

COMMUNITY SUMMARY OF MURPHY'S YARD PLANNING APPLICATION, JANUARY 2022

This note is a summary of the Murphy's Yard planning application, which runs to thousands of pages. It has been prepared to inform the community about what is being proposed in a more balanced and accessible format, so that people can make their own comments to Camden Council – details of how to do this are at the end of the note.



WHAT IS BEING PROPOSED?

This is an outline application for a **minimum of 750 and maximum of 825 homes** and a maximum of **95,000 sqm of other uses**, mainly industrial and employment.

The site today has less than 20,000 sqm of floorspace of any description, including the Murphy's HQ.

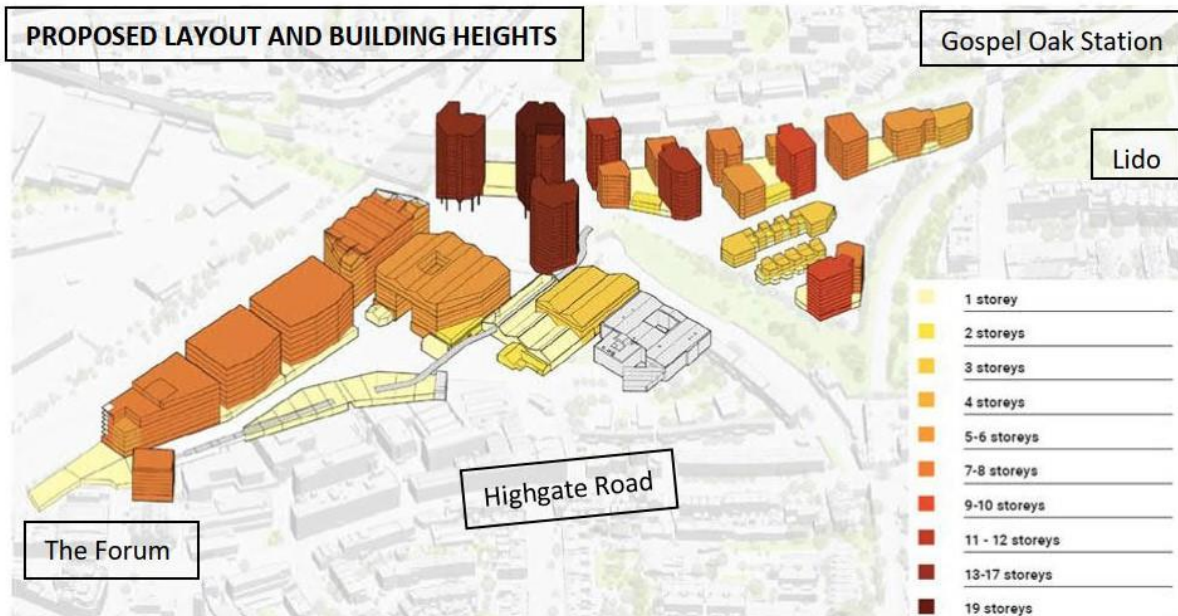
Details of unit tenure, sizes and detailed design of buildings and open space will be confirmed through subsequent planning applications.

This application is to lock in the **extent and the types of development**, including maximum **building footprints and heights**.

The proposal is for a **series of residential towers of up to 19 storeys** and a row of very large floorplate **industrial buildings of up to 8 storeys**.

Vehicular access will be from Sanderson Close for the southern (industrial) part of the site and from a new junction on Gordon House Road. No residents will be allowed to own a car.

Development would take place over a period of approximately 9 years.



WHAT HOUSING MIX IS PROPOSED? WILL THE HOMES BE AFFORDABLE?

88% of the 825 homes will be 1-bed and 2-bed flats. As a proportion, this is twice as many as Camden’s own Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) says is needed throughout the Borough. Just 14 of the 825 homes will be family (4-bed) houses – see table for details.

Need (SHMA) v proposed, all homes

	1 bed	2 bed	3 bed	4+ bed
Need in LB Camden report	8%	37.5%	37.5%	16%
Proposed development	38%	50%	10%	1.5%
Over (+)/under (-) supply	+30%	+12.5%	-27.5%	-14.5%

Camden’s policies say that 35% of homes should be ‘affordable’, but the planning application claims that this amount of ‘affordable’ is not viable. **So we do not know what proportion will be ‘affordable’, but they are arguing that it must be less than the required 35%.** It will be subject to future planning applications.

The developer’s Viability Assessment assumes that a 2-bedroom flat in one of the towers will cost around £950,000 to £1,000,000 at today’s prices.

HOW WILL THE DEVELOPMENT FIT INTO THE NEIGHBOURHOOD? WHAT ABOUT VIEWS?

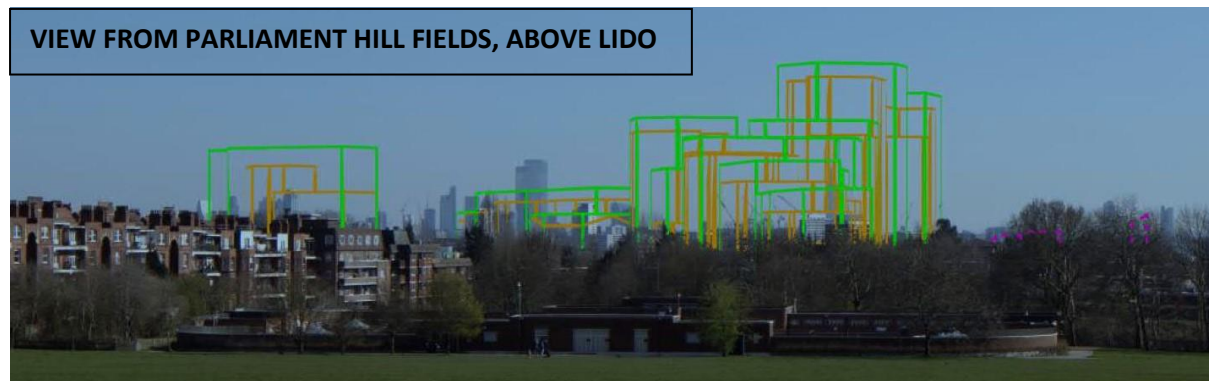
The proposal is for a high density development. Both the residential and employment components will be much more dense and bulky than anything else in the wider area. It will be characterised by very large buildings linked by ambitious open space.

The development will loom large in views from all directions, including Hampstead Heath and Oak Village. The protected views of St Pauls from Parliament Hill and Kenwood will not be directly affected but the protected view of Parliament Hill from Kentish Town will be largely blocked.

The scheme's architects say *"the masterplan is design-led, sensitively responding to its wider context...The proposed configuration of building typologies and heights responds to the scale of the existing surrounding context and allows the Proposed Development to integrate with the existing built environment."* Their 'townscape consultants' say that the proposals *"will establish a significant and notable new place with distinctive qualities, delivering a number of benefits and would result in **no adverse effects** in relation to townscape and visual impact."*

However, Camden's independent expert Design Review Panel say *"the bulk, height and massing of residential blocks is excessive and...have a **significant and unacceptable impact** on important views from Parliament Hill to the north. The amount of accommodation should be reduced or redistributed, potentially through reduction of other uses on the site."*

Judge for yourself from these images from the planning application:



TRAFFIC AND OTHER IMPACTS

The application claims that the traffic generated by the proposed Development will result in a net reduction in traffic currently generated by the site during both morning and evening peaks. This would be surprising given the low level of activity on site now and the number of homes and businesses that will need servicing.

There are several topics where the impacts will only be really known when subsequent planning applications are submitted and assessed. These include detailed breakdown of uses (e.g. community, retail, food and drink, employment type), ecology, climate emergency, impact on local businesses and services, fire safety, drainage and sustainability.

WHAT DOES PLANNING POLICY SAY?

Planning applications are judged against planning policy. Camden and London planning policy is that the **existing amount of industrial floorspace should be re-provided** [c.20,000sqm], alongside "in the

region of **750 homes**” that is “seamlessly **integrated with surrounding neighbourhoods**”, built up to a **general height of eight storeys** with **some buildings going above this** in appropriate locations. The **view of Parliament Hill from outside Kentish Town station is protected**.

WHATEVER YOUR VIEWS – PLEASE RESPOND

Some positives:

- Some local people may agree with the developer that this **addresses local need** for housing and employment space in a highly efficient way.
- They may find new **residential towers to be alluring**, or at least put up with them.
- They may be excited by the **opening up of an underused site** and the promise of new facilities and set piece open spaces.

Some negatives:

- The expert Design Review Panel states that the impacts of squeezing **too much development** into a limited space is damaging to the character of the area will **ruin treasured and protected views** and result in a development with a poor quality of life.
- The resulting towers will lead to **too many small flats** and not enough housing for families, which the Council’s own housing need study concludes are needed.
- The development will **not provide enough affordable housing**, as stated in the developer’s own reports.
- The proposal provides **limited services for young people**, according to the developer’s reports.
- With its massive structures, the development has a very high level of embodied carbon and is expected to have **high energy use** due to lack of ambitious insulation requirements. They have **not followed good practice for environmental building design**, including for natural ventilation and cooling, and will contribute to the heat island effect.
- There are **better ways to provide housing, jobs and facilities**, using low-rise, high-density models.

What do you think? Let the Council know by 21 February via this link:

<https://planningrecords.camden.gov.uk/Northgate/PlanningExplorer/PLComments.aspx?pk=567580>

See all the related planning application documents here:

<http://camdocs.camden.gov.uk/HPRMWebDrawer/PlanRec?q=recContainer:%222021/3225/P%22>

Application number: 2021/3225/P

This community briefing note has been prepared by Dartmouth Park Neighbourhood Forum (DPNF). Most of the site lies with the DPNF area. Contact: planning@dpnf.org.uk

Follow the Murphy’s Yard Community Plan campaign on Twitter: [@MurphyNw5](https://twitter.com/MurphyNw5)

www.dpnf.org.uk