

Comment on a planning application

Application Details

Application: 24/1662/FUL

Address: Sion Court Sion Road Twickenham

Proposal: Demolition of 20 derelict garages and one bed flat and redevelopment of the site to provide 2, 1-bedroom and 3, 2-bedroom dwellings, associated private amenity space, communal amenity space, accessible parking space, cycle parking and refuse.

Comments Made By

Name: Ms. Deborah Sanders

Address: 26 Lebanon Court Richmond Road Twickenham TW1 3DA

Comments

Type of comment: Object to the proposal

Comment: PART 3 of 4

Policy LP 36 - Affordable Housing

As this proposal is for fewer than 10 homes it is appreciated there is no requirement for affordable housing on site, but a commuted sum contribution may be payable under the Council's smaller sites policies. It is understood under this formula the developer would pay a contribution in excess of £400,000.

However, it is noted the applicants have submitted a Financial Viability Assessment (FVA) in regards to this application which uses some high values - for instance on the premium on existing value, profit on Gross Development Value (GDV) and debt finance rates - but it is unclear whether or not they are offering to pay the full commuted sum which the smaller sites calculator would assume for this site.

Could you confirm what offer the applicant has made in this regard? Secondly, could you advise if the applicant's FVA has been assessed by the Council's own financial viability consultants and if so, whether the Council's consultants agree with the applicant's offer and whether the Council's assessment will be uploaded to the planning portal?

The applicant's FVA shows that the proposed over development is being undertaken purely to increase the return on profit to the developer (over £600,000), that neither provides homes that an average income earner in LB Richmond could ever afford nor provides any enhancement or benefit to the existing residents, but instead encloses a much loved open space and takes away valued cycle storage for the existing residents.

Finally, why does the Council find a 33% Internal rate of return acceptable on such a small scale development ?

Policy LP 39 - Infill, Backland and Backgarden Development

This policy sets out a general presumption against back garden development and states that housing delivery from backgarden land is not needed to meet the borough's strategic housing targets.

Para 4.11.6 of the Local Plan states "... this borough is characterised by low-rise residential areas that benefit from garden areas. Garden areas contribute significantly to the special character and uniqueness of this borough, including the character of Conservation Areas ... They also provide green oases and tranquil areas for residents as well as health benefits, and they contribute to the borough's green infrastructure network due to their biodiversity value."

Given the Council's own proposed re-development of the Twickenham Riverside site emphasises the importance of open space and feeling of openness in the design of the scheme, why would the Council consider acceptable this application's proposal which does exactly the opposite on private land ?