

# Doing in the Lambeth Walk – residents react with fury to 11-storey block towering over South London landmark

LINK TO ARTICLE: [Doing in the Lambeth Walk – residents react with fury to 11-storey block towering over South London landmark – South London News \(londonnews.co.uk\)](https://www.londonnews.co.uk/news/local-news/doing-in-the-lambeth-walk-residents-react-with-fury-to-11-storey-block-towering-over-south-london-landmark)

**8 March 2022 Toby Porter**

A packed hall of residents expressed fury at plans to wreck daylight in council homes and overshadow Lambeth Walk Green by building two towers of private housing.

The 11-storey towers are part of a planning application by Homes for Lambeth (HfL) to replace 42 sheltered homes at Denby Court on the famous street with 141 new homes – only 45 of which would be social housing.

At least 40 existing homes and a nursery next to the scheme will have their daylight reduced by up to 50 per cent, locals say – leaving many in permanent gloom and with resulting multiple health issues. This is in breach of BRE standards which developers are in principle supposed to comply with.

The meeting in a community hall nearby heard from local architects who had worked up an alternative six-storey scheme which could provide the same number of homes but at half the height, and would not overshadow Lambeth Walk Doorstep Green and council homes.

A professional financial appraisal claims the alternative is viable and could generate a surplus to HfL and Lambeth council.

But the meeting in Roots & Shoots, Walnut Tree Walk, organised by a new group Save Lambeth Walk, reacted with frustration that applicant Homes for Lambeth (HfL) had sent their apologies only hours before the meeting.

All three Labour ward councillors on the ward which covers Lambeth Walk also sent their apologies, including Cllr David Amos, who sits on the HfL board. Cllr Joanne Simpson, chair of Lambeth planning committee, had tweeted that the scheme should go ahead despite concerns about the height, as new homes were required.

Green and Liberal Democrat candidates for the forthcoming local elections in May said they would ensure the alternative scheme was worked up if they were elected.

A message of support for the community from local MP Florence Eshalomi said: “I have always fought for the right of the community to be heard in planning decisions that impact them. There should be no exception here. I am clear that any new proposal for the site of Denby Court must contain a strong affordable housing contingent and be in keeping with the existing aesthetic of the area, while not negatively impacting residents of surrounding streets in a disproportionate manner.” Denby Court

There was concerns raised that constructing the HfL scheme would produce 5,860 tonnes of CO2, the equivalent of heating the buildings for over 40 years while the alternative scheme using cross laminate timber would capture around 2,280 tonnes of carbon from the environment.

Graphics which showed that on summer evenings when locals meet – a shadow from the towers would block out the sun.

The planning application is recommended by officer for approval at Lambeth council's planning committee on March 15.

One opponent said: "This development defies all sense of urban grain and will dominate its immediate environment, extracting value from the social neighbourhood and give nothing back. There are multiple examples of sensitive developments in the area in recent years which create or retain links to the community or bring visitors into the area: the Baylis schoolsite, the Hirst gallery, etc. This development is a de facto gated community for the wealthy which will blight the area. For its immediate neighbours on Saperton Walk it's a profoundly depressing prospect. They will live in darkness most of the time. This is careless, insensitive and unwelcome planning."

Another said: "This is a poorly conceived, incomplete, contradictory and deliberately selective submission which should be refused and radically re-assessed to relate to its setting. It represents extremely poor value both financially and socially to the rate and council tax payers of Lambeth.

"It would cause serious harm to the existing residents and impact many basic human rights. The process of this application is distorted and undemocratic. In essence, Lambeth is applying to Lambeth for planning permission, with the support of the elected Lambeth councillors who are supposed to represent their constituents."

But a supporter of the scheme said: "A huge improvement on the existing eyesore that is Denby court. Nimbys were out in force trying to canvas support against this proposal who conveniently forget London is a world city with a lack of affordable housing. 50 per cent affordable is about as good as it gets. Ignore the Nimbys."

The meeting heard that a similar scheme by HfL for 36 homes at Wootton St in Waterloo – which would wreck the daylight in 99 social housing flats – had been put on hold last autumn as a result of campaigners illustrating alternatives, and that HfL were working with the Neighbourhood Forum to find a better scheme.

HfL have been contacted for comment.