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Subject: Planning Committee Meeting on 19th July 2023

Having made several submissions during the course of consultations on the redevelopment of the Mortlake Brewery Site you may wonder why I am writing before the next planning meeting on 19th July 2023. My purpose is to underline concerns that the consultation process is being treated as a paperwork exercise - rather than a genuine effort to find an acceptable solution to the local community in terms of a new Town Centre for Mortlake.

Planning decisions are indeed the responsibility of the Council but it is the local community that must live with the consequences. The views of the local community deserve the genuine support of local Councillors and fair consideration at the Planning Meeting. Public opinion must not be seen as an impediment to the progress of design and implementation strategy proposed by the Developer.

The reasons for the refusal of Sadiq Khan, the Mayor of London, to withhold approval of the previous submission last year should specifically be heard on 19th July 2023 and the remedies explained. Local citizens have clearly not created an unwarranted roadblock to the objectives of Richmond Borough Council when City Hall also has objections.

I am considering two of the Mayor of London's points in this correspondence, namely:

- That building heights must conform to regulation for the Arcadian Thames riverside
- That allocations to 'affordable housing' made by the Council are currently inadequate

The Developer must provide the solutions to these constraints and it may be that the profitability of the site is not what was anticipated. That is a business risk the Developer should have considered. It is no reason to ruin the riverside character of our location.

Consideration of the Arcadian Riverside:

To my mind it would be dereliction of duty were local citizens not to oppose the current plan in terms of building heights. I recently surveyed the situation on the Chiswick bank of the

river and nowhere have I found a building higher than 7 stories and most development settles for six or less.

The Mortlake brewery site comprises land formerly owned by St Paul's Cathedral on which stood the ancient Manor House. Land which in more recent times was regraded for industrial purposes. Were it not for the demolition of the monasteries and confiscation of church income by Henry VIII, via his chancellor Thomas Cromwell the one-time incumbent of the property, Mortlake and Barnes today would have an entirely different character. But history is fickle and the Surrey records reveal that William the Conqueror failed to cross the river here just a matter of weeks after his success at Hastings; John Dee and Sir Francis Walsingham, spymasters to Elizabeth 1st, both lived here. Later still, JMW Turner perfected his skills for the depiction of waterscapes and boats on this stretch of the Thames. The area is rightly included in the Arcadian Thames Riverside and a duty to represent its importance falls on local people to ensure it is properly considered within the Council's consultation process. LBRuT is not exactly copying the glass and steel high-rise jungle that prevails down-river from Wandsworth in terms of building material but the proposed eleven stories is seriously in the same direction.

We simply cannot ignore the fact that the proposed building height and the consequent population increase will choke our roads and threaten the safety of everyone using the Sheen Lane railway crossing. The current infrastructure will be incapable of sustaining the free movement of people, whatever means of transport they use, including 'Shank's Pony' and bicycles – assuming the latter obey the traffic lights.

To the worrying desecration of Arcadia in the current plan, we must add the traffic consequences related to a new secondary school demanded by London Borough of Richmond upon Thames. The statistics show that the number of pupils in the Borough for the foreseeable future could be accommodated at existing schools, namely Richmond Park Academy and Christs. To some extent the Council's Planning Committee is marking its own homework on this part of the plan. In imposing this requirement, it ignores the 2011 concept for a small primary school, which would not be likely to draw in pupils from beyond the borough boundaries.

Alas the plan has no provision for improving the Sheen Lane crossing and access to the railway or enhancing the services via public transport. Instead, the A3003 will feature multiple access points for the new 'town centre' and thereby make matters worse for motor vehicles using Chalker's Corner and the pollution problems will be exacerbated. No consideration appears to have been given to my suggestion (at an early stage in the consultation) that extension of catamaran passenger services might be extended up-river from Putney for commuters to the West End or the City.

On the above evidence, the Mortlake Brewery Community Group should not be pilloried for delaying the start of work on the development of a new town centre for Mortlake, which we would all like to see. The old Town Centre was lost due to planning approval for the dual carriageway section of the A3003. The current plan does nothing to convince me that the Council's Planning Committee will get things right this time around.

Allocations of Affordable Housing:

To my mind the Mayor of London is right in demanding that a greater percentage of the homes being built in the Borough should be affordable. What we have at the moment seems to offer another opportunity for a small percentage of the world's population to invest their business gains in UK property while leaving empty their acquisitions. This does nothing to solve the housing crisis or bring economic prosperity to local businesses, to say nothing of starving the area of community activity and artistic endeavour.

Of course, neither does 'affordable housing' meet wider needs for a thriving community. The further consideration is a desperate need in Mortlake for 'social housing'. In any community the right mix of skills capable of providing 'assisted living' by way of sheltered accommodation and medical services for disadvantaged people must be integrated with those that can afford to live here based on their personal income. Aside from the special needs cases who would also benefit from a care-worker living alongside them, workers in police, fire and ambulance services to say nothing of nurses, teachers and essential tradespeople also need provision. Their pay would never provide them access to 'affordable housing' but they are extremely necessary to a thriving community.

Apart from shopping streets, the new Town Centre needs a post office and a medical centre to reduce the requirements for residents to cross the railway to access such services in Sheen. Apart from an unnecessary new Secondary School sucking pupils into the area consideration should be given to the provision of social services within metres of the new dwellings by building above the originally intended Primary School, so reducing pressure on dangerous roads and rail crossings. The railway gates on both Sheen and White Hart Lane are closed for 75% of business hours so those without the physical capacity to climb the stairs of railway bridges are left crowding the junctions for the few minutes before the gates open. Cars are competing for road space with the pedestrians, wheelchairs and prams without any physical barrier to separate them. Accidents are waiting to happen.

I am an Incorporated Engineer in the UK and the retired General Manager of an American satellite company. I would expect the publication of solutions to the Mayor of London's objections and discussion of their efficacy before the consultation process for redevelopment of the Mortlake Brewery site is concluded and most certainly before planning permission is granted. A new town centre for Mortlake should respect historical origins and rebuild the community that was splintered in the 1960s. To get this right, a priority must be given to safeguarding the future of all ranks of society. In your elected roles I trust that you will be ensuring that this happens at the meeting on 19th July 2023.

William Mortimer 05/07/2023