

PLANNING INSPECTORATE INQUIRY REF: 3250440

SITE ADDRESS: 265 BURLINGTON ROAD, KT3 4NE

RAYNES PARK AND WEST BARNES RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION (RULE 6 PARTY)

OPENING STATEMENT

The Raynes Park and West Barnes Residents' Association has 1800 member households.

In September 2019 we held a public meeting which some 250 people attended, members and non-members. All were totally opposed to the scheme under appeal. 500 residents sent in letters of objection. 100 residents attended the Planning Applications Committee whose decision was applauded.

The residents are not opposed to the principle of housing on this site, or even to the need to having the accommodation in blocks of 4 or 5 stories suitably spaced out to allow for some play area.

They are opposed to the way in which the present proposals ride rough shod over all the local planning guidance as to where tall buildings should be sited, and to the height, number, and density of the tower blocks. They are out of keeping with the interwar houses in the area, and will dominate the skyline from far away.

The Applicant presented very similar proposals to the Design Review Panel in November 2018, and the scheme was given a RED response, as there were significant issues which mirror the concerns of the residents. The scheme was not materially altered, and was not further presented to the Panel. We do not accept that the reasons given for not re-presenting it to the Panel are justified. The Panel is an independent body, including experienced architects and town planners, which provides pre-application advice to the local authority. Their findings have, over the years, proved to be a very good indicator of what emerges as the final approved verdict. One has to assume that the Appellant did not re-present since they knew that the present scheme would receive the same adverse verdict.

As Mr Nowell states in his evidence at paragraph 3.4.5. "The fundamental issues around the justification and rationale for the building heights proposed and the podium typology, and the consequential impacts on the relationship of the scheme with the public realm remain unresolved".

The architecture of the buildings means that they cannot meet the target for CO2 reduction.

The number of car parking spaces allowed for will inevitably mean that many of the new residents will park in the surrounding streets. These are already heavily parked. The Council will have to impose CPZ's on these streets, and so these residents will have to pay for the fact the Appellant has tried to get too much housing on this site.

Many of the new residents, however, and particularly those with disabilities or some of the elderly, will not have a car. The site is isolated from the small centres of Raynes Park and Motspur Park, and are outside comfortable walking distances even for the able bodied. The PTAL rating is low. While the 131 bus goes to Raynes Park, it is held up for long periods during rush hour while the West Barnes level crossing is down. The traffic is often at a standstill back to Shannon Corner.

The whole area is prone to flash flooding, which has become more prevalent in recent years. The water system, and particularly the sewer system cannot cope and overflows.

Finally, we fail to understand why Redrow are pursuing this appeal, at great public expense and at great concern to the residents. They announced last June that they were pulling out of building in London, and Mr Murch has confirmed in his rebuttal evidence that they do not intend to build themselves even if the appeal were allowed. We believe that it is very important to know who is to develop the site, if approval is granted, and this will not be known until after the conclusion of the Inquiry.

We have set out our technical objections in our Proof of Evidence and our Supplementary Proof of Evidence.

We respectfully ask that, in due course, the appeal will be dismissed.

John Elvidge, Chairman
07/12/2020