

## **Brunswick Park Councillor Speech**

Hello

My name is Paul Lemon, and I am here to speak in my capacity as a Brunswick Park ward councillor. Due to time constraints I am also speaking on behalf of my two fellow ward councillors, Tony Vourou and Giulia Monasterio. Of course I am also here to represent Brunswick Park ward residents who overwhelmingly supported the LB of Barnet's planning committee's decision to reject this proposal which is currently the subject of this Appeal.

The application was originally rejected by the Planning Committee on two grounds:

1. Excessive height, scale and massing that would fail to take into account local context and the established pattern of development.
2. And it did not include a formal undertaking to secure the provision of, amongst other things, affordable housing, community and health care floorspace and highways mitigation.

I would now like to expand on the above two grounds for refusal.

On the first ground, the application envisages blocks of up to 12 storeys and the number of units nearly double in total when compared to the application approved on appeal by the Secretary of state in 2020. This increase in height and size is totally out of character with local development as the housing in the immediate vicinity – namely Brunswick Crescent, Brunswick Park Road, Brunswick Park Gardens, Howard Close, Weirdale Avenue, Ashbourne Avenue, Pine Road, Oakleigh Road North, Oakleigh Close, Fernwood Crescent and Denham Road can be accurately described as both primarily suburban and semi-detached.

Furthermore, given the height, scale and massing, the proposed development would also have a huge and detrimental impact on the visual amenity of residents not just in the immediate vicinity, but given its location, further afield especially in the east of the ward on the steep incline up towards Southgate.

The proposal would therefore not create a high-quality development, would not constitute a sustainable form of development and would be contrary to the provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework, Policies D3, D4 and D9 of the London Plan 2021 and policies CS5, DM01 and DM05 of the Barnet Local Plan Core Strategy and Development Management Policies 2012.

On the second ground, the proposed development does not include a formal undertaking to secure the provision of affordable housing, community and health care floorspace, affordable workspace, off site nature conservation and play space

provision, carbon off-setting, highways mitigation, non-financial and financial skills and employment, enterprise and training obligations.

Whilst these grounds for refusal are process driven and tied to a subsequent legal agreement, I will take this opportunity to comment on affordable housing, healthcare space and highways mitigation given their impacts on the local community.

The amount of affordable housing being offered is wholly inadequate given the housing needs of the wider community in LB Barnet.

The provision of healthcare floorspace being proposed is reliant on the local NHS trust taking up the offer of accommodation. There is no indication that that is currently the case. Even if the space was utilised, it would most likely merely be a change in accommodation rather than an additional healthcare resource in the area.

Finally, with respect to highways mitigation, the inevitable increase in traffic as a consequence of the proposal, notwithstanding the environmental impact, would have a long-term cost impact on road maintenance in the area. Furthermore, the increase in traffic would exacerbate current road congestion especially at current pinch points in the south near the cemetery on Brunswick Park Road, further south at Betstyle Circus and in the north where Russell Lane, Osidge Lane and Brunswick Park Road converge.

At this point, I would also add that existing bus services, particularly to and from Arnos Grove Station, are already stretched in the rush hour and this development will only make the situation worse. I used to live within a stone's throw from the development site. So, my own experience leads me to conclude that on the whole residents will not choose, as an alternative, to walk to Arnos Grove tube station.

In summary, the development is completely out of character with the area and would, from a visual perspective, be a complete eye sore.

The proposal would place undue strain on local infrastructure especially with respect to roads, healthcare, public transport and schools.

The LB Barnet planning committee unanimously and rightly rejected this application.

Feedback from residents is pretty much unanimous against this proposed development.

Given all of the above, I believe this Appeal should be rejected.