



Stop the Blocks Community Action Group Open Statement in response to Anthology's planning application being submitted for Kennington Stage development:

23 July 2019

It was disappointing to learn recently that the developer Anthology has submitted a planning application which they disclosed to Councillor Jon Davies (Prince's Ward in Lambeth) as "a technical manoeuvre", indicating that their real intention was to submit a revised application very soon. The public statement released by [Anthology on their website on 18th July 2019](#) makes no mention of this, but it appears from Anthology's own admission that the timing of the submission was to comply with contractual and planning agreements.

It is our understanding that Lambeth Council and the Lambeth Planning department have been constructively challenging Anthology on the scale of their proposals and the options Anthology wish to pursue. Lambeth Planning has also been encouraging Anthology to revise their current proposal. Nobody in the local community has yet seen the exact details of the current form which is being discussed as Anthology didn't share the application with community representatives prior to its submission of the application. Residents will only see the current application if it is deemed "valid" and proceeds to consultation. The local community also has been given no indication of what may be forthcoming in a revised option which is said to be due soon. We only have Anthology's word that there may be a subsequent revision.

Anthology has stated that the submission of the application does not prevent continued and open discussions taking place with Lambeth Council and it intends to continue this engagement to seek to address any outstanding concerns. However, there are some very real consequences for Lambeth Council and the local community as a result of Anthology's misguided actions:

- We consider this is an abuse of the planning system and planning officers' time at Lambeth Council as they will have to deal with Anthology's application as a full application, even if there might be a revised proposal to come.
- If Anthology does then withdraw its current application and subsequently submit a similar scheme later they may argue it is the "same character or description" as the current application and not pay for another application fee. Thus, Lambeth Council will end up spending the mandatory fee on validating and consulting on the current application that Anthology say they have no intention of seeking approval for.



- Most importantly this is an abuse of neighbours, community groups and others who will still have to give up their time to respond on the current application. The community cannot afford to be complacent or caught out by not responding on this initial application simply because they have been informed that the applicant will be coming forward with an amended scheme. If a revised scheme does not materialise, then the current scheme could get to planning committee with little objection if the community doesn't respond now. However, if a revised scheme is submitted, the community will have to respond yet again to a consultation on a different scheme.
- Given that Anthology has stated that their intention is to submit a revised application then the submission of an application purely to meet the contractual and planning agreements is misguided.
- This misguided action by the developer is misleading to the local community, wasting scarce resources at Lambeth Council and undermines further any confidence that the community and local stakeholders can have in the developers stated intentions and actual actions.

We appreciate that there is a lot of work going on in the background, but we call upon Lambeth Council to challenge Anthology on their true intentions and position and share it with the local community. This is in order to ensure that the local community can have the confidence that when they are being consulted upon a submitted planning application it is on the understanding that they are not wasting their time and energy on a “technical manoeuvre (i.e. holding) application”. If Anthology want to try to rebuild their relationship with communities surrounding their “Kennington Stage” development site, they will withdraw this application to prevent further erosion of community trust.