submitted for various times of the year. The assessment should accord with current BRE guidance. An early analysis of cutbacks or a compliant envelope would be helpful.
- 11.3 Given there are no residential properties immediately adjacent to the site, officers are not concerned with regards overlooking to neighbouring flats.
- 11.4 Full details of all plant and ventilation are required and a noise report should be submitted as part of any future application.
- 11.5 You will be required to include mitigation and offsetting measures to deal with any negative air quality impacts associated with your development proposals. At the same time, your development should be designed to minimise exposure of occupants to existing poor air quality. An Air Quality Assessment would be required as part of any future application. You should also demonstrate how you will monitor and control air quality impacts during the course of construction.

## **12. Transport**

### Policy review

- 7.1 The following relevant policies and guidance should be consulted when producing the Transport Assessment (TA) and the development proposals:
- Camden Local Plan
  - Camden Transport Strategy and associated action plans
  - West End Lane to Finchley SPG
  - The London Plan
  - TfL's London Cycling Design Standards (LCDS)
  - Local Transport Note 1/20 (Cycle Infrastructure Design)
- Camden Local Plan policies T1, T2 and T3, CPG7 and policies 5, 7, 8 and 9 of the Fortune Green and West Hampstead Neighbourhood Plan are relevant with regards transport issues.

### Car parking

- 7.2 The development will be secured as a car-free development, in accordance with the Local Plan and the London Plan.
- 7.3 Parking will be provided for residents with blue badges, with 1 parking space per 3% of the proposed residential dwellings, in accordance with the London Plan. The parking is proposed to be in internal car parks within the blocks, or on-street and in the public realm if this is not possible. Further detailed information and plans should be provided with the application of the layout of the car parks, and location of spaces on the street and in the public realm
- 7.4 In accordance with the London Plan, 20% of these spaces will have active electric vehicle charging facilities, with passive provision from all the remaining spaces.
- 7.5 The parking proposals are acceptable in principle; however, details should be provided with the TA and the draft car parking management plan on how the bays are allocated and enforced, and measures to remove or repurpose the bays if not being utilised.
- 7.6 The existing car park within the site is currently being utilised by local schools for a 'Park and Stride' initiative, where parents of pupils from schools in the local area can park in the O2 car park and walk their kids to schools in the vicinity of the site. The council would like the feasibility of this provision to be explored, both in the completed development and during the interim construction phases.

### Servicing

- 7.7 A draft Servicing Management Plan is required as part of the planning application. The servicing information states that the commercial and residential blocks to the east of the site (blocks N1, N2 and S1) will be serviced from a servicing yard, accessed via the north-south servicing road which connects with Blackburn Road. The remaining blocks to the west of this north-south servicing road are proposed to be serviced from loading bays on Blackburn Road and within the public realm. This would result in a significant amount of servicing carried out from the street at these locations. The loading facilities and the buildings designs should be set out in a way that helps consolidate the deliveries (conciierge for residential blocks etc.) and mitigates the effects deliveries will have on the carriageway and public realm.
- 7.8 Detailed plans of the servicing areas are required as part of the application, and the number and type of spaces will be required to be justified within the TA. All of the servicing bays are required to have electric vehicle charging points, to encourage the use of electric servicing vehicles. Provision should also be made for the use of cargo bikes and electric cargo bikes within the servicing areas.
- 7.9 Details on how the interaction of servicing vehicles on the north-south road will occur with pedestrian and cycle movements on Blackburn Rd and along the east-west internal pedestrian-cycle route should be designed into the layout of the streets, and details provided with the planning application. Priority needs to be given to pedestrians and cyclists along these routes, and it is expected this is addressed with the physical design of the areas where interaction occurs and with measures listed in the Servicing Management Plan.

### Finchley Road

- 7.10 The improvements for pedestrians and cyclists at the Blackburn Rd-Finchley Rd junction are supported, as is the new proposed pedestrians crossing (and potential cycle crossing at this location) from the site across Finchley Road. Evidence of progressed discussions with TfL should be provided with the planning submission, as well as the next steps.



- 7.11 The setting back of buildings along Finchley Road and the potential removal of the subway entrances is supported, as it will provide more space for pedestrians on an already congested footway.
- 7.12 Cycle parking and cycling routes  
The cycle parking methodology in the TA scoping note is acceptable in principle, although no detailed plans have been provided. Cycle parking will need to comply with London Plan standards, along with the Camden Local Plan and CPG Transport, including 5% for larger adaptable cycles. The minimum number of cycle parking spaces listed in the London Plan per land use are expected to be exceeded by the development, to support the expected future growth of cycling for those that live and work in Camden and the proposed completion date of 2031.
- 7.13 There is likely to be significant amount of short stay required for the commercial uses, and therefore this should be considered at an early stage as part of the development proposal, and indicative locations and designs proposed. Short stay cycle parking should also be provided, near entrances to residential blocks and commercial uses.
- 7.14 Cycle routes on the carriageway through the site should prioritise cycling over private vehicle use, including where the cycle routes connect to Finchley Road and interact with servicing vehicle routes within the site. It is proposed that no segregation is provided on Blackburn Road within the site, and a mandatory cycle lane is provided in the eastbound direction only, between the north-south vehicle route and Finchley Road. If space allows it, and detailed plans should be provided with the planning submission, it is expected that cyclists will be prioritised within the carriageway (in both the eastbound and westbound direction) and at the junction with Finchley Road.
- 7.15 Detailed plans of Blackburn Road should be provided with the planning application, showing proposed carriageway widths and measures to ensure vehicles travel at slow speeds. Details and designs on how cyclists make the connection between eastern section of Blackburn Rd (from Finchley Rd) to the western section of Blackburn Road (towards West End Lane) should be provided with the TA.
- 7.16 Cyclists and pedestrians should be given priority within the site. Details on how cyclists and vehicles interact on Blackburn Road, with priority given to cyclists, should be provided, with particular reference to:
- the areas where Blackburn Road is proposed to be narrowed
  - the junction of the internal north-south vehicle route and Blackburn Road
  - the location where the southern pedestrian/cycle path crosses the north-south vehicle route
- 7.17 Measures to ensure cyclists travel at appropriate speeds when using the southern shared cycle/pedestrian route should be included, and details provided within the plans.

#### Bus provision within the site

- 7.18 The site is currently serviced by two bus routes and has two bus stops on Blackburn Road. The proposal seeks to remove the eastern bus stop (stop FC) re-provide the second stop (stop FB) in a different location, further to the west along the new Blackburn Road layout.
- 7.19 All of the bus provision measures need to be agreed by TfL prior to determination. The assessment will need to include bus stop capacity (for both users and buses) and the walking distances (and gradient) to bus stops (on Blackburn Road and on Finchley Road) from the residential blocks. Where a bus service ends and begins will also need to be taken into account, if changes are proposed to the existing provision on Blackburn Road. Removing one of the bus

stops, in an area where improved public transport is required, needs to be fully assessed and justified including the reasoning and benefits of removing the bus stop. Details on bus routes terminating in the site and the requirements for these services will need to be provided within the TA and agreed with TfL.

- 7.20 The TA will need to include detailed information on how the bus provision (routes and bus stops) is protected and maintained throughout construction. Any diversions or alterations of existing bus stops and routes during construction need to be fully assessed within the TA.

#### Trip generation methodology and mode share

- 7.21 The trip generation methodology is acceptable in principle. While it is proposed that a predicted mode share for pedestrians and cyclists aligns with Camden's aspirations and targets, the assessment should include reasonable levels of sensitivity testing to predict scenarios of lower mode shares of walking only, where trips may be distributed to walking and public transport.

- 7.22 The impacts of the increased person trip rates on West Hampstead Station, Finchley Road station, the bus network and the connecting streets and footways should be assessed within the TA.

- 7.23 Draft Travel Plans for the different land uses should be submitted as part of the application and will be secured by S106. Final versions will need to be submitted and approved prior to occupation of each phase.

#### West Hampstead and Finchley Road Underground Stations

- 7.24 At the time of this response, discussions and analysis are ongoing between the council, TfL and the applicants on the feasibility of improvements to both West Hampstead and Finchley Road Underground Stations. It is envisaged that this analysis will be complete prior to the submission of the planning application, which will accompany the assessments within the TA. Station improvements are fundamental for the scheme to go ahead.

#### Construction Management

- 7.25 A draft CMP for each phase of the development should be submitted as part of the planning application. These documents should include information on:
- how bus routes and bus stops are protected and maintained throughout construction, and any diversions or alterations of existing bus stops and routes during construction need to be fully assessed within the TA and agreed with the council and TfL prior to determination
  - pedestrian and cycle routes through the site during construction should also be maintained, with details provided within the TA and the draft construction management plan

#### Documents required as part of the planning application and the TA

- Draft Construction Management Plan(s)
- Draft Servicing Management Plan
- Draft Car parking management plan
- Draft Travel Plan(s)

### **13. Waste and recycling**

- 13.1 The Council is seeking to make Camden a low waste borough. Policy CC5 of the Local Plan aims to reduce the amount of waste produced in the borough and increase recycling and the re-use of materials and it seeks to ensure that developments include facilities for the storage and collection of waste and recycling.

- 13.2 If a formal application is submitted, it should include details of waste storage and collection. CPG Design provides further guidance.

## 14. Basement

14.1 Policy A5 notes that the Council will only permit basement development where it is demonstrated to its satisfaction that the proposal would not cause harm to:

- a. neighbouring properties;*
- b. the structural, ground, or water conditions of the area;*
- c. the character and amenity of the area;*
- d. the architectural character of the building; and*
- e. the significance of heritage assets.*

14.2 In determining proposals for basements and other underground development, the Council will require an assessment of the scheme's impact on drainage, flooding, groundwater conditions and structural stability in the form of a Basement Impact Assessment and where appropriate, a Basement Construction Plan.

14.3 The policy sets out guidelines for basement development (e.g. number of storeys, size etc.) but subsequently notes that exceptions to some of the rules can be made for comprehensively planned sites, which would apply in this case.

14.4 The policy goes on to note that the Council will require applicants to demonstrate that proposals for basements:

- n. do not harm neighbouring properties, including requiring the provision of a Basement Impact Assessment which shows that the scheme poses a risk of damage to neighbouring properties no higher than Burland Scale 1 'very slight';*
- o. avoid adversely affecting drainage and run-off or causing other damage to the water environment;*
- p. avoid cumulative impacts;*
- q. do not harm the amenity of neighbours;*
- r. provide satisfactory landscaping, including adequate soil depth;*
- s. do not harm the appearance or setting of the property or the established character of the surrounding area;*
- t. protect important archaeological remains; and*
- u. do not prejudice the ability of the garden to support trees where they are part of the character of the area.*

14.5 Any formal planning application should be accompanied by a Basement Impact Assessment, which would be independently reviewed by Campbell Reith. CPG Basements provides further advice, and there is also advice available on our website: [Basement development](#).

## 15. Microclimate

15.1 The proposed buildings will likely have significant impact on the microclimate of the open spaces. Wind and sunlight into these spaces should be a key consideration when developing form and height of the buildings. We encourage early wind and sunlight analysis to help shape the proposal going forward.

## 16. Energy and sustainability

### Policy review

16.1 A Sustainability Plan and Energy Plan should be submitted as part of any future application, detailing how the proposals accord with policies CC1, CC2, and CC3. All homes must be zero carbon with on-site carbon reduction met in line with policy.

16.2 Policy CC1 requires all development to minimise the effects of climate change and encourages all developments to meet the highest feasible environmental standards that are financially viable during construction and occupation. The policy notes that the Council will:

- a. promote zero carbon development and require all development to reduce carbon dioxide emissions through following the steps in the energy hierarchy;*
- b. require all major development to demonstrate how London Plan targets for carbon dioxide emissions have been met;*
- c. ensure that the location of development and mix of land uses minimise the need to travel by car and help to support decentralised energy networks;*
- d. support and encourage sensitive energy efficiency improvements to existing buildings;*
- e. require all proposals that involve substantial demolition to demonstrate that it is not possible to retain and improve the existing building; and*
- f. expect all developments to optimise resource efficiency.*

16.3 The policy goes on to note that the Council will promote decentralised energy by requiring all major developments to assess the feasibility of connecting to an existing decentralised energy network, or where this is not possible establishing a new network. Furthermore, to ensure that the Council can monitor the effectiveness of renewable and low carbon technologies, major developments will be required to install appropriate monitoring equipment.

16.4 Policy CC2 requires development to be resilient to climate change. The policy notes that all development should adopt appropriate climate change adaptation measures such as:

- a. the protection of existing green spaces and promoting new appropriate green infrastructure;*
- b. not increasing, and wherever possible reducing, surface water runoff through increasing permeable surfaces and use of Sustainable Drainage Systems;*
- c. incorporating bio-diverse roofs, combination green and blue roofs and green walls where appropriate; and*
- d. measures to reduce the impact of urban and dwelling overheating, including application of the cooling hierarchy.*

16.5 The policy also notes that the Council will promote and measure sustainable design and construction by:

- e. ensuring development schemes demonstrate how adaptation measures and sustainable development principles have been incorporated into the design and proposed implementation;*
- f. encourage new build residential development to use the Home Quality Mark and Passivhaus design standards;*
- g. encouraging conversions and extensions of 500 sqm of residential floorspace or above or five or more dwellings to achieve “excellent” in BREEAM domestic refurbishment; and*
- h. expecting non-domestic developments of 500 sqm of floorspace or above to achieve “excellent” in BREEAM assessments and encouraging zero carbon in new development from 2019.*

16.6 The below comments are in relation to our sustainability on the 22nd July 2021.

#### Demolition of the O2 Centre

16.7 Given the climate emergency and the Council’s policies on circular economy, the retention and reuse of buildings is normally strongly encouraged. Officers support the demolition of the building in principle, given that retaining it would

create fundamental issues for access to the site as well as design issues. Nevertheless, a justification is required and you must mitigate the impact of the loss of the building in sustainability terms, with sterling sustainability credentials across the development. We would appoint an external consultant to review the whole life carbon assessment. This would be need to be funded by the applicant.

Moving forward:

- 16.8 The whole site would have to be covered by a thorough energy strategy which includes all the details required below.
- 16.9 The first phase of the development should be supported by the site wide energy strategy and detailed specifications shall be provided for each individual building following the Pro-Formas.
- 16.10 Air quality modelling should be undertaken as soon as possible to enable incorporation of any design considerations into the proposals.

Overall:

- 16.11 We are currently in a Climate Emergency as declared by the UK Parliament as well as Camden Council. Local and London wide targets in relation sustainability, energy efficiency and carbon reductions (see London Plan 2021 and Camden Local Plan 2017) are a requirement not an aspiration, and your development would have to meet these throughout, otherwise refusal would be expected in the event of a future planning application.
- 16.12 Whilst the general approach seems to be going in the right direction the information provided are general and only principle based. No detailed representation of how the actual development of this site will deliver against the local and London wide targets in relation to sustainability, energy efficiency and carbon reduction is included.
- 16.13 There is no indication of how and why the energy masterplan is based on air source heat pumps. A centralised energy centre should be provided for this site. The overall approach to low carbon heat provided via an ASHP heat network, combined with a PV array seems to be sound but no carbon reduction information has been provided and the feasibility of other options such as GSHP or Sewer Source Heat Pump (SSHP) don't seem to have been considered. You are required to demonstrate through ground investigation that other heating sources have been fully considered and details of this to be provided.
- 16.14 The consideration Passiv haus principles for the building fabric are welcomed, as is the consideration of materials for the impact on Whole Life Carbon (WLC). However, there is a lack of design details so far.
- 16.15 There also doesn't seem to have been any detailed consideration of air quality considerations and further information is required. The principle of the location of sensitive land uses (specifically housing and health care) cannot be agreed until further information is provided to demonstrate that it would be acceptable in terms of air quality.
- We will need SAP2012 information (BRUKL / SAP worksheets) and GLA SAP 10 spreadsheets
  - Using SAP10 65%-80% reductions in carbon overall should be possible on site. An absolute minimum of 35% reduction on site is required.
  - The whole site will need to be net zero carbon with any remaining carbon to be offset at £95/t for 30 years or for offsite carbon offset through support for local carbon reduction schemes nearby. Our priority is to deliver carbon savings on site rather than seek contribution, this is very much a last resort.

## Pro forma and Guidance

Completion of the following proforma will enable consideration of key aspects of the proposed development. This will also help you understand if your proposal meets the targets and where you can improve to achieve them:

- [Air Quality Proforma](#)
- [Energy and Sustainability Proforma](#)
- [SuDS and Floods Proforma](#) and [GLA SuDS proforma](#)

Please refer to Camden Local Plan and Camden Planning Guidance (CPG) on

- Energy Efficiency and Adaptation,
- Water and Flooding
- Air Quality

Please refer to the London Plan 2021 and GLA guidance:

- Energy Assessment plus Carbon Emission Reporting Spreadsheet
- WLC assessment,
- Circular Economy statement,
- Be Seen Energy Monitoring

### Specifically:

#### **Be Lean**

- Mention of consideration of orientation and massing referred to but no details. This is crucial at the design stage to minimise energy demand for the development for heating and cooling.
- Air tightness will be key to Passiv Haus standard and was not mentioned. We would expect <1 m<sup>3</sup>/m<sup>2</sup>.hr @50Pa (recommended by LETI) for a super insulated building.
- Consideration of factors such as the location of MVHR units near to external walls to improve efficiency should be considered
- Waste water heat recovery was mentioned – detailed feasibility should be provided as part of the energy strategy
- Glazing g-value not mentioned or external shading which would be expected to prevent overheating.

#### **Be Clean**

- Proof of investigation of connection to heat networks will be required
- A development of this size should be looking to establish a heat pump led DHN
- Consideration of heat map opportunities to be shown.
- Further details of potential consideration of an ambient loop ASHP, Ground Source Heat Pump opportunities (including ground investigations) and consideration of Sewer Source Heat Pump from the proposed sewer network for the site
- Pipe to boundary and soft points and safeguarded space for heat exchanger required if not connecting to ensure future proofing

#### **Be Green**

- Minimum 35% reduction on site required and zero carbon overall. However with increasing concern over the climate emergency declared by Camden, we would expect on-site reduction to be notably higher than this minimum policy requirement.
- Stated “PVs to be optimised.” We need to see area demonstrated on plans, overshadowing considerations, maintenance access considered, projected energy generation and carbon savings.

- Our preference is for blue / green roofs combined with Solar PV. Substrate for intensive green roofs should be at least 150mm minimum. These should be integrated within the design of the proposals and shown as such.
- Further details on any back up heating and the proposed electric top up required including costs for residents
- ASHP proposed but further details required including SCOP (not just COP). Expected carbon savings. Details required of the connections between the buildings to form a network.

### **Be Seen**

- Commitment to GLA reporting requirements required.

### **Whole Life Carbon**

- Approach seems promising. Must be in line with GLA requirements.
- CPG Energy Efficiency and Adaptation Chapter 9 sets out the requirements.
- Note the Local Plan policy CC1 which requires all proposals that involve substantial demolition to demonstrate that it is not possible to retain and improve the existing building. Paragraph 8.17 of the Local Plan states this should be justified in terms of optimisation of resources and energy use. As such a Whole Life Carbon assessment will be expected for all applications proposing substantial demolition.
- WLC results are encouraged to meet GLA Aspirational benchmarks

### **Circular Economy**

- Approach seems promising
- Retention of elements such as ramps and foundations strongly encouraged
- Circular Economy statement following GLA guidance and approach required
- 95% target for demolition / construction / excavation waste and details about how this will be achieved on site.

### **Overheating**

- Complete the Good Homes Alliance (GHA) Early Stage Overheating Risk Tool as part of the preliminary energy information for the development.
- Further details required to show that the cooling hierarchy has been followed and cooling demand minimised. This should include elevation studies to show external shading, overshadowing, balconies etc
- For areas of the development where air quality or noise concerns pose limitations to the opening of windows, applicants will be required to submit two separate overheating analyses; one with openable windows and one with closed windows. This will ensure that passive measures have been maximised and the façade design has been optimised regardless of the constraints posed by the site's location.
- Options such as mechanical ventilation with centrally controlled tempered air to prevent overheating only, rather than individual air conditioning should be considered if cooling is proven to be required in order to achieve the required comfort levels.
- Any active cooling should be considered in Be Lean stage.
- There is no mention of Green walls which can provide a cooling effect.
- Dynamic thermal modelling in line with GLA guidance required to be undertaken for detailed application.
- 'Active cooling' should not be specified in developments where it has been demonstrated that the passive or other measures proposed have successfully addressed the risk of overheating; to avoid unnecessarily increasing a development's energy demand and carbon emissions. In addition, it is not expected that 'active cooling' will be proposed for any residential developments

## **Water efficiency and SuDS**

- Should achieve BREEAM excellent with at least 60% for water for the non-residential areas
- Rainwater collection for external use proposed. Further details required and should be included in the Drainage Strategy.
- Consideration of grey or rainwater recycling for internal use (toilet flushing) should be fully considered and details provided.

## **BREEAM / HQM**

- BREEAM excellent required
- At least 60% of credits in Energy and Water and 40% in Materials required
- Encourage all available and potential credits should be targeted to aspire to 'Outstanding'
- HQM not mentioned and should be considered. HQM highly desirable and would indicate that the development has high aspirations.

## **Air Quality**

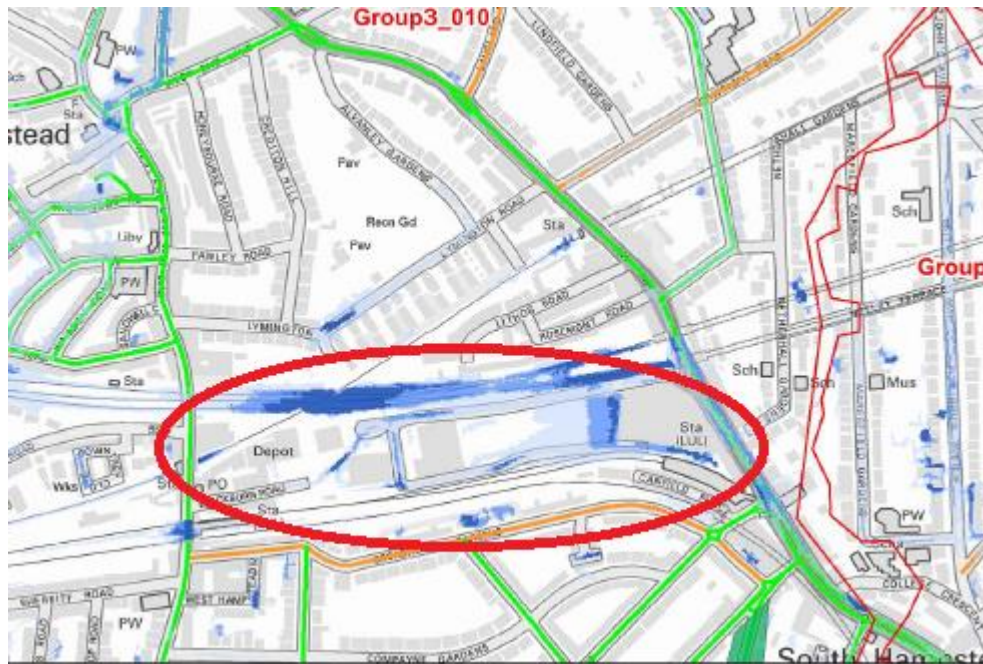
- Policy CC4 of the Local Plan seeks to ensure that the impact of development on air quality is mitigated and to ensure that exposure to poor air quality is reduced in the borough. The application site is located in an area of poor air quality. An Air Quality Assessment should therefore be provided with any formal planning application.
- AQ modelling at an early stage is strongly recommended. This would enable any design considerations (as per London Plan Policy SI 1) to be incorporated into the design.
- The assessment should consider WHO targets for PM10 and PM2.5 as set out in the London Plan 2021.
- The AQA should follow the guidance set out in CPG Air Quality. NB Dispersion modelling shall be carried out in accordance with Air Quality and Planning Guidance, London Councils (2007) and London Local Air Quality Management Plan Technical Guidance 2016. Modelling should not predict improvements to future years (future vehicle emissions or future background concentrations).
- Note that if NO<sub>2</sub> is over 5% above the annual national objective (so 42mg/m<sup>3</sup>) then arguably the proposals would not comply with the standards or the requirements of London Plan Policy SI B 1) c) to not create an unacceptable risk of high levels of exposure to poor air quality. If the proposals are recommended for approval then, in line with Policy SI B 2) b), the development proposals should use design solutions to prevent or minimise increased exposure to existing air pollution and make provision to address local problems of air pollution, or mitigation required. Specifically, we would strongly recommend that as a minimum mitigation (such as MVHR with filtration and possibly sealed windows and winter gardens) should be provided. Occupiers to be advised of health risks from poor air quality at the site.
- If the site meets the standards for NO<sub>2</sub> but is over 5% above the WHO standards for particulates then in order to meet the requirements of London Plan Policy SI B 1) c) to not create an unacceptable risk of high levels of exposure to poor air quality and in line with Policy SI B 2) b), the development proposals should use design solutions to prevent or minimise increased exposure to existing air pollution and make provision to address local problems of air pollution, or mitigation required. Occupiers should be advised of health risks from poor air quality at the site.
- The proposals should be at least Air Quality Neutral
- Housing and healthcare should be located away from busy roads and emission sources such as the railway where possible. Any housing which is located in more polluted areas which require mitigation should be a mix and not just affordable housing.

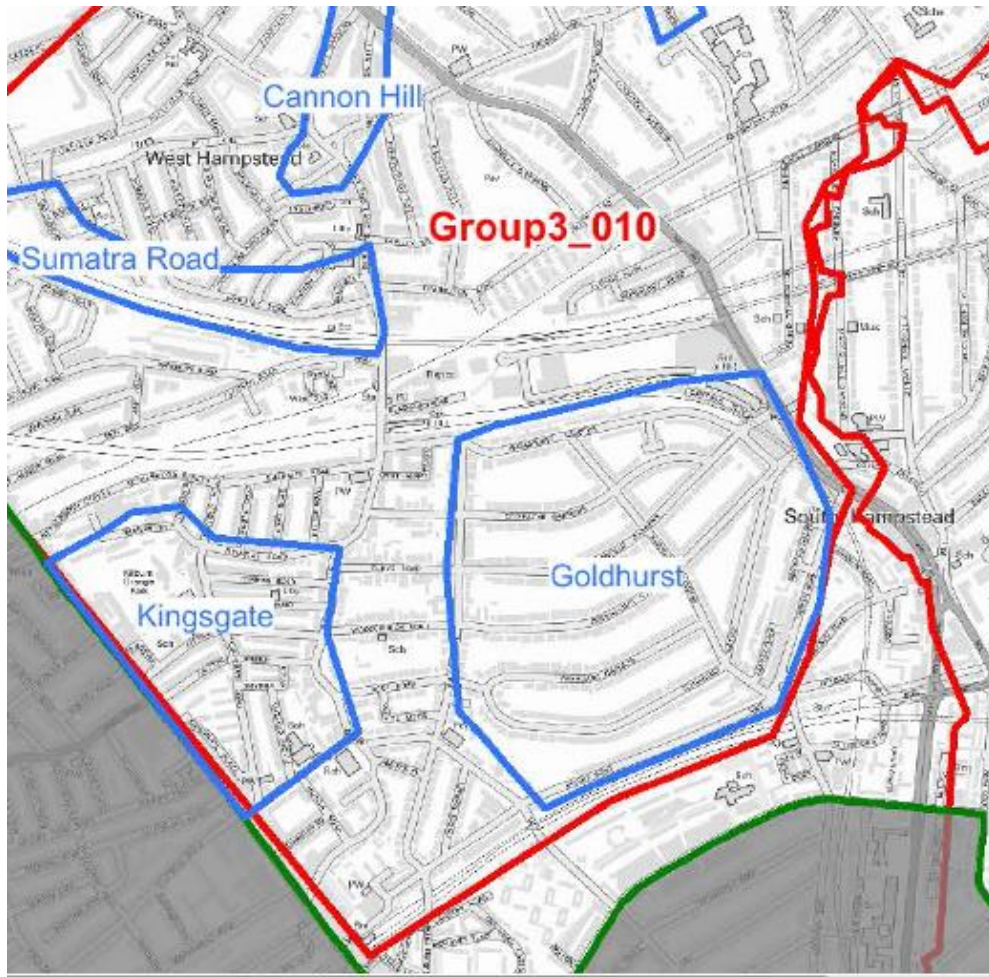


- AQ dust risk for demolition and construction of a large site would expect a large risk and therefore real time monitoring will be required. Locations should be agreed with ourselves and put in place for 3-6 months baseline monitoring in advance of works starting on site.

### **Floods and SuDS**

- Policy CC3 of the Local Plan seeks to ensure that development does not increase flood risk and reduces the risk of flooding where possible. The policy notes that the Council will require development to:
  - The site is adjacent to previously flooded streets (from both 1975 and 2002) and the area was also flooded in the recent flood event on the 12 July.
  - The site is also part of the critical drainage area for the Goldhurst Local Flood Risk Zone which also experienced flooding in the recent event.





Policy Requirement:

- Submit an FRA if >1ha
- Major developments to achieve greenfield run-off rates wherever feasible.
- NPPF requires all major developments to include SuDS unless demonstrated to be inappropriate (as set out in the Ministerial Statement by the Secretary of State on 18 December 2014).
- Development should follow the drainage hierarchy in policy SI 13 of the London Plan below:
  1. rainwater use as a resource (for example rainwater harvesting, blue roofs for irrigation)
  2. rainwater infiltration to ground at or close to source
  3. rainwater attenuation in green infrastructure features for gradual release (for example green roofs, rain gardens)
  4. rainwater discharge direct to a watercourse (unless not appropriate)
  5. controlled rainwater discharge to a surface water sewer or drain
  6. controlled rainwater discharge to a combined sewer
- Developments in areas known to be at risk of surface water flooding are designed to resist flooding and to cope with being flooded.

Best practice guidance recommended within the non-statutory technical standards:

- Constrain run-off volumes to greenfield run off volumes for the 1 in 100 year 6 hour event.

**17. Phasing and land ownership**

17.1 You propose to bring the proposals forward in three phases, as part of a hybrid application, with Phase 1 in detail and Phases 2 and 3 in outline.

- 17.2 We have no objection in principle to this approach and note it has been used in other large major schemes across London.
- 17.3 Phase one of the masterplan is proposed on the current home base site, this would be bordered by the existing O2 carpark and the car show rooms with later phases of construction and poor pedestrian access along the existing Blackburn Road. This raises significant issues and concerns for the quality, liveability, safety and access of this first phase of housing. To date, this has not been a topic of discussion in pre-application meetings and further discussion is needed around how these issues may be mitigated through careful planning, construction phasing and meanwhile uses. Consideration should be given to:
- Meanwhile uses around the carpark within phase one to ensure it feels like a complete place from the outset.
  - Meanwhile public realm plans to improve the access to the first phase along Blackburn Road both from Finchley Road and West End Lane
- 17.4 Whilst we have no objection to the hybrid form of application, we have concerns over site ownership and land assembly. As we understand conversations have progressed well with the leaseholders in the O2. However, the car showrooms owners have submitted their own pre-application proposals for what would be Phase 3 of your application. We understand you have had some conversations with the owners of this site, but it is clear that far more conversations are required. The Council's aim is for the whole O2 Finchley Road to come forward comprehensively. We consider this could potentially be done under different ownerships, but the land owners would need to work very closely together. You are strongly advised to set up a strong dialogue with the owners of the car showroom site to resolve the above issues.
- 17.5 Community and local uses within the O2 centre should be relocated during its demolition and construction of this phase. We consider that open space and facilities should come forward in Phase 1. The health centre is included in this. We note the proposals for a temporary supermarket to replace the Sainsbury's before the main supermarket is provided in Phase 3. There must be a continuity of supermarket provision throughout the build and the temporary supermarket must be available before the existing closes.
- 17.6 We have concerns that the aforementioned health centre is proposed in a later phase, and on land not in your ownership. The bus turning area is moved under your proposals to the car showroom site. Without a clear and joined-up strategy with the car showroom owners (as well as TfL), it is difficult to see how this could be achieved.
- 17.7 The Council is open to using its CPO powers to unlock land ownership and site assembly issues, though this would only be done if negotiations are tried and exhausted without success. There needs to be a clear public benefit for the Council to utilise its CPO powers. We consider that with 35% affordable housing, or only an aim of 35%, it would be difficult to justify this.

## **18. Consultation**

- 18.1 You are encouraged to undertake public consultation, including with local groups, before the submission of any planning applications. The details of any should be provided within a Statement of Community Involvement.
- 18.2 You are strongly advised to make early contact with local organisations/groups and ward councillors.
- 18.3 We note you have engaged with the GLA and we are waiting for their feedback. You should also enter into further conversation with the rail operators, continue discussions with TfL, the car showroom owners and Sainsbury's. It

may be worth engaging with adjoining boroughs, depending on how visible the scheme is from different locations.

18.4 As part of your submission you should set out what public consultation you have carried out, what comments have been received and how your proposal has been amended in response to such comments.

18.5 Officers expect you to undertake significant public consultation on your proposals, reaching out to a diverse range of people including in terms of race, class and age. Your youth engagement with 2 to 3 Degrees is commended and ongoing consultation is strongly encouraged. This consultation process should actively inform your proposals.

## **19. Conclusion**

19.1 Residential use is strongly welcomed. A good affordable offer is expected given the quantum of development. 50% is the Council's policy. It would be difficult for the Council to utilise its CPO powers without a very good affordable offer.

19.2 The proposals must support the character, function, vitality and viability of the Finchley Road Town Centre, providing retail, community and employment uses. Officers accept there will be some loss of town centre uses, given the move away from the shopping centre model. More work is required justifying this loss and demonstrating that the proposals will support the town centre.

19.3 Overall, the development is too dense and tall and this has several knock-on consequences discussed above, and summarised below.

19.4 We have some concerns regarding the quality of the proposed accommodation in terms of aspect, separation distances, light, typologies and connection to the open space.

19.5 The proposals are considered to cause 'less than substantial harm' to surrounding conservation areas. A reduction in heights across the site would be required to mitigate this harm. An excellent package of benefits would be required to justify this harm.

19.6 The acceptability of a large-scale, high-density development depends on the accessibility/permeability of the site and the quality of the public realm. The approach to architecture for phase one is broadly supported at this stage. A reduction of massing of blocks as would help to ease the dominance of the proposed blocks on the open spaces and the feeling of over-development on site. If the splay could be reintroduced in the original form, the linear park and some of the other streets widened, the blocks adjacent to the open space lowered and the number of dual aspect homes significantly increased the scheme would be more successful.

19.7 We note and welcome the high-quality landscaped approach proposed, across the site. We have concerns over the viability of the linear park as an actual park rather than a route. A mixture of uses, including residential, should be employed to ensure activation of this route and for reasons of security. The bus turn around area and Blackburn Road, to the north of the blocks, still require more work.

19.8 There are ongoing issues of site assembly and land ownership which require resolution. We have concerns over the provision of the bus turning circle and the health centre must be provided in phase 1.

19.9 We look forward to continuing to work with you to resolve the above issues.

## **20. Community Infrastructure Levy**

- 20.1 Policy 19 of the Fortune Green and West Hampstead Plan outlines the CIP priorities for the area.
- 20.2 At the present time development would be subject to the Mayor of London's Crossrail CIL given that more than 100sqm increase in floorspace is proposed. The rate depends on the type of floorspace with (for example) £50 per sqm levied for residential use in Camden. Please be aware that the Mayor is reviewing his CIL schedule and has indicated that a new schedule may be in place in 2019.
- 20.3 The proposal by its size and land use type will be liable for the London Borough of Camden's Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) introduced on the 1st April 2015 to help pay for local infrastructure. You will need to refer to the prevailing charge at the time that any planning permission is granted. At present the Council levies a charge of £250 per sqm for residential development.

## **21. Section 106 obligations**

- 21.1 CPG8 (Planning obligations) is relevant with regards to planning obligations.
- 21.2 The section 106 obligations below are likely to be included in an agreement. Please note that this list is not exhaustive.

### Potential section 106 terms (not exhaustive)

- Car free
- Sustainability/energy
- Construction Management Plan + monitoring fee & bond
- Highways contribution
- Pedestrian, Cycling and Environmental contribution
- Landscaping, trees and Public Open Space
- Affordable housing
- Community facilities including health centre
- Community use plan (subject to nature of any community use proposed)
- Employment and training – construction and end users
- Affordable workspace
- Transport items TBC including step free etc
- Phasing and design codes

### Information to be submitted with any planning application (not exhaustive)

- Planning Statement
- Design and Access Statement(s)
- Affordable Housing Statement
- Viability Report if not providing policy compliant affordable housing
- Daylight/Sunlight Assessment
- Transport Statement
- Townscape, Heritage and Visual Impact Assessment
- Phasing Plan
- Air Quality Report
- Statement of Community Involvement
- Energy Statement
- Sustainability Statement
- Details of refuse and recycling storage
- Noise (and Vibration) Report and details of necessary attenuation measures
- Draft Construction Management Plan
- Draft Servicing Management Plan

- Statement of Community Involvement
- Flood Risk Assessment
- Ecological Appraisal
- Health Impact Assessment.
- Fire Safety Statement
- Play strategy
- Design Codes

The proposals would constitute a Schedule 2 development under [The Town and Country Planning \(EIA\) Regulations 2017](#), given over 150 dwellings are proposed (part 10 (b) (ii)).

Please note that failure to provide all of the above information with any planning application is likely to lead to delays in the application being validated. Please note, this list is not exhaustive, and other documents may be required to validate the application if they are considered necessary at a later date.

Disclaimer:

This document represents the Council's initial view of your proposals based on the information available to us at this stage. It should not be interpreted as formal confirmation that your application will be acceptable nor can it be held to prejudice formal determination of any planning application we receive from you on this proposal.

If you have any queries about the above letter or the attached document please contact **David Fowler** on **020 7974 2123**.

Thank you for using Camden's pre-application advice service.

Yours sincerely,

David Fowler  
Deputy Manager