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From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 16 June 2024 15:37
To: Forward Planning
Subject: Concerns regarding the Edgware Policy in Barnet Local Plan Main Modifications

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Representations from: Joanna Sulek

Address: [REDACTED]

I am writing to express my concerns regarding the Edgware Policy in the proposed Main Modifications to the Barnet Local Plan.

I use the town centre for mainly shopping activities, socialising, eating out, and travelling outside of Edgware by tube or bus.

Edgware is a small district centre. It is not a city centre nor really a town such as a market town. It has no civic centre or town hall, few civic amenities such as art galleries or culture, and is not a Parliamentary constituency in itself. Part of Edgware lies in Harrow. It has very few doctors' surgeries, schools, and no accident and emergency hospitals, hardly any hospital facilities at all.

As a resident of Edgware since 2003, I understand the plan has been under development since 2020. I only became aware of its existence and impact on the local community relatively recently.

I have never received any written communication from Barnet Council about the Local Plan, in spite of its significance for Edgware's future. I believe wider communication would have been helpful, as the very people who might be most impacted by the plans, people with special needs, frail and elderly people, are unlikely to know about the plans or how to object to them.

The volume and complexity of the Local Plan and the related documents are overwhelming, even for university-educated and professional people. The 42-day consultation period seems inadequate for anyone seeking to comprehend the details of the plan.

However, I am deeply concerned about the impact of the Local Plan on Edgware and its residents, past and future.

I fail to see how anyone currently living in Edgware could support these plans, as I can see few benefits for them, but only problems and difficulties. I am very alarmed and appalled by the proposed development to Edgware town centre and the Broadwalk Shopping Centre and bus station/depot, and wish to object to them in the strongest terms possible.

In light of these concerns, I would like to express my support for any representations made by Save Our Edgware and the Edgware Community Association. Please consider their submissions as reflecting my own concerns.

- I agree that the proposed development of extremely tall tower blocks would be out of all proportion to what Edgware is - a small place as described above, with its own character, lying partly in Harrow Council area but much less urban in character than Harrow. The area lies on the edge of the Green Belt, and this quality has attracted many people to live there, including ourselves. The proposed buildings would dwarf Station Road and the surrounding area. This area currently is like a village with its own Parish Church and this atmosphere is appreciated by those of us who live here and can meet people in the locality.
- Edgware is predominantly suburban, with lower-density developments such as detached and semi-detached houses, small buildings, typically of two to three storeys, matching the profile of a suburban setting rather than a central area. The density calculations are based on a mistaken assumption and should not be based on the assumption that Edgware is a major Town centre - it is not. We are being asked to accept 25 new tower blocks in this development - 13 of which could be 29 storeys high! It is really frightening and alarming.
- The Edgware district does not have the infrastructure to support the vast increase in population - doctors' surgeries, schools, roads and transport would all be swamped. The population density here would then be among the highest in the UK, if not the highest. The Harrow part of Edgware has not been included in these or similar development plans with such a high density. How can we be expected to accept this as for our benefit?
- The increase in overcrowding only will change the character of Edgware forever and blight its transport links - with overcrowded buses and trains and fewer parking spaces for ordinary residents and visitors. The population of Edgware would increase by around 50 per cent. The resulting congestion, lack of light, extra rubbish and crime and antisocial behaviour would potentially make Edgware a very unpleasant place to live. Where are the extra police and law enforcement who will deal with the potential increase in lawlessness?
- The elderly, disabled, people with pushchairs or young children, and people in wheelchairs currently benefit from the indoor covered area of the shopping centre. Vulnerable people need this kind of space to be able to shop comfortably and safely, away from the rain. There is also a shared sense of community arising from the use of the common space, which does not exist in street-style shopping. Everyone is anonymous to everyone else, and goes about their business - that is what a big city means for people with vulnerabilities, but as a small place, Edgware has provided more of a community spirit.
- The loss of valuable shops such as Boots, WH Smith, Superdrug, Costa Coffee, and clothes shops for between 5 to 10 years will be an irreparable loss for anyone who cannot drive easily or get a lift. Brent Cross is not a suitable replacement for this length of time. It is not particularly near to Edgware and it is much harder to negotiate. It is huge and hard to navigate. The crowding there can be overwhelming at times and it is so hot and stuffy that it is hard to breathe there. I do not drive and this will affect me in this way.
- People will get used to shopping elsewhere and this will jeopardize the future of the remaining shops on Station Road. We all saw the disappearance of well known brand names from Edgware owing to loss of footfall during the Pandemic. Just as poor old Edgware tries to get on its feet again, the blight of fewer customers will hit it again.
- This effect will be compounded by the loss of parking spaces - people who can drive, will go elsewhere. It is projected that there will be a loss of 70% of the current parking space. The lack of parking will affect people using the local schools and medical facilities and Edgware station. I often get a lift into central Edgware and see how chaotic the current situation is with regard to on-street

parking and grid-locking on Station Road - and this is with the current number of vehicles! As the residents of the new flats who are not Blue Badge holders, will seek to park down Station Road and side streets instead as there is no proportionate amount of parking provided for them. The current car park is the ONLY car park in Edgware of any significance - there are no local alternatives.

- The loss of Commuter parking spaces means that people who currently take the Underground for work or shopping nearer to London, will turn to their cars and be more likely to drive there, resulting in greater pollution for our area.
- The lack of a bus station for so many years will result in a loss of safety or security, as a woman often travelling alone, I feel that the overground covered bus shelter is much safer than waiting at the kerbside bus stops, as there is a greater sense of community and you are more likely to get help if you need it.
- I echo and share the concerns of Save Our Edgware about the safety of putting electric buses underground - I have seen many reports and videos now about the absolute conflagration which results from the igniting and bursting into flame of Electric Vehicles. The Fire Brigade also deem the plans to move the bus garage underground as unviable, owing to the risks of lithium batteries in electric buses. The top of the highest new buildings would reach 100m, whereas London Fire Brigade has ladders of 64 m. The risk to life would be to the staff at the bus garage (who it seems would be incinerated) and those living in the tower blocks. Emergency vehicles would find access difficult, as it seems that the access points would merge behind the shops into a single point for the garage.
- Deans Brook Nature Park will be impacted, however the plans do not compensate for the loss of the green space which is used by youngsters, families and local residents. This will be replaced by the forest of tower blocks, the concrete jungle, and a few shops in street format.

Please can you consider my objections and arrange for this letter to be considered as part of the Equality Impact Assessment?

Your sincerely,

Joanna Sulek
