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Sent: 13/January/2023 09:27 (GMT)
To: planning@richmond.gov.uk
Subject: Application A - 22/0900/OUT and Application B 22/0902/FUL - BARNES COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION objection

BCA response – Application A - 22/0900/OUT and Application B 22/0902/FUL

I wish to object to the planning applications above related to the Stag Brewery site in Mortlake, on behalf of the Barnes Community Association.

It is unfortunate that the current proposals and latest changes still do not address any of the earlier significant failings of previous applications.

The redevelopment of the Brewery site presents a great opportunity to re-establish a heart to Mortlake, introducing new facilities for the community while preserving and respecting the history and the character of the area. While there are lots of positives in the plans presented by the developer, the Barnes Community Association has some concern about the development which, if not addressed, will have a detrimental impact on the Mortlake and its' neighbouring communities.

As before, we would like to object to the latest proposals on the following planning grounds.

Applications A

Density, Building Height & Scale of Development

The scheme now proposes 1071 residential units, a minor reduction of 14 from the March 2022 submission, and thus remains far too dense given the prevailing scale and density of the existing community, the sensitive riverside location, heritage context, and the severe and unique access constraints of this site.

The Council's own Design Review Panel (DRP) - "felt the scheme is too dense for this area - and resonates more with Central London where higher density is expected." (DRP letter 28.02.22).

Many of the residential blocks still exceed 7 floors in height and overwhelm the character of the Thames bankside setting and still dominate the locally protected Maltings building and adjacent heritage assets.

An almost rural character prevails along the Thames from Putney/Hammersmith to Kew creating a green landscape corridor. The densely packed blocks combined with their height and scale will destroy this unique stretch of the river.

These building heights are unacceptable given the sub-urban context, surrounding Conservation Areas and Adopted Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG). We believe new buildings on the riverside should be restricted to 3/4 stories to fit in with existing riverside buildings, the historic Maltings building, and the landscape up and downstream and across the river. They should also be set back from the towpath so as not to overshadow the towpath and the river.

Affordable Housing

Despite the increase in residential units to 1071 from 813 in the earlier 2020 planning applications the affordable percentage remains exceedingly low at around 19% (39 Intermediate units and 165 Social Rent). We would like to urge the Council to push up the percentage of affordable housing.

Otherwise, this could lead to the Mayor intervening yet again - bringing us full circle after years of planning blight.

The current proposals represent a 32% increase in unit numbers from the 2020 scheme and yet little or no increase in the offer of affordable units. The scheme thus contravenes both London Plan and Local Plan Policy at a time of greatest need for affordable homes.

The affordable units are concentrated largely in one area in the west of the site which hardly promotes a truly integrated community.

Infrastructure, Highways & Access

Traffic generation and congestion remain major concerns. The road network around the site is already gridlocked and not just at peak times. The supporting reports and data simply do not reflect the actual conditions of severe congestion and poor air quality in the area.

The scheme will significantly increase the local population by around 2500 residents and yet the only highway mitigation measures propose a new left hand turn lane at Chalker's Corner. The developer's plan for this junction is unlikely to resolve the issue of increased traffic and might even attract further through traffic. For local residents in Chertsey Court and on Lower Richmond Road this might mean an increase in pollution, traffic and noise. With limited road capacity and an already busy public transport network it is also essential any changes to this junction will include a segregated cycle route connecting the development to Chalkers Corner in the west and Barnes in the East, safe and direct pedestrian crossing on every arm of Chalkers Corner and clutter free, wider pavements along Mortlake High Street and Lower Richmond Road.

While we understand a relatively big increase in population is inevitable, we are very much concerned that our area and infrastructure will simply not cope with the increased demand. Traffic congestion in recent years has steadily become worse and we fear new on-site resident parking spaces will make things even worse as the local infrastructure cannot accommodate an additional increase in traffic. We believe private car ownership should be discouraged by making the development "car free" ie offering on-site parking to Blue Badge holders only. As mentioned above, a better provision should be made to encourage walking, cycling, use of public transport, and car clubs.

The additional population generated by the scheme has increased to unrealistic levels and together with the additional school run traffic of 1250 pupils and staff, will result in an even greater risks and dangers at the Mortlake Station level crossing. This crossing is already the second most 'at risk' crossing on NR's Wessex Region network. Proposed 106 mitigation works are cosmetic and do nothing to address the constraints and daily risks. It is clear, the proposed scheme will increase use (vehicles and pedestrians) of the crossing at peak periods. Increased traffic will lead to further delays, greater frustration and an increased likelihood of accident and there are no current plans to address the pedestrian and vehicular risks at the crossing.

Given the above, it is questionable how Stantec can justifiably verify their proposed upgrading of the PTAL accessibility of the site. (See Technical Note - Bespoke PTAL Calculation Summary - 01.07.22).

Application B - New Secondary School

The site for the school is just 30% of the DfE's recommended size for new schools of this scale (1250 students). This is totally unacceptable on a total landholding of 8.6 hectares, and completely inadequate for students' health and well-being. We would like to see either a smaller capacity school or more land needs to be allocated to it.

The proposed school is still located on protected OOLTI green open space, sports fields which represent the largest open green space in Mortlake.

Jubilee Gardens and Mortlake Green are the only other meaningful green open spaces in the area and are already highly pressured in use by the existing population. OOLTI re-provisioning is simply not achieved by the proposed nine pocket-sized open spaces. These spaces do not offer the quality, quantum or openness expected from a local green space. Two of the spaces are even all hard surfaced. Furthermore, daylight-sunlight data now illustrates many of the open spaces are highly over-shadowed due to the increased building heights compared to the 2020 design proposals.

To summaries, we still feel disappointed by the overall unimaginative design of the complex. It seeks to build multiple blocks of flats averaging about 8 stories high in an apparent attempt to maximise the numbers of 1 and 2 bed flats. It will be a shame to repeat the obvious architectural failings of other recent riverside developments. The development of the old brewery is a once in a generation opportunity. We should aspire to design buildings and roads that people would actually enjoy, and variation of appearance, shape and layout would have been great. Unfortunately, the present plan exhibits a bland uniformity.

We still have concerns regarding the demolition process and removal of material from the site and would like it recorded that none of the materials during the demolition or re-construction should be trafficked through Barnes Village. We would like the weight limit of 18t on the Terrace to be noted and would ask that the developer observe any limitations added to that in respect of movement eastward from Stag Brewery. Alongside that sits the current difficulty with extra traffic as a result of the closure of Hammersmith Bridge and no resolution of that for possibly another 5-7 years. Barnes Village High Street is taking a high degree of extra through traffic as a result. We realise such conditions are applied along with granting of Planning Permissions but feel these should also be noted that this early stage of the application.

We would like to note that although it is our remit to safeguard the area's environment, we understand and accept the site should be redeveloped and not left derelict. We think the communities around the site can benefit hugely from the new lease of life it will receive, but this should be done carefully and without losing sight of the limitations of the location and the wish of the locals who already live in the area.

We demand a scheme that will excite and inspire and one which is fit for the future.

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Chairman

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