

Cathy Gallaher

Ref Q 23

Department of Planning and the Environment,

October 2 2009

London Borough of Hounslow

Dear Cathy,

SCOTTISH WIDOWS SITE, KEW BRIDGE

Thank you for letting us know about your meeting with the developers on 5 October.

Following the meeting of the Sustainable Development Committee on 16 September the six amenity societies which opposed the development at Kew Bridge Road have discussed their approach to a revised scheme. The societies have different special interests in the site, but they are all agreed that this letter expresses their views. We hope that you will note these views and share them with the developers at your meeting.

It is common ground among everyone involved that this site, almost one hectare in area, is of great significance not just to the local area but to the national heritage and to world heritage.

- The site lies partly within the buffer zone of the World Heritage Site of Kew Gardens
- It is within sight of and forms the setting of the Grade 1 water works and tower, the Grade 2* Kew Bridge, the Grade 2 Kew Bridge Station. The planned buildings would affect the setting of numerous listed buildings and important public views.
- It is within the Kew Bridge Conservation Area and in sight of both the Strand on the Green and the Kew Conservation Areas.
- It is seen from tens, perhaps hundreds of thousands of vehicles that use the South Circular Road every day.

In our view this site requires a building of international standing and we are not convinced that a few minor changes to the plans will achieve a design worthy of this uniquely important site.

The amenity societies are unanimous that:

- This building is not of sufficient quality or style for the site it would occupy.
- We are all agreed that the plans, as presently drawn up, describe a building that is far too high and far too densely occupied.
- We are all concerned that the traffic and parking problems for the surrounding area have not been properly considered or resolved.
- We all consider that the building does not fit in with – still less enhance – the key listed buildings close by.
- We are all united in the view that the plans do not respect the World Heritage Site and the three conservation areas and the numerous domestic listed buildings they contain.

- We all agree that the plans do not respect or enhance the River Thames or its banks, paths, trees or setting nor make sufficient provision for water-related uses..
- We are all surprised to see that the plans do not fit in with the Thames Landscape Strategy policies opposing tall flat roofed buildings. That they do not accord with the London Plan, the UDP, the Mayors SPGs and the recently adopted Brentford Area Action Plan. These policies call for designs to show a respect for context, a sensitivity to local character, an appropriate density and a range of house types, private amenity space, permeability through the site and children's door step play facilities,
- We are all disappointed that the building does not respect the views, light, and outlook of its immediate neighbours on Kew Bridge Road.
- We all believe that there should be a way through the centre of the building to the river from Kew Bridge Road.

Finally we would urge all concerned to take note of the unanimous views of the amenity societies when considering amendments to the plans.

Yours sincerely

Robert Colvill, Chairman Strand on The Green Association*

Stephen Browne, Chair, Brentford Community Council*

The Chiswick Protection Group

Terry Thorn, Chair, Gunnersbury and West Chiswick Group

Ben Knight, Executive member Kew Society*

Angela Dixon, Chair West London River Group

* = Amenity societies affiliated to the London Forum of Amenity and Civic Societies which were a Rule 6 party to the previous inquiry who have consistently opposed over-development.