

## Watling Avenue Car Park Consultation Feedback October and November 2023

Thank you to everyone who has participated in the community engagement activities to date for the proposals for Watling Avenue Car Park in Burnt Oak.

During October and November 2023, there have been 847 website visits, along with 149 responses through feedback forms, emails and calls.

The public drop-in events engaged over 60 local people, while a session with around 25 young people provided insights into their needs.

There were 118 feedback forms (109 online and 9 hard copies), together with 22 phone calls or emails direct to the team during the consultation period. In addition, at the workshop event held at Unitas, we received a further 9 hard copy feedback forms, totalling 149 responses.

Of the online feedback form responses 57% of the responses were from females and 32% were from males (c.10% preferred not to say)

The online survey results indicate that respondents' age distribution is as follows:

- 7% aged under 24
- 9% aged 25-34
- 24% aged 35-44
- 18% aged 45-54
- 21% aged 55-64
- 12% aged 54-74
- 4% aged 75 and above
- 4% preferred not to disclose their age.

The majority of respondents, comprising 68%, identified as Barnet respondents, Barnet business owners (3%), individuals working in the London Borough of Barnet area (15%), representing voluntary/ community organizations (6%), public-sector organizations (2%), and 6% marking the "Other" category.

## Summary of key themes from Question 1: What do you think are the most important considerations for the team?

### The loss of parking.

39 of the respondents identified the loss of parking as a key issue. Concern was raised about where the commuters and residents would park and the potential build-up of parked cars on other surrounding roads.

### The proposed building heights and density.

The scale of the development in the surrounding area was raised by 31 respondents.

### Local services are already stretched, with particular reference to GPs and schools.

The impact on local services was a common theme, reported 25 times. There was concern in relation to recent developments in the area having a cumulative impact on the availability of local services.

### The feeling of being unsafe in the area and ensuring that safety measures are implemented.

16 respondents noted that they do not feel safe in the area.

Other common themes mentioned under this question included:

- Ensuring the development was sustainable, mentioned 13 times with the main concern around not disturbing the existing river life and greenery.
- There were also 13 comments on the surrounding area already being too overdeveloped. Noting new schemes around Burnt Oak would add more people to the area and then as a result the infrastructure not being sufficient.
- The impact the proposals will have on the conservation area was mentioned 7 times. The concern of the respondents is that the proposals do not respond to the local environment.
- Ensuring that affordable housing is truly affordable was raised 8 times. Comments noted that affordable housing must be affordable to local respondents.
- Linked to the increase in people to Burnt Oak was the increase in traffic which was mentioned 7 times.
- Flood Risk was mentioned 6 times, noting that the area has been waterlogged for a number of years and regularly floods.

- Making sure the community benefits from the development was also mentioned 6 times. Ensuring that they can use the parks, shops and cafes to make Burnt Oak a nicer area.

## Summary of themes from Question 2. Do you have any other feedback on the proposals?

### View that the car parking is economically advantageous and helps with the health of the High Street.

20 respondents noted parking again, expressing that the High Street was busy with lots of shops and so parking is a necessity to keep the High Street viable.

### Concerns over the density and height of the building

The proposals being too high and/or too dense were mentioned 19 times in the feedback form responses.

### Overdevelopment of Burnt Oak

Overdevelopment was reinforced by 15 respondents, noting their area already has too many homes. The knock-on consequences listed because of this are an increase in traffic and local services becoming stretched in the area.

### Combining high-rise properties with existing safety concerns

8 residents are concerned that there will be an increase in crime with the addition of new high-rise properties.

Other key themes under this question included:

- Issues around safety and crime were raised 8 times and the need to prevent anti-social behaviour in the area.
- Additional feedback was provided on the park, raised 7 times. Respondents would like to see more trees and outdoor play facilities.
- Respondents reinforced that services are already stretched in the area a further 6 times. Noting that the additional people from the development will increase the need for local services.
- 5 people commented on the library noting it as an important community hub that should be retained.

## Summary of Key Themes Question 3: Do you have any ideas about what the new park should look like or include?

The three top themes that emerged from the questionnaire were:

- 20 respondents were keen to see the landscape proposals lead to a space safe to include features such as a monitored CCTV, lighting, and security to stop antisocial behaviour.
- 15 respondents requested facilities for the elderly, disabled and children (of all ages) to enjoy together.
- 10 respondents would like to see a variety of native wildlife and plants.

Other key themes under this question included:

- 6 respondents would like to see a sports facility included within the park. Cricket, football and an outdoor gym were all mentioned.
- 5 respondents mentioned that the park could include a café or business space.
- 2 respondents would like to see a community allotment.

## Summary of Key Themes Question 4: Do you have any other comments or questions at this stage?

- Based on the additional comments and concerns provided, the three main concerns that residents raised in this section were:

### Against development

16 respondents suggested abandoning the current plans and focusing on putting the necessary infrastructure in place before proceeding with any development.

### Infrastructure and Services

11 respondents expressed their concerns about the lack of infrastructure and services to support the proposed development. Questions about the availability of doctors, schools, dentists, medical centres, and parking facilities.

### Car Parking

5 respondents reinforced the previous point about the loss of car parking and the impact this will have on commuters and locals.

## Common questions raised in feedback form responses.

We have reviewed the responses and summarised the key questions respondents raised at this stage, to ensure they are covered in the next stage of engagement.

1. What safety measures are we putting in place to ensure that all residents will feel safer than they currently do?
2. How are we ensuring that affordable housing is genuinely affordable?
3. How we are addressing consultation comments and concerns?
4. How are you ensuring there are enough GP and School places in the local area that can take the extra demand given all the recent new developments in Burnt Oak?
5. How has the issue of flooding been addressed in the proposals?
6. What parking are you proposing on the site?
7. How are you going to keep people informed after this?
8. How are you going to ensure that the building is of high quality?
9. What are you doing to develop the area economically?
10. How will the development improve the area?
11. Will the car park be smaller and if so, will that be a problem for users of Burnt Oak tube station or visiting the High Street?

## Summary of the Youth Engagement Event

On Thursday 19th October 2023 we held a consultation event at Unitas, Barnet Youth Zone to discuss the proposals for Watling Avenue.

A summary of participants:

- Over 25 young people attended the event.
- 9 group responses to the questionnaire (which were answered collaboratively during the session)

- All respondents were under 24 years old.
- 56% of respondents were somewhat aware of the proposals, whereas 44% of respondents did not know about the proposals.
- All respondents were Barnet residents.

## Key outcomes from youth engagement

- Security and feeling safe is an area of concern for young people.
- The ability for young people to access local employment or volunteering as part of the development/construction period.
- Making sure affordable housing is implemented and is accessible to younger people.
- Within the green space, would like to see a play area, outdoor gym, café, shelter from the rain, and for the park to feel safe.
- Final comments relate to the prevalence of anti-social behaviour, drinking alcohol outdoor in the local area and the need to improve this.

## Summary of Email and Phone call Feedback

In addition to the completed feedback forms there have been 22 responses via email and/or phone calls about the proposals. The main themes raised were:

- Impact during the construction
- Safety concerns and need for street lighting
- Keen to understand whether the library is being re-provided or closed
- Provision of green space and encroachment on the river
- Concern that the scheme is for profit over community benefit