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The Planning Officer
Richmond upon Thames Council
York House
Twickenham
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Dear Sir/Madam

With reference to planning applications 22/0900/OUT and 22/0902/FUL for the Stag Brewery Site, I feel that **we need the proposed co-ed non-denominational secondary school on the site.**

There are only two schools on the Barnes, Mortlake and Kew side of Richmond, one of which is a church school so leaving little choice. The Academy school in Sheen was once two good looking schools with adequate playing field space but is hardly attractive now, with many out-buildings and reduced green space, even if exam results are good. There are about six or more schools on the other side of the borough and it takes an hour or more each way every day for children from the above areas to reach them. **Tired children do less well academically are more likely *not* to behave well, placing a burden on other neighbourhoods as well as our own. The travel involved is equivalent to a whole day a week; the children deserve to be more usefully occupied.**

(Children from very privileged back grounds are well catered for at local public schools. Even those parents with middle incomes tend to send their children outside the borough, again involving much travel. This has been going on for 50 years or more. No wonder **families move out of this part of the borough; not only do they get a better house if they sell from this area but their children will most likely get better access to education.) Our children in Barnes, Mortlake and Kew have managed but they deserve better.** One could argue that actually they are currently deprived!

(A new primary school is definitely not needed. The existing ones are struggling to keep open. Even with full reception and nursery classes, by Level 6 the numbers have dropped very significantly for the reasons given above.)

A Secondary school at the Stag Brewery Site is the best chance to help our children and the borough to have a mixed aged population in future.

Having said that as a premise, I feel that our children deserve better than the proposed secondary school.

I believe that the whole of the existing playing field should be designated for the school and the building situated alongside it, not on it. Then two pitches would be available on site instead of one.

It has been proved that children are not only stronger and healthier physically if they play games, they do better academically and socially too. Being in a green “country-side”

environment also enhances their emotional and spiritual well-being. Childhood obesity and poor street behaviour is less likely, more so when the curriculum is augmented by games competitions after school or at the weekend.

If the boys are playing on the only pitch, the girls cannot and vice versa. This is for a six form entry secondary school, at least 30 classes with *one* all-weather pitch! The school and two blocks of houses are on the existing field site and so too is a small public park which would be better placed opening the view to the river from Mortlake station. **I feel that ideally the school should be just north or east of the existing field leaving the whole the existing grass field for the school or, at minimum the two blocks house should be removed. Keeping the whole field with green grass would be better for the environment and for wildlife too.**

It has been argued that the site is too small for a 6th Form Secondary School (Years 7-13) and maybe this is so but I do not believe that this should prevent a Secondary school being built. Educational arguments rage about the benefits of 6th forms (Years 12 &13) in schools or in 6th form colleges. **The need for a new secondary school is so great here, that one for years 7 to 11 would be more than welcome, I believe making the best use of the site.** The children in Years 12 and 13 could then commute further afield to an educational establishment which best suits their individual needs.

I believe secondary children tend to use public transport or cycle whereas primary school children are frequently transported by parents using cars, the latter engendering more traffic. Hence a secondary school would make for less traffic. **This could be further helped if the 378-bus route from Putney Bridge Station through Barnes and Mortlake (now it does not reach as far as the proposed school) were extended along the lower road to Richmond so that children from Kew (and the general public) had better east-west access.**

I am told that there is funding already available for the school and now funding can also be obtained from the government for playing fields - details on <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-funding-to-boost-schools-facilities-and-healthy-lifestyles>.

Hence I have mixed feelings about this planning application. Overall I would like the secondary school but really I believe that everyone concerned should be more generous to our children. We should do better than what I feel is a parsimonious application. I should be grateful if you would take the above ideas into consideration.

Yours sincerely



Formerly of Lakeside, 3 Queen Elizabeth Walk, Barnes, SW13 9SA