



*Friends of School House Lane Orchard*

*59 School House Lane*

*Teddington*

*Middlesex*

*TW11 9DP*

*Tel: 020 8943 3276*

*Email: [ian.jones.healey@btinternet.com](mailto:ian.jones.healey@btinternet.com)*

Bryan Staff  
The Planning Department  
London Borough of Richmond upon Thames  
2nd Floor Civic Centre  
Twickenham TW1 3BZ

09 July 2007

Dear Mr Staff,

**Re: Planning Application No 07/2142/FUL**

We are writing on behalf of The Friends of School House Lane Orchard (FSHLO) to object to the above planning application by Linden Homes.

First, we would like to explain our credentials and interest in this matter.

The FSHLO is a community group formed in March 2006 to conserve the School House Lane Orchard site, its flora, fauna and wildlife habitats as a community resource, promote its use by local people as a place for the enjoyment and study of nature, and promote practical conservation works through voluntary action for the benefit of the local environment and community. Part of the impetus for founding FSHLO was to prevent inappropriate and undesirable development of the Orchard as proposed in Linden Homes' initial planning application (04/2579/FUL), which envisaged the site - a grassy area with a number of mature fruit, nut and other trees and shrubs/hedges - being surfaced and play equipment installed.

The FSHLO relies on volunteering by local residents (we have 30 members, all of whom live locally) and has been awarded a grant by Awards For All. We have also received support from the Council's Parks and Open Spaces team. We are members of the Richmond Environment Network and were given an 'outstanding services for volunteering' award by Richmond Council for Voluntary Service in June 2007.

After Linden Homes' initial application in 2004, to which we were strongly opposed, many of our members spent considerable time working with them to come up with a plan that we felt was just about acceptable. This

became the second application (05/2114/FUL), which was approved by the Council in November 2005. This included removing the proposal for inappropriate development of the Orchard. We are extremely angry that having agreed not to come back for more, they should now be doing just that, and under the dubious pretext of saving the environment.

The view of the proposed new development 'from School Lane' (*sic*) given in Linden Homes' design plan is actually an impression of the view one would get from School House Lane Orchard if this development were to go ahead. As can clearly be seen, the proposed development would ruin the views that local residents currently enjoy from the Orchard and the sense of being surrounded by nature and open space (see photo attached of current view). It would also reduce natural light and overshadow the Orchard. The proposed height of the two blocks shown, at five storeys, is far too high and totally out of keeping with other buildings in the area. The blocks are ugly and massed together.

We are particularly concerned about light and noise pollution from these buildings affecting the wildlife in the Orchard and our gardens. We object to the large terraces, which will exacerbate this pollution, particularly the communal terraces that were not part of the previous proposal. Currently we are fortunate to have little or no light pollution between the Orchard and Bushy Park (the previous commercial use of the Sandy Lane site meant there were no lights at night). The site, the railway line and the Orchard provide a corridor for a rich variety of wildlife, including bats and birds of prey, from Bushy Park to forage and nest further afield. For example, a tawny owl can regularly be heard at night hunting in the Orchard and surrounding gardens. Over the past 15 months, we have been planting more fruit trees and plants and are installing bird and bat boxes in the Orchard to encourage this wildlife. We are concerned that the light and noise pollution would put an end to this, meaning less pleasure and enjoyment for neighbours and less feeding and nesting opportunities for creatures such as owls and bats.

Linden Homes attempts to make a lot of currency about the eco-friendly nature of its application. However, the bare facts are that the biggest environmental impact of their proposals will be the hugely destructive effect of the estimated 500+ residents of the proposed 238 apartments and their cars. Linden's environmental claims don't stand up. They are simply an excuse to make more profit out of this site. This proposal must be rejected.

Yours sincerely,

Ian Jones-Healey, Chair  
Jane Harnden, Treasurer  
Sue Horne, Secretary

Friends of School House Lane Orchard