

12th May 2022

Dear Sir/Madam,

**Re: Secondary Education - London Borough of Richmond upon Thames
Proposed Secondary School - Former Stag Brewery Site
(Application B - Reference 22/0902/FUL)**

I am writing to draw your attention to our serious concerns about proposals for a large new secondary school with 6th Form, within our catchment, on the Former Stag Brewery site.

Local schools jointly objected to this proposed new school at the Planning Committee held by Richmond Council at the end of January 2020, but our objections and deep concerns were not upheld, despite us explaining the damage another school will cause to us and our 6th Forms. Although this application was overruled by the Mayor of London, we understand that a new application has been submitted.

At that time, there was serious doubt raised as to the 'need' for this school, which Richmond Borough had presented to the DfE. An in-depth Report prepared by the Mortlake Brewery Community Group (MBCG) casts deeper questions over any justification for a new school in the area. This is further amplified by the tangible reduction in primary school pupil numbers in the area, a situation which local primary heads have most recently confirmed is even more prevalent this year, with most primary schools experiencing pupil numbers well below capacity.

Richmond's Data indicates a short-term increase in secondary pupil numbers, but this falls off, and will have done so by the time any new school could realistically get through the GLA planning process, detail design, tendering and construction.

In short, we believe that 3 strong and consistently improving, local secondary schools are a more sustainable and appropriate outcome than 4 schools which would then all have specific and unnecessary challenges to effectiveness, viability and quality of offer.

We are willing to look at the current expansion of our school, which we maintain is a more viable strategy both for any immediate new place needs, but importantly for a stronger educational offer in the locality. This would also allow us to expand our 6th Form to a more effective capacity and provide a broader curriculum.

We understand that the DfE has confirmed you will investigate the Report presented to you by the MBCG and will no doubt be liaising with Richmond Council in terms of what are the 'genuine' school place needs. We urge you to consider our alternative strategy and appropriate expansion of the existing local schools which is perfectly feasible and is a more robust educational strategy in terms of quality schooling and financial viability.

We also strongly support the proposal for Thomson House Primary to be situated at the Former Stag Brewery Site. This would provide an appropriate site for a much-needed excellent local primary school.

We eagerly await the outcome of your analysis of this situation and your discussions with the borough.

Yours sincerely,



Nabila Jiwa

Principal