



#MORTLAKESAYSNO

To overdevelopment with no infrastructure

Demonstration at Mortlake Green

Tuesday, September 22

5 pm

9 Little St Leonards
East Sheen
SW147LT

Sarah Olney MP
House of Commons
BY EMAIL

Dear Sarah Olney MP

A great deal has happened since we last corresponded about the **Stag Brewery Redevelopment**. I have now been invited to write to you on behalf of the MBCG. We are also encouraging members of our community to express their feelings to the GLA in the proper manner. They need to be alerted to the limited time remaining to do so. We hope we may engage you now, in as active a manner as you are able, in resisting the new and somewhat inflated ambitions of this development proposal.

I have been closely involved in opposition to the scale and density of this project, and in particular about the traffic plan which never matched local experience, and which now must, in any event, be regarded as redundant following the closure of Hammersmith Bridge. If there are to be changes to traffic flow through Richmond Park, any meaningful traffic plan will have to take this into account as well. There is so much to be said about the lack of reality about the existing traffic assessments in the area around the Brewery and at this vital confluence of so many major commuting roads in an out and around SW London. We shall however confine what we have to say to more pressing concerns. The residents of Mortlake, and Barnes as well, have very little time now to place proper restraints on the proposals for this part of the Borough from which we fear the community will never recover. The scale of local opposition measured by responses to the original plans was, as you know, very considerable. The revisions showed the opposite of respect for local views on density, and in my personal view can only now be regarded as an insult to us all. I have already placed my personal objections forward to the GLA. I now write to you in a representative capacity. I have had input from a number of concerned experts in legal, planning, transport, environmental, and education provision.

We are aware you have been consulting with local councillors about the revised proposals, so that we can provide the strongest possible response in

our submissions to the Mayor for London. I am aware too that you have stated your concern about the increased scale of the development, and the impact this will have on the surrounding area. To increase the number of homes from 813 to 1,250 is, as you have recognised, significant. Some buildings will increase in height by three storeys. The affect on already congested surrounding roads will be extremely problematic.

DENSITY combined with Transport and Traffic issues

First it has to be made very clear that this is no longer a suburban development of unusual density and scale, but is now a significantly altered plan from the one placed before the Planning Committee, and has as you know increased the density of the original plan significantly to an urban scale. We have been astute to get these percentages right, as others have misrepresented them by failing to state clear parameters, or the basis of the statements they have made. The reality is really quite disturbing.

- The residential population of the scheme itself has now increased by 50% - 2800 to 4200 now - this uses the developer's own data/ schedules of unit mix and sizes. It comes nowhere near the Mayor's targets for affordable housing even with this already unjustified expansion.
- The Developer has suggested that the physical volume has only increased by 9.4%. This is quite wrong.
- The population of Mortlake will increase by 90%. The current population of Mortlake is approx 4650 - This uses the 2011 census geographic parameters with allowance for some limited growth (Charlie Butler - North Worple Way / White Hart Lane - and above Sainsburys/WHL schemes). The revised and enlarged Stag scheme will accommodate approx. 4200 residents based on the mix and size of units scheduled in the developers' latest data. (The area taken from the census is bounded by the River, A316, the railway and in part to the Mortlake Cemetery area, and White Hart Lane)
- The revised and enlarged scheme represents 36% of the latest census population for the much larger Mortlake and Barnes Common Ward. 4200 / 11482 (2018 latest figure- estimate - was 10,919 in 2011) - This ward extends into Barnes, the Upper Richmond Road and the Common.
- The number of habitable units in Mortlake is approx 2220 based on growth from the 2011 census. The revised and enlarged scheme of 1250 units creates an increase of 56%
- The existing average density of homes in Mortlake (excluding the Stag site area) is just 44 homes/hectare (2220 homes on 50 hectares). The revised and enlarged scheme represents 211 units / hectare. - almost 5 times the density.

- The average density exceeds even 'Central' London density guidelines for new development, given the poor accessibility rating of PTAL 1/2, and minimal chance of improvement, especially given the unique geographical constraints of this site (River Thames and railway/level crossings). We can provide more detailed technical information in support of this if required.
- It is striking that this scheme would deliver much of Richmond's housing targets for the next 10 years, but all on one site. It frankly amounts to a serious dereliction of responsibility towards, or basic concern for the community of Mortlake and Barnes, and is likely to resonate for years in terms of costs to health and environment, and the faith placed in local government. It is frankly a heartless exercise in suburban planning.
- It is only made worse by the revised proposals for the smaller Homebase site of 453 units (that I am aware you oppose in its present form), and the development at the old Barnes Hospital site (80 units), almost equidistant from the Stag development to the East and West. This all increases traffic in the area to a level to an extent, which makes it difficult to see how almost permanent gridlock can be avoided. We are close to that already. The cars travelling through are from all over London, Surrey and beyond, and are unlikely to change their habits, as they have no viable alternatives. More or even longer trains, even if theoretically possible, would mean the level crossings would be closed longer than the present 40 minutes in each hour, simply adding to unmanageability of local traffic.

There could be no clearer example of this than the lack of any Logistics solution to any early works/demolitions on site whilst Hammersmith Bridge is closed. There has not been a solution presented to the problems of congestion at Chalkers Corner and all suggestions we have heard about either would make matters worse or do nothing actually to alleviate the present solution. It was scarcely surprising that Option C was rejected by the Planning Committee of Richmond Council. If any other solution had been practical, it would have been made long ago. None has emerged, and none are made now with sufficient information for the local community to address. Despite some reduction in car parking provisions there is no acceptable mitigation to increases in traffic caused by the scheme.

Other Issues

- The Other Open Land of Townscape Importance (OOLTI) protected sports fields are lost forever, and re-provisioning is NOT provided to comply with conditions related to quantum, quality and openness.
- The Covid-19 pandemic is unlikely to be the last such pandemic, and has highlighted the preciousness of community and open space. The sheer density and increased building heights have further degraded the quality of almost all of the open spaces which have become even more oppressive and over-shadowed .

- Building heights are unacceptable given the sub-urban context, surrounding Conservation Areas and Adopted SPG. The Local Maltings, itself one of three buildings on the site of “townscape merit”, and the towpath are now overwhelmed by the sheer height and scale of the scheme.
- The site for the secondary school is just 30% of the DfE’s recommended size for new schools of this scale (1150 students). This is totally unacceptable on a total landholding of 8.6 hectares, and completely inadequate for students’ health and well-being. There is much informed research to be laid out concerning the need for this school at this location, but this will be the subject of separate and detailed submissions. Schools are usually held to be desirable, but there is new, clear and carefully researched evidence that a secondary school here is no longer needed.
- The population of the scheme itself has increased even further to unrealistic levels and will create even greater risks and dangers at the Mortlake Station level crossing. This crossing is already the 2nd most ‘at risk’ crossing on NR’s Wessex Region network. The proposed 106 mitigation works are cosmetic, and do nothing to address the constraints and daily risks.

The MBCG are not a reactionary group who fail to understand the need for an imaginative re-development of this important, historic, riverside site in a manner compliant with the Community Consultation Vision. Nonetheless, the revised and enlarged scheme has abandoned quality, and a proper relationship to what was previously proposed, and has evolved into a ‘numbers game’ simply to fail in its attempt to meet affordable housing targets. We do not wish to overstate the local community case, but we are persuaded that this latest scheme is of the past, and representative of mediocrity and greed. It has to be resisted with all the means at our disposal in the limited time we now have. We hope to that you can persuade the Mayor to come and see what may happen in this locality if this scheme goes ahead.

Yours sincerely

Bruce

Bruce Houlder CB QC

On behalf of the Mortlake Brewery Community Group