

156 West End Lane – 14 July 2015

What are the core elements of the planned scheme?

The plans are for a housing-led regeneration of the site. The main element will be new homes. The current design shown at the first exhibition in June showed about 200 homes. 50% of these will be for private sale and 50% are affordable dwellings, in line with Camden Council planning policy. The affordable proportion is split into 60% for rent and 40% for shared ownership, again in line with Camden Council planning policy.

The scheme also includes new shops fronting West End Lane as well as start-up units for new businesses and a community room, responding directly to requests from the local community.

We are also planning extensive improvements to the streetscape, especially where the new buildings meet West End Lane, as well as improvements to the entrance to Potteries Path and as it runs along the railway line. A new green open space is also planned at the heart of the site.

How high is the planned development?

The current design put forward at the first exhibition in June showed buildings stepping up in height to a maximum height by the railway line of 25m, which is 8 floors. To compare, the empty office block which fronts onto West End Lane is 20.50m at its highest point where it meets Canterbury Mansions, so the highest part of the new scheme would be approximately one and a half floors taller than this. The houses on Lymington Road are around 10m to 12m to the roofline from the ground.

The current design put forward at the first exhibition showed buildings of 3 or 4 stories nearest the back gardens to Lymington Road homes, and then increasing in height further away towards the railway line. Large gaps have been created between the new buildings.

The site also slopes by roughly the height of one floor between West End Lane and its further (western) part, so that the 25m height figure only really applies to the West End Lane element closest to the railway.

Why put housing here on 156 West End Lane?

The site is in a Growth Area, which prioritises new housing, and the urgent need to provide more homes is widely recognised. Planning policies for the country as a whole, for London, for Camden and for the neighbourhood all support and strongly encourage new housing on sites such as this to boost housing supply. Camden Council and your Neighbourhood Development Plan identify the site for new housing.

What is the benefit to the local economy of your scheme?

Re-using sites such as this for new housing, as well as providing new shops and start up space for local businesses, is known to boost local economies in a range of ways. In addition to the construction phase which will employ approximately 300 people and create spin-off benefits to local shops and services as well as training and work experience opportunities, the completed scheme will create 70 jobs directly on site and indirectly in services and benefits to the local economy.

What about car parking?

The only car parking on the site will be designated parking bays for Blue Badge holders. New residents will not be able to apply for Resident's Parking Permits. It is also Camden's policy not to grant parking permits for occupiers of new developments to park legally in neighbouring streets. 156 West End Lane is a highly accessible development site as it is close by Thameslink, the Overground and an Underground tube station.

Will Travis Perkins be included in your scheme?

The Travis Perkins builder's merchant and yard does not feature in our plans as this is a homes-led regeneration scheme. New employment space specifically designed for small and start-up local businesses, as well as space for the community to use, has been included in the design.

Travis Perkins has a lease with Camden Council, which is their landlord, and all such matters are being handled by the Council.

How do I qualify for the affordable housing?

The current plans show 50% of the housing to be affordable housing, and this will be under the control of Camden Council.

The Council will identify people to live in the rented accommodation from its housing waiting list (called nomination rights, and Camden Council will hold 100% of the nominations rights for tenants of the new rented homes, so identifying who will live in all of the new rented homes). The rents for these new homes will also be controlled by Camden Council policy, and will be based on percentages of open market rent values ranging from 25% - 60%, and will be no more than Local Housing Allowance Rents.

The Council will also set the rules for the shared ownership homes, with a stated preference for the homes to be sold to those living or working in Camden. The range of incomes that qualify for these shared ownership units is set by Camden Council.

As a Lymington Road resident, will you overshadow my back garden?

We are still undertaking detailed analysis but our early survey work suggests that there will be some overshadowing of some of the gardens in Lymington Road at some times of the day and year.

The current design is the result of working through a number of options to try to find the one that has the least amount of overshadowing whilst also delivering the number of new homes envisaged by planning policy for the site. We do appreciate the concern that this can cause to neighbours and are running a special meeting in July for Lymington Road residents who back onto the site where we'll be showing much more detail on this issue on an individual house-by-house basis. A2Dominion will assess the potential impact very closely as the design progresses.

The potential impact of overshadowing on neighbouring properties is something which is also dealt with in discussions with Camden Council's planning officers. Detailed reports assessing the amount and impact of any overshadowing will have to be submitted to the Council and as part of a planning application will be publicly available. We would also expect Camden Council to appoint their own consultants.

What type of homes will they be? How many family units?

The majority of new homes will be one- and two-bedroom flats. In addition to providing homes for younger people and smaller families, this approach also allows Camden Council to see whether people living in larger flats elsewhere but whose circumstances have changed may want to "downsize", freeing up those larger flats for families. There will also be larger flats in the scheme, with three and four bedrooms, and these will mostly be in the new affordable homes for rent. The current designs show around 30 three and four bedroom new affordable family homes.

How do you see the site fitting into West Hampstead?

The site has a number of different elements to it and the new design has to try to balance these. On West End Lane there are opportunities to improve on the existing buildings as well as helping address some of the pressures on the pavement; at street level there is the opportunity to introduce new shops and uses as well as a community space and new accommodation for small local and new businesses; the entry to Potteries Path is currently lost as a car park whilst the path itself is unwelcoming, and so there is the opportunity to create a widened pavement here, a new public space and make Potteries Path more welcoming and safe as it approaches the playspace and children's playground. A new green open space is also planned at the heart of the site.

How will you respect the existing townscape?

This is clearly one of the key challenges in any new scheme, particularly so where a site is next to a Conservation Area, and one A2Dominion and its design team takes very seriously.

In terms of sensitivity, we see the rear gardens of the homes on Lymington Road and the buildings on West End Lane as critical. The new buildings closest to Lymington Road will be three or four stories high and the new building on West End Lane will match the height of Canterbury Mansions before rising in height by the railway line.

Fronting the railway line the buildings will be taller than what is on the site now, up to eight stories in places, and we believe that buildings of this height, although higher than most buildings in the Conservation Area, can still respect the surrounding townscape.

It is proposed that the buildings will be largely built with red brick reflecting the surroundings, with design elements such as brick detailing again reflecting the surroundings. On West End Lane the new building next to Canterbury Mansions will incorporate horizontal banding and continue the vertical rhythm of Canterbury Mansions.

What kind of open space are you planning?

The existing site is effectively closed to the public, with high walls surrounding it on all sides. The proposal is to open up the whole site, from West End Lane to the play area and playground at its eastern end.

On the corner of the site on West End Lane by the railway line the current access to Potteries Path is hidden by car parking. It is proposed to turn this area into a new public space, with new paving, trees and planting, and a new treatment to the high wall facing the railway. As well as creating a pleasant new public space, this will also act as the start of Potteries Path, which will be widened as the principle pedestrian route running through the site and linking to the play area and playground beyond. The Path will be faced by front gardens, front entrances and the new green open space at the heart of the site. The design of this new central open space is being progressed, but it is envisaged as a green space, full of vegetation and containing plenty of mature trees.

The new homes will have a mixture of courtyards and front gardens.

How wide will the pavement be in front of the site on West End Lane?

The pavement would be widened to between roughly 4.6m and 6m at the southern corner of the building.

How large will the community space be?

We are pleased to include community space as a result of engagement with local groups. The allocated space is approximately 60m².

Have you carried out a traffic impact study?

A study will be undertaken by a specialist into the effect of the new development on traffic and transport in the area, and will be submitted as part of the planning application. As there will be no parking on the site (apart from Blue badge holders in designated spaces), and only servicing for the new shops and refuse vehicles at the West End Lane end, it is expected that traffic movements will reduce from the existing parking and servicing arrangements, particularly with regard to large lorries.

How sustainable are the plans?

The detail of the sustainability strategy is currently being developed but a number of key energy conservation measures have already been identified. The new homes will be served by a district heating system powered by a combined heat and power plant which will help reduce energy use and carbon emissions. It is likely that there will also be photovoltaic and/ or solar thermal panels on the roof.

In addition, the opening up of the site not only provides the opportunity to ensure that the new homes and buildings are designed in such a way as to save as much energy as possible, but also the opportunity to “green” the site. The ecological value of the site at the moment is negligible, being mostly covered by tarmac and hard standing, and this will be greatly improved with new trees and planting, green roofs and biodiverse roofs. An ecology consultant will be employed to advise on maximising the ecological aspects.

What is the proposed distance between existing back garden walls and the proposed low blocks and the distance between existing back garden walls and the high blocks?

From the Lymington Road back garden boundary wall to the proposed three storey buildings the distance would be at least 7m and extending to 8m. It is worth noting that windows in the new buildings here are likely to be limited as they will be north-facing, and most will tend to be for kitchens and bathrooms, smaller and with obscured glass.

From the Lymington Road back garden boundary wall to the proposed eight storey part of the proposed buildings facing the railway line the distance would be at least 17m and extending to 18m. Here most windows would tend to face the courtyards - east or west - rather than facing north to Lymington Road.

What is the proposed distance between the back wall of Lymington Road houses and the proposed low blocks?

From the back wall of Lymington Road houses to the proposed three storey buildings the distance would be at least 18m and extending to 21m.

Will your plans affect the play area adjacent to Crown Close?

The games area is not part of our site area. It remains in the control of Camden Council.

How will your plans affect Potteries Path?

On the corner of the site on West End Lane by the railway line the current access to Potteries Path is hidden by car parking. It is proposed to turn this area into a new public space, with new paving, trees and planting, and a new treatment to the high wall facing the railway. As well as creating a pleasant new public space, this will also act as the start of Potteries Path, which will be widened as the principle pedestrian route running through the site and linking to the play area and playground beyond. The Path will be faced by front gardens, front entrances and the new green open space at the heart of the site. The design of this new central open space is being progressed, but it is envisaged as a green space, full of vegetation and containing plenty of mature trees.

The high wall facing the railway line has to remain at that height for safety reasons, but we are looking at what can be done to it to make it more welcoming and friendly.

The very end of Potteries Path, at the far end by the play area and playground, remains in the control of Camden Council and we will be supporting the Neighbourhood Development Forum in its discussions with Camden Council to have this improved.

How wide is the planned access road?

The width of the access road is approximately 5.5m. It would be a shared surface for both people and for deliveries to the new shops as well as refuse vehicles but it will be used primarily by residents accessing their homes.

What will happen to the rear wall between the gardens in Lymington Rd and the development?

The existing rear wall will be retained.

Feedback and consultation

We organised a first exhibition of our plans on 11th and 13th June, 2015. Looking ahead, there will be another major public exhibition in early September at which the project team can be questioned in detail. The planned dates are 10th September from 4.00pm to 7.30pm at the Hampstead Synagogue and on 12th September at Sidings Community Centre from 10am to 1pm.

In meantime, recognising the special relationship between a new development at 156 West End Lane and those Lymington Road residents on the South side of the road who back onto the site, we are organising a workshop for 5-7pm on 21st July at the Residents Hall.

We wanted to provide an opportunity for householders who back onto the site to see visually the relationship between the proposed development and their individual property. To achieve this, it makes most sense to be able to meet with residents on an individual basis.

We are planning a final exhibition on Thursday 22nd October at the Hampstead Synagogue.

At the time of the application submission, a Statement of Community Engagement will accompany the planning application.

What measures will there be to deal with the noise, dust and disturbance caused by the construction work?

A binding agreement – a Construction Method Statement - will be agreed with Camden Council as part of the planning process. This will include details of working hours, controls over noise, measures to prevent dust and disturbance, and contact numbers during the construction phase.

A2Dominion will draw on its experience of successfully delivered a number of housing developments in London and how to achieve that with minimal disturbance to the site's neighbours. A2Dominion is registered with the Considerate Constructors Scheme, and are committed to follow the rules and guidelines of the scheme.

What about managing deliveries once the site is built out?

Camden Council will control the hours during which deliveries can take place to the new shops.

A deliveries and servicing plan will be prepared by the occupiers of the site which forms a framework, agreed with the council, outlining how delivery and servicing vehicles are expected to access the development. Essentially, deliveries to the site will take place from dedicated delivery bays carefully designed into the ground floor of the scheme, therefore removing any requirement for deliveries to take place on the roadside of West End Lane.

Who will manage the site once it is built?

A2Dominion is a Registered Provider of affordable housing and a registered charity. Its approach is to remain involved in the new communities it helps create and the wider neighbourhoods. It does this by remaining as the landlord and manager for all the new homes it builds, both affordable and for private sale, rather than, for example, being simply a developer who then sells off the properties.

A2Dominion is currently landlord to over 34,000 people in London and the south-east. A manager will be directly employed by A2Dominion for the new housing and, as happens elsewhere, in addition to supporting the new residents will also be expected to play a full role in supporting neighbourhood objectives.