



The Planning Inspectorate
Temple Quay House
2 The Square
Bristol BS1 6PN

25 June 2020

Planning Inspectorate,

Appeal reference number: APP/N5660/W/20/3248960 – Woodlands Redevelopment

I am writing as the MP for Vauxhall to formally object to the above planning application.

Many residents in the local community have contacted me with their concerns about this plan. As the local MP, I recognise and support the need for redevelopment and the provision of truly affordable housing to rent and to own in the area. But it must be proportionate to its setting and sustainable in the long term. In my view, this is not the case with this redevelopment and there are a number of grounds that I must support local residents on in opposing the application.

Lack of affordable and quality housing

The developers are not offering the tenures and mix of affordable housing that both the Lambeth and London Plans expect. Only 24 out of the 258 residential units proposed will be for 'affordable' rent, which is less than 10% of the total number of units. Lambeth is one of the most deprived areas of London and this is simply unacceptable given the urgent need for more affordable housing. Also, the design and quality of accommodation is poor overall. There is a disproportionate and high density of dwellings out of context with what is essentially a low-rise urban area, and limited amenity space with shortcomings in the servicing of the site particularly regarding cycle parking, site access for refuse vehicles and waste collection.

Sunlight and shadowing

Access to daylight is a fundamental right and I believe acceptable reductions in sunlight should not be higher than 20% in planning applications. Residents concern about loss of daylight was frequently cited in their comments on the proposal, with particular reference to the height and bulk of the buildings blocking both daylight and privacy to existing homes. The scheme would affect the levels of daylight enjoyed by several neighbouring properties, especially the three-story terraced houses in Renfrew Road and Castlebrook Close.



Impact on heritage and conservation areas

The proposed tower block would sit very awkwardly in its surrounding context, being much bulkier than the recently completed tower blocks in the neighbouring Elephant & Castle regeneration area. It would also cause substantial harm to local heritage assets including the Grade II listed former Administrative Block, former Water Tower, former Fire Station, former Magistrate's Court as well as the following Conservation Areas - Renfrew Road, Walcot Square and St. Mary's Gardens & West Square.

Community involvement and Lambeth Local Plan

The planning application was submitted on 24 July 2019 and validated on the 16 August, yet it was not made available to the public until the 22 October. This is in contravention of the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework. The version available for public viewing was also heavily redacted which made it difficult for residents to properly assess the scheme in full.

I would like to bring to your attention that over 500 residents commented on the original planning application and I would urge the Planning Inspectorate to consider their concerns in addition to my own.

In light of all the above, including any further objections from residents, I strongly encourage the Planning Inspectorate to reject this application.

Yours sincerely,

Florence Eshalomi MP