


Lisa and Peter Davidson
11 Gerard Road
London SW13 9RQ



310

Environment Directorate at:LBRUT,
Civic Centre,
44 York Street,
Twickenham TW1 3BZ

12th May 2018

Dear Sirs,

Re: Planning applications 18/0547/FUL and 18/0548/FUL

As local residents, we are extremely concerned about the planning applications for the redevelopment of Stag Brewery, both in terms of the devastating impact the current proposal will have on the area and also in terms of the missed opportunity it represents to genuinely benefit the area.

A positive opportunity to enhance lives

We welcome the principle of redeveloping this site. For all of our lives, the brewery has effectively cut Mortlake off from the river. It has made Mortlake, an historic settlement nestled picturesquely by a bend in the river, into little more than a through road. As such, Mortlake lacks a usable civic space such as Barnes possesses.

Redesigning the brewery site as mixed development could give Mortlake back its heart. There is ample space for a vibrant and balanced mix of social housing, local services such as schooling and healthcare, open spaces, and places to eat and drink by the river.

A negative licence to line pockets

The problem is the design is not at all balanced. It is not a genuine attempt at mixed development. It tries to squeeze in far too much residential property in proportion to services. The emphasis is all too blatantly on profit rather than on catering to local needs.

We see the design flaws falling into two categories:

1) Inappropriate scale and density of housing

The old brewery building has always dominated its surroundings - it dwarfs the pub next door most oppressively and is completely out of proportion to anything else locally. However, it is already there and it has historical interest. As such, renovating it can be justified.

What can't be justified is taking the scale of this single building as a precedent to allow a dozen more buildings of even greater size to be racked up next to it, choking off the river once and for all.

Quite apart from the staggering visual crassness of depositing a huge Central London riverfront on a small suburb, neither within the plan nor in the existing surrounding area will there be the services able to cope with doubling the local population.

One of the buildings to be dwarfed by these proposed upscale tenement blocks is the new school. At what looks to be 3 stories, the scale of this school has been properly thought through so as to integrate with the rest of Mortlake. The residential buildings need to be equally properly thought through and restricted to the same height as the school. This is after all similar to the height of the existing brewery wall.

2) Loss of open space

The proposed sports facilities will of course be welcomed, but on the present design they take up too much of the existing green space - both from the point of view of local people and of the schoolchildren themselves. Once again, the plan tries to cram in what the space will not comfortably allow.

Accept what is genuinely possible

In conclusion, our objection is not one of NIMBYism; we welcome the redevelopment of this site. But we would urge a more reasonable acceptance of what can be genuinely made to work, both within the dimensions of the site itself and in the wider context of its surrounding locality.

The emphasis of this design is heavily weighted to produce the maximum number of residential units.

Furthermore, this does not appear to be in order to supply the dire social housing need. The very last thing any part of London needs to carry is more high-end riverside investment property.


Having had some experience of working both with property developers and town planners, we would say that what would be sustainable in the long run would be to think in terms of accepting between a third and a half of the currently proposed residential units, largely through restricting number of stories. And to supplement this with giving the school more breathing space and including a new GP's surgery in the plan.

This could be a great development opportunity of real benefit to the local area if a genuine balance between residential and services is sought. At the moment it is screamingly obvious that profit margin alone is directing the bulk of the design choices.

Yours faithfully

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