



# Fox Lane & District Residents' Association

[www.foxlane.net](http://www.foxlane.net)

Evie Learman  
Case Officer  
Planning and Regeneration  
L B of Enfield  
Civic Centre  
Silver Street  
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1st July 2019

Dear Evie Learman,

## **Ref: 19/01941/FUL - Southgate Office Village. Proposed Redevelopment**

We are writing on behalf of the Fox Lane and District Residents' Association (FLDRA) to comment on the proposed redevelopment of the Southgate Office Village.

We do not object to the development of the site per se, nor do we object in principle to sensitively developed, high density housing near to shopping/transport/service hubs as we think this could help to reduce the need for short car journeys.

However we do have the following grave misgivings about these particular proposals:

1. We are very concerned at the high proportion of single bed flats over three bed family units. FLDRA acknowledges that steps must be taken to address the housing crisis, but it has found no evidence that proposals of this type alleviate the crisis for families or the need for affordable housing in general. It notes with concern that some experts think the "build-build-build" policy will not, as some assert, drive prices down to affordable levels, and that its main beneficiaries are the developers, banks and foreign investors.

We therefore urge Enfield Council to meet its house-building quotas by supporting developments which are unequivocally aimed at creating affordable, family-friendly housing for those on low incomes. This means a much larger proportion

of affordable 3-bed units, community gardens, playgrounds and other family-oriented spaces. There is a great deal of evidence that high-rise buildings, consisting mainly of small units to increase profitability, are socially damaging and are not the answer to the shortage of family accommodation.

2. The height of the proposed blocks is completely out of character with the area. The site is not in a conservation area but it is immediately adjacent to one, and this proposal will have a great visual affect upon it. Southgate Station and Circus is the flagship of the 1930s Piccadilly Line extension and a classic set-piece of Art Deco architecture and Listed as such. It is arguably of national importance and the tower blocks will have a huge detrimental impact. A maximum height of 5 or 6 storeys would be more acceptable. We fear that anything above this would set a dangerous precedent for other sensitive areas.

We also note that after Grenfell and the recent fire in Barking there is public concern about the flammability of high rise block and a reluctance to live in them without guarantees concerning construction materials.

3. The lack of adequate parking provision means extra cars will be parked in local streets causing more traffic congestion in an already busy area. We acknowledge the need to encourage more cycling and walking but to assume that few of the new occupants will possess cars is unrealistic. Perhaps underground car parking could be provided.

4. Not enough consideration has been given to the social infrastructure of the area, in particular the effect on already oversubscribed local schools and GPs' surgeries. Concern has been expressed that any Community Infrastructure Levy money raised from this development will be spent elsewhere in the borough.

5. Southgate Circus suffers heavy congestion particularly in the morning and evening rush hours. Five main road converge and vehicle traffic is frequently backed up. Commuters and students from seven nearby schools and a large FE college using the bus and tube stations mean this small area also throngs with pedestrians and roads are hard to cross. We feel the new development can only make this situation worse without proper traffic assessment and provisions.

6. There is a clear feeling locally that any consultation carried out earlier in the year by the developers was deeply flawed. We are glad to hear that a special Planning Panel has been convened to examine this proposal. We urge the Council to engage with the local community to develop revised plans that can provide affordable family housing and still protect the character of the area.

Yours faithfully

Richard Mapleston  
Chair FLDR

Sue Younger  
Secretary FLDR