

From Denis Browne, Chairman,
Planning Consultative Committee
Brentford Community Council
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Consultation on Revised Documents for planning application no 1508/A/P6
At the Citroen site, Capital Interchange Way, Hounslow

Dear Sir,

I am writing at the request of the Planning Consultative Committee of the Brentford Community Council to ask you to refuse consent for this application.

We note you have decided to call in the L&Q planning application to determine yourself after a "hearing" and we request that you take our views into consideration before reaching a decision.

Last year you produced a draft New Plan for London, which was sent out for consultation. We expect that you will review the comments you receive and that an amended text will be submitted for a public inquiry before you decide whether you wish to adopt it.

The plan emphasises the importance of housebuilding, particularly for those with low incomes. You have also proposed that there should be a major heist to the annual house-building targets in every borough.

The draft London Plan also considers the full range of problems which face our city, which include better transport, cleaner air and the protection of Urban Green spaces (MOL) and the Green Belt. The shortage of developable land may make some of his objectives difficult to meet.

The BCC fully endorses your concern for new affordable housing, as there are many people who need family housing in our borough that they cannot afford.

The position in Hounslow is particularly unfortunate as the Council have recently approved two schemes which the applicants demonstrated were not viable unless they could be supported by additional funds. The proposal was to permit high density housing, all at full market costs, which would generate funds to “enable” these projects to be built.

The locally popular Brentford Community Stadium required a high-rise hotel and 910 multi-storey flats to generate funds to allow this unviable project to go ahead.

This precedent has been followed by a recent approval of plans to build 300 flats on Half Acre and next to Watermans Park on the river to enable our Arts Centre to be re-located and re-financed, again with few flats available below full market rents.

The problems in Brentford East are particularly severe. Any development there would have to be built around the busy North and South Circular roads connected by the often grid-locked Kew Bridge and by the important A4 and M4 roads, leading to Heathrow and the west. Planning attractive buildings and safe spaces may not be possible. Air Quality is also a problem as it is one of the most polluted areas in West London.

But the Council has now prepared a Draft Planning and Design Plan (SPD) for Brentford East, which does set out planning guidance to develop the area as a whole. This is a welcome move and we hope the Mayor will have the opportunity of considering whether the plans for the L&Q site, which is in Brentford East, not only helps him to meet his targets for affordable housing but also meets the many other needs for our residents which are set out in his own plan and in those prepared by Hounslow.

In our view the Council should not have sought to fund unviable projects by allowing housing at excessive densities, especially when few, if any will be available to those with the greatest need and the minimum resources. Housing needs to be provided for families of all sizes. Plans should include schools and shops and amenities for a full life Your own London plan sets out all these objectives and it is important that the dire need for affordable housing does not unbalance your plan.

We would ask you to support Hounslow’s initiative in promoting the Brentford East SPD.

We note that the planning guidance in the SPD is not followed by this application as the proposed heights significantly exceed those guidelines .

We ask you not to approve this application and to wait for Hounslow Council to complete it's consultation on the draft SPD so it can refine and adopt the document.

When the SPD is in place it will include planning briefs for all the development sites in the Brentford East SPD area, including the Citroen site. These briefs should conform to the SPD guidelines AND require an acceptable level of affordable housing.

We need to plan first.

Yours sincerely

Denis Browne
Chairman, Planning Consultative Committee,
Brentford Community Council.

Cc LB Hounslow
Amenity Societies