

London Borough of Richmond upon
Thames
Planning Department
Civic Centre
York Street
Twickenham
Middlesex
TW1 3BZ

Our ref: SL/2019/119116/04-L01
Your ref: 19/0646/FUL
Date: 17 June 2020

Dear Sir/Madam

DEMOLITION OF EXISTING BUILDINGS (WITH THE RETENTION OF A SINGLE DWELLING) AND REDEVELOPMENT OF THE SITE TO PROVIDE UP TO 116 RESIDENTIAL UNITS AND 175 SQM COMMERCIAL FLOORSPACE; LANDSCAPED AREAS; WITH ASSOCIATED PARKING AND HIGHWAYS WORKS AND OTHER WORKS ASSOCIATED WITH THE DEVELOPMENT.

GOULD ROAD, TWICKENHAM, TW2 6RT.

Thank you for consulting us on the above application.

We have reviewed the update plans (Ground Floor River Side General Arrangement Drawing No A3164 10056; 02/06/20). In light of this new information we are changing our stance and **object** to the proposed development, due to its impacts on nature conservation and Water Framework Directive (WFD) requirements. We recommend that planning permission is refused.

The submitted planning application and associated documents indicate a significant loss of riparian semi-natural habitat within the riparian zone of the River Crane will be required as part of the proposed development. This activity will require a flood risk activity permit under the Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations 2016 which is unlikely to be granted for the current proposal.

Reason(s)

In determining the flood risk activity permit for this development, we will assess its compliance with the Thames River Basin Management Plan (RBMP). We'll also consider how the development will affect water Biodiversity and the wetland

environment. The RBMP states that the water environment should be protected and enhanced to prevent deterioration and promote the recovery of water bodies. Based on the information submitted with this application, there is a significant risk that the development will cause deterioration of water body status.

The Thames River Basin Management Plan (RBMP) states that the water environment should be protected and enhanced to prevent deterioration and promote the recovery of water bodies. Based on the information submitted with this application, there is a significant risk that the development may prevent achievement of good ecological status. Natural river corridors can provide a filtering effect on runoff to 'clean' runoff before it enters the watercourse. By not providing a natural corridor to the River Crane, there is an increased risk of roadside runoff into the watercourse, causing a deterioration to water quality. Natural river corridors provides habitat for many riverine animals including fish, invertebrates and macrophytes through the provision of refuge areas and diversity of available habitat. Lack of provision of a natural river corridor here may prevent the improvement in status of the Biological element of the current WFD classification (currently at poor [fish] and moderate [invertebrates and macrophytes]). and therefore not meet the requirements of the Water Framework Directive unless the provisions of Article 4.7 of the Water Framework Directive can be met.

- In the recently submitted document 3164-1005 P4 Ground floor Riverside General Arrangement_8, the buffer zone ranges from 3- 5m wide. The majority of the buffer is indicated to be composite timber or grasscrete. These materials will not provide the filtering effect required to reduce the amount of pollution from run off and does not consist of a natural buffer zone.
- Previous buffer zone drawing 3028742 Landscape and Urban Design, is not clear on the width of timber and grasscrete, it was presumed a larger proportion of buffer zone would be of natural planting.
- Dark corridors and undisturbed riverside buffer zones are of high importance to many protected species including bats. The use of the buffer zone as a play area will detract from the biodiversity potential of the site.
- The bat report RGA Greggs Bat Report 2019 V2.0 ISSUED indicates there are a large number and range of species currently utilising the site, not all of which tolerate higher lighting levels. The 3000743 supplementary lighting report should be revised to ensure light spill onto the 5m buffer zone is at a maximum of 2 lux, including the impact of light spill from within the development itself (ie. from the housing units).

This objection is supported by paragraphs 170 and 175 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) which recognise that the planning system should conserve and enhance the environment by minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity.

Richmond Local Plan

Additionally, Richmond Upon Thames Local Plan policy LP 15 states 'The Council will protect and enhance the borough's biodiversity, in particular, but not exclusively,

the sites designated for their biodiversity and nature conservation value, including the connectivity between habitats.' With particular reference to point 5 of Policy 15 'enhancing wildlife corridors for the movement of species, including river corridors, where opportunities arise;'

Overcoming our objection

To overcome our objection, an amended scheme should contain plans for the creation of a natural corridor formed as part of the walkway. The buffer zone should be largely free from built environment, including light spill. It should consist of native species planting and create a natural corridor adjacent to the river. Please refer to our previous response SL/2019/119116/03; dated 10 Feb 2020 which include details of what should be included in the scheme.

Informative

The applicant could be liable to criminal prosecution under the

- Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended by the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000)
- Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 for European Protected Species

The above legislation provides protection to all species of bats. It is an offence to damage, destroy or obstruct access to any place used by bats for shelter, whether they are present or not. High lighting levels will obstruct many species of bat from normal foraging and resting behaviour. It is advised that the lighting levels within the buffer zone are adapted to accommodate the large number of species found here.

Decision notice request

The Environment Agency requires decision notice details for this application in order to report on our effectiveness in influencing the planning process. Please email kslplanning@environment-agency.gov.uk with any decision notice details.

Further Discussions

To achieve the best results for the development, we welcome a meeting with the applicant to discuss the improvements in detail. Please contact us on the email address below to arrange this.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if needed.

Yours sincerely

Mr Randeep Dhanjal
Planning Advisor

Direct e-mail kslplanning@environment-agency.gov.uk