**URGENT ACTION NEEDED!**

**Act now to save St Ann’s Hospital trees!**

We are shocked to learn that Catalyst’s Housing planning application for St Ann’s Hospital, Haringey will result in the loss of 50% of the existing trees on the site.

StAGS calls on everyone to reject these plans. You can make your objection to Haringey Council’s Planning Services until this Thurs 22 Sept here: [https://bit.ly/3UkryQZ](https://l.facebook.com/l.php?u=https%3A%2F%2Fbit.ly%2F3UkryQZ%3Ffbclid%3DIwAR0GcWhfluJBAcDQtfFm9xket_wUjHnDVpYtuKx_NYOzb1myLMY2RkIQqIE&h=AT0DvFDedCWgwlkqEp6OEURNXikWoTu8QcIQNmD7xjhTxDD4YZKSzT2wuVxTzOom2CZIspPYzVlgpt6m7LUoILswAvLqs15GRXMpNvrr2iuFrT_E9l0XC0C-f0_M29QxJyV0rxLESw&__tn__=-UK-R&c%5B0%5D=AT2bVqPVebYwFgqu8GJs1iEXBHxEzE4BOOxRYwrf_HFyMT-uNgr4fLOmI4r8y91OPo2YVOZGm4O3F7CPcu5koagcuVyvudoiRVGEJDPc3Md9lmKTVJe88Ha7slmj8Y6yPAZ93dGGO99pVKiw61mOCSdO6-hLVSnji7pGV0DKeELVnEnb2wl-80VTVk2byHKHiJiOYyG15CFVXj_XAW9qTKrnkk8nRBKX)

**OUR REASONS FOR OJBECTING TO CATALYST HOUSING'S PLANNING APPLICATION**

Please use this information if helpful for your response to LB Haringey Planning Services.

Friends of St Ann’s Green Spaces (StAGS) works to ensure that the unique green spaces of St Ann’s Hospital site, particularly the trees and the railway woodland area, are conserved, cared for, and enhanced for local people.

The new, mixed-use development by Catalyst Housing will demolish the majority of the existing buildings on the non-hospital side of the site, with the creation of up to 995 new residential dwellings, along with non-residential use buildings, car parking, and landscaping including an extended Peace Garden.

The [Arboricultural Impact Assessment (AIA) Survey](http://www.planningservices.haringey.gov.uk/portal/servlets/AttachmentShowServlet?ImageName=1676883), which has been submitted as part of the planning application, proposes a huge reduction in trees, species and canopy cover of St Ann’s green spaces, which will lead to increased local air pollution, summer heat and a reduction in biodiversity.

**1. Impact on our local area in South Tottenham**

Catalyst’s plans go against the Mayor's London Plan 2021, which describes this area of Tottenham as an Area of Deficiency in access to nature. St Ann’s site is ‘the lungs and heart’ of our area. Housing is desperately needed, but not at the expense of green spaces. We should not have one at the expense of the other.

**2. Tree loss at 50%**

**Catalyst’s plans for the St Ann’s development will result in a projected loss of almost 50% existing trees, across 30 tree groups.**

Arboriculturist Russell Miller, says of Catalyst’s plans:

‘the scale of tree and canopy loss is extraordinarily high. Given the climate emergency and record London temperatures in 2022 loss of canopy of this magnitude should lead to an automatic rejection of the design. People in London are dying from excessive heat and air pollution. A project that predicts an overall loss of canopy even after new planting should be unacceptable. All planning guidance in London is for increasing canopy cover.’

**3. SINC Woodland**

**The current Catalyst proposals will severely undermine nature conservation on the site, particularly for the SINC woodland – a site of local importance for nature conservation.**

The Catalyst Arboricultural Impact Assessment (AIA) Survey does not identify the value of the SINC Woodland - the Site of Local Importance for Nature Conservation - which runs along the railway side of the St Ann’s site.

Ian Holt, Haringey Council's Conservation Officer in 2015, described the SINC woodland strip as the "key environmental feature" of the site - acting as a corridor bringing beneficial wildlife into Tottenham from the Lee Valley. He advised StAGS members that a continual green space corridor through the development, linking the woodland strip SINC with Chestnuts Park, is of paramount importance for maintaining biodiversity in this area of the borough. Page 6 of MKA Ecology Ltd's report for Haringey’s current Conservation Officer Annabel Foskett "Haringey SINC Review" October 2021 defines the designation: "Sites of Local Importance tend to be of particular value to people within a local community (schools, community groups) and may have an educational role. They have a particular role in Areas of Deficiency in access to nature."

The high loss of canopy cover across the development will compromise the green space corridor from the SINC through the site, significantly impacting our local biodiversity.

The AIA Survey itself quotes National Planning Policy Framework (p.10, para 2.26):"Loss or fragmentation of trees and woodland may constitute or give rise to significant harm to biodiversity." Para 2.28, p.11 quotes Haringey Council's Local Plan: "All development shall protect and improve sites of biodiversity and nature conservation....through its...Protection, management and maintenance of existing trees and the planting of new trees where appropriate." Para 2.29 quotes the GLA London Plan Policy G7 A: "London's urban forest and woodlands should be protected and maintained..." and C: "Development proposals should ensure that, wherever possible, existing trees of value are retained…"

**4. Loss of rare and veteran trees**

The trees at St. Ann's are much more diverse and unusual than typical urban planting. Whilst the AIA acknowledges this it proposes tree losses on a huge scale. The Survey quotes National Planning Policy Framework guidelines (page.13: para 2.39) that: “...veteran trees are those which, because of age, size and condition, are of exceptional biodiversity, cultural or heritage value...Ancient and veteran trees are regarded as 'irreplaceable' “, before concluding that there is only "1 veteran tree within the site".

This conclusion conflicts with botanist David Bevan's review of the trees at St Ann’s in 2015. He found that, “Some of the trees are more than 80 years old and many are rare in cultivation.” The GLA Mayor's London Plan Policy G7 B also directs boroughs in their Development Plans to "protect 'veteran' trees...where these are not already part of a protected site”.

The Committee on Climate Change’s Report to Parliament 2022 stresses the need for a huge increase in woodland to meet net zero carbon emissions by 2050: some 1.5 billion trees and 1.5 million hectares of woodland are required. Trees are the ultimate carbon capture mechanism, and the felling of mature and veteran trees at St Ann’s site will result in significant carbon release. Research by Imperial College London demonstrates the importance of retaining complex tree ecosystems. They caution that, 'poorly planned planting efforts can actually increase the amount of carbon dioxide (CO2) in the atmosphere and increase global warming.’  This research is born out by others, such as research by the University of Stirling in 2020. For these reasons it is critical to retain existing trees wherever possible.

While we welcome the final biodiversity net gain figures, the development will take seven years to build, and carbon gains far longer. Paras 7. and 8. give details of new planting and "approximate canopy cover at 20 years post development...". This should not be at the expense of existing mature trees, and in our state of climate emergency.

**5. Green roofs**

The planned green roofs are a major element of the post development habitat. The roofs are said to be largely 'intensive' but the terminology is vague, and leaves too much scope for poor delivery. Greater clarity is required as to minimum substrate depth, substrate type, maintenance provisions and biodiversity value of these roofs. This is essential if anything of wildlife value is to be gained from these buildings.

StAGS believes that St Ann’s Catalyst Housing development could and should be an exemplar of green planning and affordable housing. We call on London Borough of Haringey to reject the Catalyst proposals as they stand, and to resubmit plans that truly address the issues of housing need and climate change that we all face.

Submit your comments on the Catalyst Housing proposals by **Thursday 22 September** to Haringey Council’s Planning Department on this [link here](http://www.planningservices.haringey.gov.uk/portal/servlets/ApplicationSearchServlet?PKID=432914)

You can contact StAGS at friendsofstags@gmail.com