

**LOCATION:** National Institute for Medical Research, The Ridgeway, London, NW7 1AA

**REFERENCE:** 16/4545/FUL

**WARD:** Burnt Oak

**APPLICANT:** Barratt Homes

**PROPOSAL:** Redevelopment of the site to provide 460 new residential units following demolition of all existing buildings. New residential accommodation to consist of 448 self-contained flats within 19 blocks ranging from three to nine storeys with basement car parking levels and 12 two storey houses with lower ground floor levels. Associated car and cycle parking spaces to be provided. Provision of new office (B1a) and leisure (D2) floorspace and a new publicly accessible café (A3). Reconfiguration of the site access and internal road arrangements and provision of new publicly accessible outdoor amenity space. New associated refuse and recycling arrangements. The application is accompanied by an Environmental Statement.

## **BACKGROUND**

- 1.1 This application was refused by Planning Committee on 19 February 2017 against Officer's recommendations for the following reasons:
- 1) The proposed development, by reason its appearance, specifically the modern residential design and use of flat roofs, is out of character with the Mill Hill Conservation Area and has a negative impact when viewed from the Green Belt land to the north, contrary to policies 7.8 and 7.16 of the London Plan (2016), policies CS5 and CS7 of the Local Plan Core Strategy DPD (adopted September 2012) and policies DM01, DM06 and DM15 of the Development Management Policies DPD (adopted September 2012).
  - 2) The proposal will result in the loss of trees of special amenity value with associated loss of nature conservation value, contrary to policies 7.9 and 7.21 of the London Plan (2016), policies CS5 and CS7 of the Local Plan Core Strategy DPD (adopted September 2012) and policies DM01 and DM16 of the Development Management Policies DPD (adopted September 2012).
- 1.2 The Mayor of London subsequently directed (under the powers conferred by Section 2A of the 1990 Act) to act as the Local Planning Authority for the purposes of determining the application on the following grounds:
- (i) The proposed development would have a significant impact on the implementation of the London Plan; and
  - (ii) There are sound planning reasons for the Mayor's intervention (in respect of housing delivery targets including the delivery of affordable housing).

1.3 Following the Mayor taking over the application, the applicant made the following changes to the scheme which were publicised for a 3 week period in August/September.

- On site affordable housing increased to 35% by habitable room (40% by unit) – at the time proposal considered by LBB, applicant was providing 18% by habitable room (20% by unit) plus £4.56million off-site contribution.
- Layout changes to the units proposed adjacent to Burtonhole Lane to allow more trees to be retained.
- 388 trees to be removed with 839 new trees to be planted – at the time proposal considered by LBB, applicant was proposing to remove 507 trees and plant 748 new trees (in both instances all 3 Category A trees to be retained).
- Car parking provision reduced to 535 spaces across the site – at the time proposal considered by LBB, the applicant was providing 613 spaces.

1.4 A Representation Hearing was held by the Mayor of London on 6 October to consider the amended scheme. Councillor Braun represented the Planning Committee and Planning Officers were in attendance.

## **2 Mayor of London's Decision**

2.1 At the Representation Hearing, the amended scheme was presented to the Mayor. The Mayor listened to the Council's objections to the scheme as well as other objectors (including Andrew Dismore) with objections including the design of the scheme, impact on Conservation Area, loss of trees and impact of increased vehicular movement in the area without sufficient car parking provision.

2.2 The Mayor asked a number of questions to the Council, objectors and the applicant before deciding that the scheme should be granted. This was on the basis that the proposed development is on a vacant site on previously developed Green Belt land which has been identified by the Council for development (through a planning brief). The delivery of 185 affordable homes; provision of 155,560sq.m of publicly accessible open space and sports pitches; and enhanced public access to the Green Belt therefore made this scheme acceptable. In granting the application, the Mayor added a new condition to review the tree planting scheme, 18 months after commencement of the development phase adjacent to Burtonhole Lane. The Mayor also responded to objections regarding access into the site from Burtonhole Lane to allow only emergency vehicle access.

2.3 It is anticipated that the Mayor will send an instruction to Barnet in the next few weeks to issue a decision notice to grant the scheme. The Local Planning Authority will then be responsible for discharging the planning conditions.

