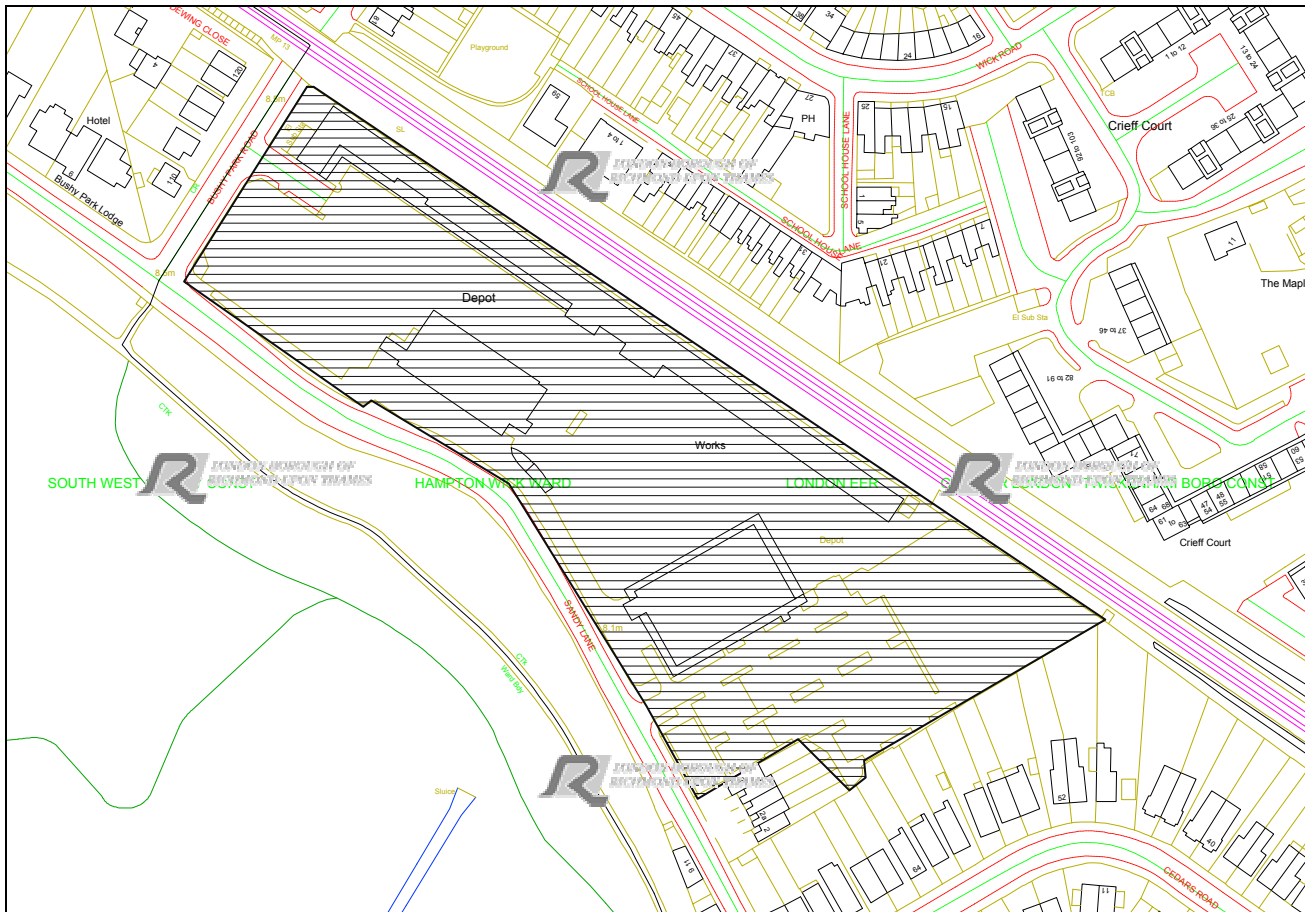


04/2579/FUL  
FORMER SEEBOARD SITE  
SANDY LANE  
TEDDINGTON

HAMPTON WICK WARD  
Contact officer:  
A Wilson



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LA 100019441[2005].'- Do not scale

**Proposal** Demolition of existing Buildings and Erection of Office units, a crèche, Retail/Restaurant, Nursing Home and 229 Flats of which 40% Affordable

**Applicant** Lennon Planning for Linden Homes

**Application Received** 11 August 2004

**Main Development Plan Policies**

UDP – STG 5, 7, 11, ENV 3, 5, 7, 8, 10, 12, 19, 20, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 37, 38, 40, 41, 42, 43, 47, HSG 4, 6, 8, 11, 17, 18, REC 2, 4, 7, HEP 3, 5, 9, SHP 4, EMP 1, 2, 5, TRN 2, TRN 6, 7,8,9, 22, 23 Proposal Site D9, Adjacent to MOL, Cons. Area, Public open Space, Grade I listed Park.  
UDP –First Review, STG 3, 4,5, 7, 8, 11, IMP 1,2, 4, ENV 1, 6, 9, 10, 11, 13, 20, 34, BLT 2, 7,8,9, 11, 12, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 29, 30, 31, TRN 1, 2, 3, 4, 9, 12, 13, HSG 1, 4, 6, 8, 11, 16, 17, 18, EMP 1, 2, 4, CCE 4, 8, 10, 23, TC 2, Proposal Site D9, Adjacent to MOL, Cons. Area, Public Open Space, Grade I listed Park. Departure from the development plan,  
London Plan 2A.6, 3A.1, 3A.2, 3A.4, 3A.5, 3A.8, 3A.15, 3A.17, 3A.20, 3A.21, 3B.2, 3C.1, 3C.2, 3C.16, 3C.19, 3C.21, 3C.22, 3D.2, 3D.9, 4A.7, 4A.8, 4A.9, 4A.11, 4A.13, 4A.14, 4A.16, 4B.1, 4B.3,

4B.4, 4B.6, 4B.7.

## **Present Use** Builders/Timber and Plumbers' Merchants and Offices

**Site, History and Proposal** The application refers to a 2.07 hectare site, which had been occupied by a gasworks between approximately 1875 and 1975, though a gasholder was still present in the western corner of the site until 1987. The site was then occupied as a depot for Seeboard where vehicular servicing was also undertaken. There are currently two substantial buildings on the site, the 3 storey office building comprising 2586 sq.m. floorspace, last occupied by Serco, but now empty, and the 18m high and 1886 sq.m. brick and concrete clad depot building used for storage and offices. The latter forms part of Jewsons builder, timber and plumbers' merchants' site. This also contains 2004 sq.m. of various single storey workshops and storage buildings, mainly abutting the railway along the north-east boundary. Jewsons sells directly to the public as well as to trade customers, though the previous consent only allowed retail as an ancillary activity. There are 96 car spaces associated with the office building close to the south-east boundary.

The site is contained between the railway, also designated a Green Corridor, and Sandy Lane which is a local distributor road linking Teddington and Hampton Wick centres. To the south of Sandy Lane is the Grade I listed historic park, Bushy Park, which is also designated Metropolitan Open Land, Public Open Space, a site of nature importance, and a conservation area in its own right.

Adjacent areas along Sandy Lane are residential in both directions, predominantly 2 and 3 storey detached and semi-detached houses. The houses opposite the site across Bushy Park Road are 2 storeys plus rooms in the pitched roofspace and were developed on what was also part of the gasworks site by the current applicant, Linden Homes, under the reference ref.96/0235/FUL. Adjacent at the corner with Sandy Lane is a hotel, though it is of a similar domestic scale. To the south-east of the site facing Sandy Lane is a terrace of 3 storey houses with integral garages, before the junction with Cedars Road where the houses are typically large two storey detached and semi-detached, plus some converted roofspace. The rear gardens of houses in Cedar Road back onto the south-eastern boundary, where there is significant screening by trees. On the opposite side of the railway, to the north-east are 2 storey Victorian houses on School House Lane, the rear gardens of which back onto the railway. To the east, also on the opposite side of the railway, are post-war residential blocks of 3, 4 and 5 storey height at Crieff Court.

The former gasworks site is heavily contaminated with coal tar products and 3 gas holder bases remain buried. An aquifer crosses beneath the site and has now been culverted.

## **History**

- 66/597 - Use as District Depot for Seeboard, workshops, stores, vehicular repair and washing, covered and open vehicular parks. Approved.
- 68/83 - Use of part of 2<sup>nd</sup> floor stores building as temporary offices. Approved.
- 71/1366 - Erection of extension to vehicle repair workshop to provide additional maintenance facilities for vehicles. Approved.
- 71/2672 - Erection of Extension to provide additional Offices. Approved.
- 72/717 - Erection of office building. Approved.
- 73/2844 Erection of 4 storey office building. Refused.
- 75/364 - Erection of 3 storey office building. Approved.
- 96/0235/FUL - (112-120 Bushy Park Road) Change of use from former Gasholder site and redevelopment to provide nine 2 and 3-bedroom Houses. Approved.
- 97/0824 - Change of Use from former Vehicle Depot, including secure yard garage

workshops, stores, staff and ancillary areas to Timber, Builders' and Plumbers' Merchants with ancillary service mill and Offices. Approved.

- 04/2583/FUL - Duplicate of ref.04/2579/FUL undetermined.

## **Proposal**

The proposal is to redevelop the site completely and build a mixed use scheme comprising 229 residential flats, including 92 affordable units, 3608 sq.m of offices, a 72 bedroom nursing home, a crèche, and a 250 sq.m. retail or restaurant unit. The application is a major development and departure from the UDP. The development would be spread across the site into 16 blocks varying between 3 and 5 storeys, the affordable dwellings being concentrated at the eastern end of the site and the offices on part of the north-east boundary. The nursing home and crèche would be near the middle of the site backing onto the railway. An additional access would be formed onto Sandy Lane to add to the existing accesses onto Sandy Lane and Bushy Park Road. A total of 256 car parking spaces would be provided, with basement and semi-basement car parks provided for the offices, retail and all market residential blocks, except the most south-easterly, which would have surface car parking, as would the affordable housing, crèche and nursing home. Each access would serve its own enclave although emergency and service vehicles could pass between the two easterly accesses.

Although a row of 8 buildings would help define the northern side of Sandy Lane, the buildings' individual accesses would be generally orientated to face the interior of the site. These would have varying degrees of setback, generally between 3m and 8m, although the central Block C would be set back obliquely to a maximum of 18m from Sandy Lane to enable a triangular wedged grass area to be formed in between. Grass amenity areas would be mainly confined to the Sandy Lane frontage and adjacent to the northern boundary, plus some providing buffers between buildings and access routes within the site. Soft landscaped areas of 22.5m by 12m and 18m by 11.5m, traversed by paths, would be created within the office enclaves formed, but otherwise spaces within the site would be mainly vehicular routes, manoeuvring spaces or surface parking areas.

The buildings' sizes would vary considerably. Generally the smaller buildings, in terms of footprint, would be sited towards the north-western end of the site. Typical of these would be the residential blocks A1, A2 and A3 measuring 17.5m by 17.5m. The affordable housing at the eastern end of the site and the nursing home and market residential Block C near the centre of the site would have larger footprints, in the case of Block C 36m by 16m. The affordable housing Blocks G and H would be joined, and apart from a ground level tunnel, would extend for 58m on the elevation facing the rear car park and Cedars Road properties. Block I, consisting of a ground floor crèche and affordable flats on the upper 3 floors, would also have a very substantial footprint in an L-shape with maximum dimensions of 36m by 32m. The height of the blocks varies from 3 storeys adjoining Bushy Park Road, rising to 4 storeys towards the centre of the site and 5 storeys in the case of the market flats at Block D, and dropping to part 3, and part 4 storey in the south-east corner of the site. The affordable blocks and nursing home abutting the railway would be 4 storey. The blocks in most cases are stepped down a storey along the most visible edges of the buildings. The storey heights would be increased by approximately 1.5m where semi-basement car parks underneath are proposed i.e. the blocks facing Sandy Lane with the exception of Block F.

The style of architecture would be contemporary. Flat roofs would be employed throughout and individual elevations would be composed of a variety of materials and elements, buff brick, render, timber boarding, aluminium/zinc metal cladding and other metallic detailing. Individual blocks would display considerable indentation with varying roof heights and extensive use of balconies.

A total of 256 car spaces are proposed, with 207 of these allocated to the residential part of the

development. 260 cycle spaces would be provided.

Improvements are proposed to Sandy Lane, by re-alignment on the bend opposite the proposed access partly to facilitate the formation of the additional access and to enable the formation of a turning lane into it. Enhancements would be made to the pedestrian crossing across Sandy Lane immediately south of the Bushy Park Road junction. Improvements to the railway bridge leading onto Bushy Park Road and a new bus shelter on Sandy Lane would form part of a package and the applicants have expressed a willingness to make contributions towards public transport, the railway footbridge, local play space, education and improvements within the Royal Park. It is hoped that a model will be available at the meeting.

An Environmental Statement has also been submitted with the application, which comprises detailed documents covering land and ground water pollution, drainage and utilities, archaeology, ecology, relationship to Bushy Park, transport, local services and construction methodology. This seeks to establish the degree of any environmental impact by displaying the topic areas likely to have an influence, and then demonstrating how any adverse effects would be mitigated. The topics overlap to some degree with the normal planning considerations, but as a document allows the total environmental impact to be view in a comprehensive manner.

The applicants have appealed this application for non-determination within the prescribed 16 weeks. Subsequently the Secretary of State 'recovered' the appeal from the Inspectorate to make his own decision, due to the size of the development exceeding 150 dwellings, in accordance with powers given under the 1990 Town and Country Planning Act.

**Public and other representations:** Two petitions have been received consisting of 381 and 201 signatures from occupiers in nearby roads, both opposing the development on the following grounds;

1. Excessively dense and massive
2. Poorly designed and visually intrusive from Bushy Park
3. Adding burden to local education, highways, health services etc.
4. Serious loss of light and privacy for neighbouring streets
5. Reducing road safety on Sandy Lane
6. On-street parking

A third petition signed by 11 Sandy Lane residents objects due to;

1. Loss of privacy 2-11 Sandy Lane;
2. Breach in building line adjacent to 2 Sandy Lane;
3. Potential flooding, blockages, damage to underground river;
4. Traffic congestion;
5. Parking overspill;
6. Noise at night and from traffic;
7. Loss of trees near south-east boundary;
8. Excessive density;
9. Design out of keeping;
10. Public transport inadequate.

119 individual letters have been received from residents opposing the scheme on the following grounds;

1. Excessive density, bulk, height and building mass
2. Poor design, inappropriate materials
3. Out of character with nearby buildings

4. Putting burden on health, education services, water etc
5. Adding to traffic congestion, threat to road safety, emergency vehicle access
6. Adding to parking congestion
7. Enough large scale development in Teddington
8. Contamination harmful for specified uses and unclear whether adequate or safe decontamination would be undertaken
9. Increased crime risk
10. Detrimental to views from and into Bushy Park
11. Increased anti-social behaviour, litter, nuisance from pedestrians
12. Loss of light (Bushy Park Road, School House Lane, Wick Road)
13. Light pollution (School House Lane) and from rail bridge lighting
14. Loss of privacy (Bushy Park Road, School House Lane, Cedars Road, Wick Road, the park)
15. No benefit to local wildlife
16. Inadequate recreation, play space
17. Jewsons wish to stay, which offers a valuable local service and existing offices could be let and loss of existing jobs
18. Offices redundant
19. Nursing home location unsuitable
20. Retail puts strain on existing shopping centres and creates nuisance
21. Need for crèche offset by demand created by development
22. Noise including reflected sound from trains, car park area at rear of Cedars Road properties
23. Oppose re-location of Orange phone mast (*not part of proposal*)
24. Access onto Bushy Park Road unsuitable for decontamination traffic
25. Use of Vicarage Road, Cedars Road as 'rat runs'
26. New access to Sandy Lane dangerous
27. Loss of trees (rear of Cedars Road)
28. More houses would reflect character of area better
29. Cramped living conditions for future occupiers
30. Pollution from stream, water quality
31. Cycle facilities inappropriate
32. Overbearing to Sandy Lane and houses in School House Lane
33. Loss of employment site
34. Detrimental to the setting of and views from Bushy Park
35. Points from community liaison not taken on board by Green Issues consultants
36. Toxic gases from works
37. Inaccurate references in applicant's documents (e.g. new Toucan crossing)
38. No need for clutter in School House Lane park
39. Two letters praise the architectural quality; progressive character welcomed, welcomes mix of affordable housing, social facilities and leisure amenities, and loss of existing buildings

Non planning issues also raised include, lower property values, loss of views, damage to roads, loss of (private) views; impact of construction traffic,

**Cllr Arbour and Cllr Parsons** register their objections based on overdevelopment, out of character and unneighbourly.

**Cllr Avins** objects to; loss of privacy, noise nuisance from trains, hazardous decontamination process, overdevelopment, design, water supply, schools, health and local services, parking in existing streets, traffic.

**The Teddington Society** object on the following grounds:

1. Overdevelopment
2. Insufficient demand for offices
3. Inadequate parking
4. Traffic congestion
5. Design of care home inadequate
6. Size of crèche excessive
7. Design,(though not opposed to 'imaginative contemporary approach')
8. Overshadowing of houses to north
9. Inadequate use of energy-saving technology
10. Inadequate decontamination

**Hampton Wick Association** object on the following grounds:

1. Loss of builder's merchants
2. Rigorous decontamination required
3. Places burden on local infrastructure. Section 106 contributions would not reflect costs
4. Less office space needed
5. Overdevelopment and out of keeping with area
6. Poor location for the nursing home
7. Overbearing to properties across railway
8. 'Gateway' buildings not needed
9. Parking congestion
10. Traffic congestion
11. Safety at new access point;
12. Adversely affecting views from Bushy Park
13. More energy saving solutions.

**Friends of Bushy Park** on the following grounds:

1. The almost unbroken wall of building mass on the borders of the Park which would adversely affect views for much of the year and out of character with the area
2. Serious visual impact on the Park
3. Excessive density setting precedent.

**Greater London Authority** The Mayor's initial comments are as follows. The principle of a "medium density mixed use development" would be acceptable in strategic planning terms. However the following strategic matters would be either unacceptable or would need to be re-considered.

- The viability of the offices needs to be considered. Although referring to the London Plan's support for increasing office space and mixed uses on large employment sites, they point to the London Policy Office Review 2004 which indicates that generally for Teddington, speculative office development in the short and medium term may not be viable. A residential-led mixed use scheme (which this would be) would reflect the findings of the Review, and they generally support the mix of uses, but with some underlying concerns about the viability of the offices. Information about the re-location of the builder's yard needs to be provided which is seen as being an important local service in a sustainable location
- The level of affordable housing needs further justification. The proposed units for rent and shared ownership must meet the definitions of social rent and intermediate housing in the London Plan, and subject to the views of this Council's Housing department, more larger units should be provided
- There is very little amenity space and no formal play facilities for younger children, which

should be included on site. A contribution towards improvements to Bushy Park should also be sought given that it would also cater for a range of recreational needs

- There is insufficient evidence to ensure that the development will satisfactorily minimise the potential adverse impact of noise on future occupants (from the railway and Sandy Lane)
- The identity of spaces in the public realm within the site (as referred to in the applicant's design statement) is weak and poorly defined. The spaces would appear to be dominated by surface car parking
- An assessment of the expected number of bus trips should be made to enable Transport for London to consider whether changes to the bus network will be needed. There is a shortfall in disabled parking and the crèche parking should take the form of a drop off /pickup area. The cycle spaces should be well lit and covered and those associated with business to have access to changing facilities
- It is noted that there is extensive use of ramps, but an access statement (for disabled) should be produced. All dwellings should be built to 'lifetime homes' standards and the proportion of wheelchair accessible units increased so users are not restricted by tenure
- There is no evidence that the Mayor's energy hierarchy for the heating and cooling of buildings. An assessment of energy demand for the scheme should be made
- A bat survey is required and where appropriate mitigation

The GLA note that the density would be approximately 379 habitable rooms/hectare whereas the density matrix in the London Plan considers 200-250 h.r.h. would be appropriate. Their Character Map in the draft Housing Provision SPG defines the site as having a 'suburban' character. However, they conclude that the site is relatively self-contained, and is capable of adopting its own character without harming the surrounding lower densities. Bushy Park is also considered as offsetting the relatively small amount of amenity space within the development

**Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE)** has visited the site and welcome its redevelopment and give the scheme general support. They find the site layout convincing and the use of materials and architecture appropriate. The success of the scheme would depend on the final detailing and materials. They do consider that the nursing home siting is inappropriate.

**English Heritage** do not wish to make representations and recommend that government guidance, development plan policies and local conservation advice is followed.

**Royal Parks** welcome redevelopment because of the unsightly prominent existing buildings, but raise concerns about

1. scale and density with little spacing between buildings
2. views from the Park especially in winter
3. building height, bearing mind the semi-basement levels raise overall height
4. light pollution at night to Park users and wildlife
5. overlooking into Park

**English Heritage (archaeology)** have endorsed an archaeological desk-based assessment. On balance it does not seem likely that redevelopment would affect archaeology. Any requirement for

pre-determination archaeological assessment/evaluation can be waived.

**The Crime Prevention Officer** considers that,

1. surface parking close to dwellings is always preferred to underground car parks. If the latter is approved, then an effective form of access control would be needed to the vehicle ramp, stairwells and doors, and a grille to the air vents
2. The offices' siting adjacent to the railway would make them vulnerable to night time burglary and graffiti
3. Ground floor windows in nursing homes would be vulnerable to night time intruders and he suggests all ground floor windows have sash windows which can be fitted with appropriate locks

**Environment Agency** agree with the contamination report that the site is contaminated. They will require a remediation strategy for assessment outlining the remediation and monitoring programmes, and an assessment to derive site specific target levels for the contaminants of concern. They have reviewed the submitted Flood Risk Assessment and Outline Foul and Surface Water Drainage Strategies Report, and raise no objections providing the works are completed as detailed.

**Thames Water** Regarding foul drainage, the development would produce foul sewage flows far in excess of the existing use of the site. However, without conducting an impact study and detailed modelling of the local sewerage network, it cannot be established whether the existing infrastructure could receive the proposed flows. As the expected flows would equate to 63% of the pipe capacity into which the development would connect, this could lead to foul sewerage flooding of the new development, as well as properties upstream and downstream. Thames Water would accept discharges into the network up to the flow rate, which has discharged in the past, but not any increase. It would be the developer's responsibility to demonstrate that the historic rate of discharge was not being exceeded. The developer would be expected to fund any investigations or impact studies and any upsizing of sewers or upgrade of the Sandy Lane Pumping Station arising. Surface water drainage should be to separate sewers and to reduce the possibility of surcharging of and flooding from those sewers, storm flows should be restricted by storage and flow limiting devices. Any drainage of leachate or contaminated groundwater arising through land decontamination, could only be discharged to a public sewer if agreed to by Thames Water. They also need to assess the capacity of the network water supply infrastructure.

They require all details of water infrastructure and for provision of water supplies to be approved prior to works commencing.

**The Garden History Society** do not wish to comment.

**Richmond and Twickenham NHS Trust** do not object to the development, but are requesting a financial contribution towards the increased burden placed on local health provision. The current GP surgery in the area is stretched to capacity, and as the present facilities are inadequate, there are plans to re-locate it into more suitable premises.

**Network Rail** have requested that an informative be applied requiring details of changes in levels, new trees, drainage details on areas adjacent to rail land.

#### **Professional Comments**

The principle of development is accepted on this brownfield site, which would remove two large unattractive buildings. However, the benefits of adding a large number of dwellings to the housing

stock, including a substantial amount of affordable housing, has to be weighed against the impact of the development on the character of the surrounding area and Bushy Park, and the spacing standards within and around the development itself. The scheme would retain a significant part of the site for employment activities, but has to be viewed in context particularly regarding the site accessibility by different transport modes and the knock-on effects of parking on nearby roads. Other key issues are the adequacy of supporting infrastructure and services, land contamination, neighbour amenity and the mix of affordable housing offered.

#### Massing, Bulk and Design

Generally, the scheme is considered an overtly dense, cramped overdevelopment of the site, which would be out of keeping with the character and appearance of the area and would be harmful to the setting and views from Bushy Park.

The scheme proposes an extremely high density measured both in terms of residential units and habitable rooms per hectare. This high density is argued by the applicants to be in accordance with Government policy, but it must be remembered that density is not an aim in its own right. To be sustainable, density and quantity must be constrained both by a proper respect for context and, consequently, by exemplary design quality. In this case the high density of the scheme:

- fails to take proper consideration of its context and consequently has a very poor relationship with the surrounding area;
- generates an unacceptable internal layout and a scheme characterised by a series of profound design flaws manifest in the form/scale of the buildings and spaces proposed, as well as to the residential amenity of future occupiers;
- creates a significantly detrimental impact to the wider setting of the site particularly in terms of the adverse impact upon important views from Bushy Park.

These major concerns are explored in greater detail below.

#### Relationship to the Area

The development would, in particular, be visible in many views along, and from Sandy Lane. The site is immediately adjacent to the existing Sandy Lane buildings at both ends of the site and those in Bushy Park Road and the development would therefore be perceived as a natural continuation to the townscape sequence. There is therefore no justification in trying to treat this as a “stand-alone site” setting its own pattern of development. The scheme must fit comfortably into the existing townscape and in these terms must respond more appropriately to the key characteristics of the building line, scale and enclosure of the built form.

The existing almost exclusive pattern of development in both above roads, and in Cedars Road to the east, is of 2 to 3 storey domestic scaled detached or semi-detached buildings. Across the barrier formed by the railway to the north, the buildings are even smaller terraced houses in School House Lane and Wick Road. Although the Crieff Court flats further north-east are 3 to 5 storey, they are uncharacteristic of the area, but in any case, are well spaced in their surroundings.

In the characteristic oblique views to be had along sandy lane, the effect of the tight sequence of large buildings facing on to this road would be to create an entirely uncharacteristic ‘wall’ of development. This would create a form and scale of enclosure alien to the area.

The area is typically suburban. However, there is little or no reflection of the local character in the scheme. The size of the blocks would be substantially bulkier than the typical buildings of the area having a significantly greater scale (as a function of larger footprints and more height) than the prevailing context. . The footprints of the smallest blocks (K and M for offices) would be

approximately twice the size of the typical nearby buildings (taking a pair of semi-detached as one building), whilst Block C's footprint would be typically 7 to 8 times larger.

The bulk created by the buildings' excessive footprints would be exacerbated by the building heights. Comparing the eaves level of typical pitched roof buildings in the area with parapet levels of the proposed blocks (these being the prominent points of reference the eye is drawn to when viewing height), there would be increases ranging from approximately 50% to more than a doubling in height. The increases would be less marked for the blocks bordering Bushy Park Road and the 3 storey block N at the south-east site corner. However, the large majority of the blocks would be substantially at 4 or 5 storey height. With these generally having either unsubstantial or no insets on their upper floors, the overall roof height would be apparent. The roof heights of buildings closer to the middle of the Sandy Lane elevation, would reach 13.2m at Block B, 12.8m at Block C and 15.4m in the case of Block D. On the railway side of the site, the buildings would appear as 4 storey with roof heights approximately 11m (the extra height facing Sandy Lane being mainly due to semi-basement car parks).

The proposed height combined with the size of the footprints would result in a building mass created substantially out of keeping with the surrounding area. The massing towards the eastern end of the site would be substantial. The blocks G and H would adjoin on the upper floors to form an L-shaped building mass, with its longest elevation continuing for 58m. Although there are currently two very substantial buildings on site, these appear in isolation, and do not represent the same adverse impact on the local character, that a comprehensive coverage of the site with 16 substantial blocks would bring, even though it is recognised that the 2 buildings appear out of context with the locality.

The overdevelopment in the context of the surrounding area is further emphasised by density comparisons. Overall density of the scheme would be 108 dwellings/hectare (excluding the nursing home units), compared to figures in the adjacent areas of approximately 26 dwellings/hectare in the Cedars Road/Vicarage Road area to the south-east, and 16 dwellings/ha. in the residential area to the north-west of the site. These are clearly substantially below the density now proposed, and even in the case of the flats at Crieff Court across the railway, the density would be approximately 57 dwellings/ha. Although nationally and regionally a more efficient use of brownfield sites is being advocated, this has to be balanced against protecting the prevailing character of an area, and based on the area's 'suburban' character and moderate accessibility, the density would exceed the London Plan's density indicator by a substantial margin.

The intensity of the development would also manifest itself by the difficulty there would be in obtaining views through the site due to the site's coverage with buildings. Though gaps between existing buildings in the area are smaller, the bulk of the proposed blocks demands that greater spacing be provided. The cramping of the development would also be evident in certain cases from the lack of adequate spacing between the new buildings behind the Sandy Lane and Bushy Park Road footways. Whereas the existing buildings, and the existing flats at 2 to 2d Sandy Lane, are set back 10m, most of the proposed buildings would be much tighter to the back of footway, which given their height would also cause an overbearing impact. Block A1 at the western corner would be set back only 2 to 3m from the back of both footways, and Blocks E and F at the south-east corner would step forward of the adjacent 2 to 2d Sandy Lane building in an obtrusive manner.

It is noted that CABE have offered the scheme general support, although their comments have concentrated on internal aspects of the scheme rather than its relationship to the wider area.

#### Views from Bushy Park

Views from Bushy Park would be adversely affected for some of the year when trees near the park

boundary are not in leaf. The existing buildings do not enhance the Park's setting, but whereas these currently account for approximately one third of the site frontage, the proposed development would read as a continuous wall of building mass, as gaps between the buildings would be lost by the other buildings within the immediate backdrop. Even in summer, views of the development from underneath the tree canopy would be apparent from the footpath running parallel to the park wall. Although English Heritage have chosen not to comment, it is considered that the development would be insufficiently sensitive to the setting of, and views from, this highly protected Grade I listed historic Park. Besides breaching Policy BLT 3, the scheme would also conflict with other UDP policies covering Bushy Park. It would adversely affect the setting and views of the Park as a Conservation Area (BLT 2) and the open aspect adjacent to Metropolitan Open Land (ENV 1) and designated public open space (ENV 11).

#### Internal layout

The effect of high density and consequently cramped overdevelopment would reflect itself in various ways through the site layout.

The layout and cramping due to insufficient spacing between buildings, would mean there was generally inadequate public amenity space. There would be no obvious main public space within the site, acting as a focal point for the community, which might be expected for a scheme of this size. The applicant's Design Statement refers to a 'piazza', 'avenue', 'space' and 'square', but on inspection, most of these spaces are dominated by hardstanding for parking or to facilitate vehicular movements.

In the case of the grass area shown between Block C and Sandy Lane, its use as an amenity area may be limited given its poor natural enclosure and exposure to the noise and fumes of traffic on Sandy Lane. The other potential areas for use as amenity space would be very limited for a development of this size. The only other significant amenity areas would be four grass enclaves adjacent to the 92 affordable flats and two grass areas formed within enclaves formed by the offices. However, the former would mainly serve to form a buffer with the railway, and being to the north, would tend to be overshadowed, whilst the latter would tend to be associated with the proposed offices.

Besides having insufficient private amenity space for residents, there would be no devoted play area for small children. The amenity space arrangements and setting for the nursing home appear totally inadequate with a limited strip of land adjacent to the railway. The expectation that nursing home residents or small children could make regular use of Bushy Park is unrealistic given the need to cross Sandy Lane. Social services officers have also indicated that the nursing home's facilities and internal spacing standards would fall below national registration standards for nursing homes.

The closeness of the buildings would mean that many of the flats' occupiers would suffer from direct mutual overlooking. There would be many instances where window to window relationships within the development would be well under the Council's 20m guideline distance. These unacceptable relationships would lead to poor residential amenity and lack of privacy for future occupiers.

Comments from outside bodies on the internal layout have been mixed. CABE find the pattern of private and public spaces convincing whereas the GLA consider the public realm areas to be weak and poorly defined, partly due to the dominance of surface car parking.

#### Design detail

There are no strong arguments for opposing the contemporary architectural style, incorporating flat roofs. A lot of attention has been paid to breaking down the facades into contrasting but

complimenting materials, protrusions, recessions, and balconies, so that the elevations would not appear bland. Though it is not typical of the adjoining residential areas, these are not Conservation Areas, and there are plenty of examples in the Borough of modern design sited in close juxtaposition with more traditional architectural forms. Government advice in PPS 1 states that obviously bad design should be refused, but this is more directed towards scale, bulk and layout rather than architectural style. This is supported by UDP Policy BLT 11.

### Land Use

Mixed uses schemes are generally encouraged by UDP policies STG 5 and IMP 2, in line with government guidance, subject to the protection of existing uses by other policies. In this case the existing uses are *sui generis*, covering the larger building merchants activity on site, and Class B1 offices, and the property is considered as an 'employment site' and therefore subject to employment policies in the UDP. In particular Policy EMP 4 is designed to prevent the loss of such land from employment purposes. Similarly, the GLA consider that these uses can be considered in the context of the Mayor's employment policies.

A comparison with the existing 'employment category' floorspace (including the building merchants floorspace) reveals a decrease from 6479 sq.m. to 3608 sq.m. i.e. by 2871 sq.m. However by including the nursing home, crèche and retail/restaurant uses in the figure, it could be argued that 6469 sq.m. of uses providing an employment component were now proposed i.e. the loss would be only 10 sq.m. floorspace. By making the assessment using employment numbers, with the projected total being 197, there would be a substantial increase from approximately 35 currently employed at the building merchants. The site however is currently under utilised, partly as a result of the empty office block. Even so, the employment numbers would increase by approximately 23 from the period when Serco and Seaboard occupied the site when the numbers projected were approximately 174. From that period the projected increase in office staff would be from 94 to 132.

However despite the presumption in favour of retaining employment uses on site in Policy EMP 4, officers are objecting to the amount of office space being proposed in this location. The site is only moderately accessible by public transport, reflected by the score of 3 in the London Plan's Public Transport Accessibility Level matrix (PTAL). Buses only run half hourly on Sandy Lane, services on Kingston Road are approximately 500m away and Hampton Wick rail station is 640m away. The site is not within a town or local centre, or on the edge of one, yet those are the locations most suited to benefiting from good public transport links. It is therefore considered likely that this development would attract substantial numbers of office staff commuting by car. This would run contrary to Government advice in PPG13, which seeks to reduce the length and number of car journeys. Office staff tend to be less local than in the case of other employment generating uses. The UDP policies EMP 1,2 and 4 and TRN 1, 2 and 4 all refer to good accessibility and links to public transport as being important considerations in the assessment of new developments. Also the London Plan aims to support high trip generating development at locations with high levels of public transport accessibility and capacity.

An integral part of the above strategy has been the Council's adoption of maximum parking standards. The proposed 19 office car spaces complies with this, but given the location, and notwithstanding the applicant's initiatives regarding a Travel Plan, it is likely that there would be many commuting by car within the projected 132 office staff. One likely result of this would be that Bushy Park Road and roads to the north of the railway e.g. School House Lane and Wick Road, would come under intensive pressure to accommodate extra parking. The numbers of vehicles seeking kerbside spaces would be likely to cause localised congestion which would be detrimental to the amenity of the area, the flow of traffic and road safety (see also Parking paragraph). With the inclusion of a crèche and nursing home and retail/restaurant supporting a further 65 jobs, there

would be further pressure from parking, although in the context of the sustainability issue, staff in these jobs would tend to be more local, and would be less likely to drive.

It is not considered that the impact on parking in the neighbouring area from the current authorised uses being fully utilised, would have the same effect as in the proposed case, because the existing offices have 96 on-site parking spaces. In considering a redevelopment, the Council must maintain a consistent stance by imposing the current maximum parking standard in order also to limit new influxes of car-borne commuting.

There are also concerns about the viability of the proposed additional offices in this location. Although supporting a 'residential-led mixed use scheme', the GLA have reservations about the viability of the office element. This is despite their draft Industrial Capacity SPG, which considers that in view of Richmond's relatively small amount of employment land and low levels of vacancy, changes to other uses should be restricted. However, in their London Policy Office Review of 2004, speculative office schemes in Teddington district centre in both the short and medium (to 2011) terms, are considered to be unviable. In the case of Kingston town centre, which is the closest town centre, they consider speculative office development to be unviable in the short term and only possibly viable in the medium term. Sandy Lane is less accessible than either of these sites by public transport. The same review also states that across the Borough there is already office development in the pipeline to satisfy short term demand, and enough to satisfy 60% of long term demand (until 2016). Although the viability of schemes is mainly a matter for market forces, there is the danger that the Council may be pressurised to agree a less appropriate use for unlettable office buildings at a later date.

In certain circumstances this package of uses and increase in employment might have been deemed to satisfy Policy EMP 4. However, the policy also refers to the likely access, parking and traffic implications whilst EMP 1 and 2 for new business developments also refer to public transport accessibility. The amount of office space in this off-centre location has to be considered incompatible with a strategy of minimising the number and length of trips by office staff. The location may prove to be unviable for the amount of offices, but if not, a further side effect would almost inevitably be excessive parking pressure on nearby residential roads.

Although raised by the GLA as an objection, the loss of the builders' merchants use would not be contrary to any UDP policies, which are not there to protect specific users, even though it is recognised that there may be difficulty in finding an alternative site within the Borough for it.

#### Affordable Housing

Although the 40% minimum of dwellings would be affordable housing as required by Policy HSG 6, the mixture of dwellings would fail to meet the Council's housing needs criteria as covered in HSG 6 and the Council's supplementary planning guidance.

The requirement is for 75% of affordable units to be for the social rented sector, whilst 25% could then be shared ownership. The GLA's Mayor requires 70% social rented and 30% 'intermediate' (similar to shared ownership criteria) housing. The applicants' figures however, indicate that 61% of the affordable units would be shared ownership and 39% social rented.

Furthermore the social rented dwellings are mainly required for families and should therefore normally be for 2, 3 or 4 bedroom properties. However, the applicants are proposing 61% of these units as one-bedroom, 39% for 2-bedroom and no 3 or 4 bedroom units and, as such, would not match with Council needs in this sector. On the other hand, one-bedroom units are considered more appropriate for shared ownership units, as these are most genuinely affordable, yet 70% of these

units would be 2-bedroom and 30% one-bedroom.

Consequently the mixture of affordable dwellings would display a mismatch in relation to the Council's housing needs.

#### Other housing policy

The number of small (one-bedroom) units within the market sector would be 35%, which exceeds the 25% requirement in Policy HSG 11. Ideally the development should display a mixture of houses and flats, but it is recognised that the provision of houses would add substantially to land decontamination costs, because of the need to remove a greater amount of topsoil in order to make grass areas suitable as gardens.

#### Neighbour amenity

The proposal would adversely affect the amenity of various existing residential occupiers. Properties on the western side of Cedars Road, and particularly Nos. 52 to 64 Cedars Road would be confronted with Blocks G and H, which would form a continuous wall extending for 58m at a height of 3 and 4 storeys, 16m behind the rear of the above properties' gardens. The appearance would be visually intrusive and overbearing and only partially mitigated by landscape screening. Though not directly behind the town houses at 2 to 2d Sandy Lane, the same building mass would form a major visual intrusion from the rear of those properties. Also, the bulk of the buildings adjacent to the railway would appear visually intrusive to residents from the rear of School House Lane properties, and the 4-storey height would appear overbearing from rear gardens. The new buildings would be slightly further than 25m from the back of School House Lane gardens and in all cases, the distances would be too great for loss of privacy or substantial loss of light arguments to be sustainable.

#### Parking

A total of 256 car spaces are proposed out of a possible 278 spaces, were the scheme providing the maximum number under the Council's adopted standard. However, although under the adopted maximum standard, the site is considered only moderately well connected by public transport. This is reflected in its ranking of 3 in the London Plan's Public Transport Accessibility Level (PTAL). It is therefore likely that substantial numbers of office workers, residents and visitors would arrive by car. However, given that Cedars Road and the roads to the south-east of the site are within a Controlled Parking Zone, and Sandy Lane is unsuitable for parking, the likelihood is that there would be considerable pressure for parking in roads to the north of the site and Bushy Park Road. However, Wick Road and School House Lane mainly consist of terraced houses with restricted off-street parking and opportunities for further on-street parking would be limited. In these circumstances it is considered that the Council's maximum standard for residential should be imposed, so as to help mitigate the localised traffic congestion and the search for kerbside spaces which would adversely affect the free flow of traffic, road safety and the local amenity.

However the 256 spaces provision on site would be reduced further by various factors. To comply with disabled standards for parking spaces in dimensions, number and spread through the development, there would be an overall net loss in numbers, as disabled spaces are wider. The lack of disabled spaces serving the nursing home and in the basements is noticeable. Approximately 7 spaces have sub-standard manoeuvring aisles in front.

There would be some mismatching in the allocation of car spaces around the site in relation to the respective units served. The lower ratio of provision under the one space per dwelling maximum, would fall most particularly within the parking areas associated with the affordable housing Blocks I, G and H where 63 spaces would be provided for 93 dwellings.

The introduction of a CPZ would help mitigate the on-street parking congestion, but this would be at a cost and there could be no guarantee of its agreement at this stage.

The 260 cycle spaces would be adequate in number to meet the Council's adopted standards. However the storage facilities at surface level and in 2 of the 3 basements would not be secure i.e. enclosed in cages. Also the siting of the surface level facilities would be poor in various cases, i.e. in relation to building entrances and in causing obstructions. Non-resident cycle users have not been provided with shower facilities. These are details, which could mainly be rectified with minor adjustments, although the poor siting is partly a result of the cramped overdevelopment.

#### Other Transport

The applicant's Transport Assessment has not provided any pedestrian flow information for the site, where there is likely to be a significant increase in numbers compared to the present levels. The GLA's objections, which question the ability of the existing bus network to service the site, particularly at peak times, stem from this. The applicant has agreed to provide a new bus shelter on Sandy Lane, but there may be potential for a contribution towards improving services on Sandy Lane or on other nearby routes. In the case of Sandy Lane, buses currently run twice an hour.

The applicants have submitted a document, which could form the basis of a Travel Plan, in the event of planning permission being granted. This seeks to demonstrate measures to promote alternatives to car use. Transport engineers have indicated a number of ways in which its effective implementation could be improved.

#### Highways

The Council's engineers are satisfied on the basis of the Transport Assessment undertaken, that the scheme would not have an adverse impact on the road network. HGV movements to the site would be reduced with the loss of the builder's merchants. The re-alignment and widened footway on Sandy Lane and the additional footway on Bushy Park Road are all acceptable in principle subject to details, which could be agreed through a Section 106 agreement. The proposed alterations to the Sandy Lane pedestrian crossing are welcome in principle, though certain details would be subject to negotiation. Also the pedestrian footway at the Bushy Park Road and Sandy Lane junction would need widening to ease pedestrian movement, this being related to the point already made regarding the cramped siting of the closest block (A1) behind the respective footways.

The improvements proposed to the railway bridge including improved lighting and CCTV would be welcome as part of a S.106 package. Any potential light nuisance caused could be overcome by sensitive design.

However, the scheme fails to make adequate provision for service vehicles, to the retail unit or to the offices, nursing home and crèche. The area for the turning of service vehicles near the western end of the site would also be sub-standard. There are further criticisms from engineers on the design of ramps and access to the basement car parks and possible obstruction of sightlines due to the siting of ground level refuse stores. These are further symptoms of the cramped overdevelopment of the site. It may also be the case that stores sited within basements would need to be re-located in order to comply with the Council's refuse collection arrangements.

#### Land contamination

Because of the heavy contamination, a Site Investigation Report has been submitted with the application, consisting of a desk-top study of available historic and environmental resources and 2 phases of intrusive investigation, the sinking of boreholes and taking of samples, by a specialist

geotechnical consultancy, Southern Testing. The bases of former gasholders are buried up to about 10m depth and there are liquor and tar tanks and other infilled buried structures. In investigating soil and groundwater contamination, the consultants are agreed that in the absence of adequate remediation measures, there would be unacceptable risks to human health, vegetation and groundwater as a result of contamination by poly-aromatic hydrocarbons, petroleum hydrocarbons, benzene derivatives, asbestos, arsenic and cyanide. Also, building materials and underground services are considered to be at risk from hydrocarbon contamination. The investigations indicate considerable variations in contamination across the site. More significant contamination has been found in groundwater and from volatile organic vapours. Any redevelopment works on site would be likely to require mitigation measures. Surface water contamination was found to be insignificant when samples were taken from the culverted stream. The proposed development would require deep piled foundations or ground treatment. Spoil generation would in turn lead to off site disposal in licensed landfill sites.

A combination of remedial techniques are suggested including product removal and containment/stabilisation for the deep infilled structures, traditional excavation and removal probably with some pre-treatment, groundwater treatment possibly by 'pump and treat' and bio-remediation. In general the applicants would wish to minimise the need for off-site disposal of waste.

However the initial investigation is not a definitive remedial strategy and tests and discussions are on-going with the Council's Land Contamination Officer. Because this is a lengthy process, it is as yet uncertain to what depth treatment or excavation will be needed for different parts of the site, and to what extent treatment on site or disposal to landfill sites will form part of the final remediation strategy. However, the Land Contamination Officer is satisfied that the site investigation work undertaken to date and the applicant's approach to this, suggests that they will be able to fulfil remediation works to a satisfactory standard.

Though the applicants would wish to justify the amount of development being proposed by the need to offset the cost of the investigation and remediation works, officers would not allow this to compromise satisfactory remediation standards for the decontamination of the site.

The Environment Agency have also considered the Site Investigation Report and are not raising objections at this stage, though they would want to assess the remediation strategy in due course.

As a condition cannot be imposed under the current application, land contamination would also form grounds for refusal.

#### Drainage

In most cases drainage does not form a planning consideration, but because of the scale of this proposed development, there could be significant implications for the drainage infrastructure of the area. Thames Water advise that the scheme would generate foul sewage flows far in excess of the current flows, and suggest that there is a real risk of flooding up and downstream and in the new development. In the absence of an impact study and detailed modelling having been undertaken of the local sewerage network, it is uncertain whether the infrastructure could cope with the extra discharge. As no agreement has been reached with Thames Water, an objection would have to be raised due to the failure to demonstrate that there would be sufficient capacity in the foul sewerage network, and that this might lead to flooding. Similarly, it has not been demonstrated that the surface water drainage system could cope with flows.

#### Trees

Two mature trees, a yew and an ash, are close to the rear boundary of Cedar Road gardens. Roots to these trees would be harmed due to the construction of parking bays close to this boundary. The trees offer good screening for the houses behind, and it would be difficult to provide adequate replacements. Although it might be possible to secure their retention by way of conditions, or amendments to the car park layout, this issue has not been addressed by the applicant, and the harm caused by damage to the trees would form grounds for refusal.

#### Retail policy

The proposed retail or restaurant unit, being 250 sq.m. is considered too large for this location outside any recognised local centre. It could not be regarded as a purely local facility serving the development and, as such, would be harmful to the Council's overall retail strategy, which seeks to enhance the established town and local shopping centres, which is supported by Policy TC 2. The centres affected would be Kingston Road, Teddington, Hampton Wick and Teddington centre. Though a restaurant would be preferred on policy grounds, the applicants have left open the option of a single retail unit.

#### Health facilities

The development will place an increased financial burden on GP services and local primary health care facilities. The inclusion of a 72 bed nursing home would also be a significant factor. A contribution proportionate to the increased burden is being sought by officers, but in the absence of any agreement with the applicants, this would form further grounds for refusal.

#### Education

The Education Department have calculated that the development would generate 64 primary and 21 secondary school places, and based on the projected shortage of school places in Hampton Wick/Teddington, a financial contribution of £421,652 has been sought in line with Policies CCE 8 and HSG 18. In the absence of any condition or legal agreement being imposed, the lack of an education contribution forms a ground for refusal.

#### Crime Prevention

Ideally officers would wish to incorporate all of the Crime Prevention Officer's recommendations. However to insist upon no basement or semi-basement parking and on the re-siting of all offices away from the railway would put too onerous a demand on the scheme's viability. Also, the Policy BLT 17 is based on crime and safety, but does not specifically refer to either of the above design problems. In the event that permission was being granted, a condition could be applied to ensure that effective access controls were provided for basement access ramps, stairwells and doors and a grille to air vents.

#### Archaeology

The conclusions drawn by English Heritage's archaeological advisor, being the Council's consultee on archaeological matters, (see Public and other Representations) are accepted, and no pre-determination archaeological field evaluation is recommendation prior to a planning decision.

#### Wheelchair housing

The proposals do not meet the Council's standards for housing to be accessible for wheelchair users. To meet this standard a minimum of 10% of dwellings should be designed as such, as stated in Policy HSG 8. The proposal indicates 5.2% of units being designed to be capable of such use, meaning there would be a substantial shortfall, despite the fact that on larger sites, the provision of such dwellings would be more viable. There is also no indication that the wheelchair units selected would be spread between affordable and market categories. The GLA's policy that 100% of new housing should be built to lifetime homes standards is not a Richmond policy, although the applicant

is advised that the Mayor has stated they he would not re-consider the application until conformation has been provided that **all** homes will be built to lifetime standards.

### Recreation space

In an attempt to help ameliorate the shortage of recreation space within the scheme, the applicants have agreed to make a £80,000 financial contribution towards provision of play equipment on the small park at the end of School House Lane and to make unspecified improvements in Bushy Park. The School House Lane site is D9 Proposal Site in the UDP where it has already been agreed to upgrade the park into a children's playground.

However, these provisions, though welcome, do not adequately respond to the objection regarding the deficiency in recreation space within the application site. In particular, it could not be expected that these areas off site would be as readily accessible for young toddlers, the elderly and less mobile.

Although the above provision of the above improvements could have formed part of a legal agreement, no planning permission is being recommended, and the lack of adequate recreation space forms part of the general objection to the scheme based on it being a cramped and over intensive development.

### Noise

Due to the potential for noise pollution from traffic on Sandy Lane and the railway to the north of the site, the applicants have conducted acoustic studies and made proposals as to how future occupiers would be protected from excessive noise disturbance. The measures involve installing 'high performance acoustic glazing' on those habitable rooms most susceptible to external noise. These are in practice those windows facing the railway and Sandy Lane. Other windows would be double glazed. However, the GLA have raised objections on the basis that there were flaws in the acoustic consultants' methodology. This makes it doubtful that the maximum internal noise levels sought by government guidance in PPG 24, WHO Guidelines for Community Noise and BS sound insulation standards would, as claimed by the applicants, be achieved. The GLA's comments are supported by Council environmental health officers. The ambiguity in methodology applies to all blocks. A further issue arises because in the absence of air conditioning, the closure of all windows in order to achieve sound insulation, would result in the overheating of buildings.

Because of the potential for excess noise from trains affecting those who may wish to use the grass areas as amenity space along the northern boundary, the applicants have offered to construct a fence or wall along this boundary. Though no details are provided, the wall or fence should achieve some 10-15 dB(A) reduction in noise from rail traffic. Even so the 50-55dB(A) WHO standard for external noise in residential areas, would probably not be achieved.

It should be born in mind that the noise levels being sought, both internally and externally, would be below the levels commonly encountered by many residential properties abutting railways and busy roads across the Borough. The issue appears resolvable by applying a higher standard of acoustic protection and providing air conditioning to prevent rooms from overheating. However, an objection is raised as the measures currently proposed fail to offer adequate safeguards to protect future occupiers from external noise.

The erection of a boundary wall on the railway boundary, together with the facades of the proposed buildings on this boundary, raises issues about 'reflected noise' effecting residents to the north of the railway and future occupiers. A boundary wall would be unlikely to result in any significant extra noise, than that already present with the existing single storey buildings along this boundary. It has

not been possible to obtain measurements of how the proposed buildings' facades might increase noise for residents opposite, with the from those facades from the proposed buildings facing the railway, but it might contribute to some of the loss of amenity to School House Lane residents already referred to. (see Neighbour Amenity).

### Energy and Resource Conservation

Of the issues relating to energy and resource conservation, transport arrangements and their relationship to the location of the new development, are probably the most important. The objections to the amount of office space covered in the section under Land Use are then substantially because of the likely extra car-borne commuting into the area.

There are however other issues concerning energy and resource conservation, which the applicants refer to. The Council has policies intended to ensure that the design and external materials of new buildings and external works take account of energy and resource conservation. The applicants have set out a number of energy saving measures, which would be incorporated into the buildings and their construction. The principal features would be the inclusion of energy efficient gas boilers, provision of SAP (home energy ratings) of 80 or more for new dwellings, double glazing, energy efficient lighting and the use of sustainable and locally-sourced construction materials where possible. Recycled materials would also be used extensively in the site preparation and infrastructure, following a comprehensive audit of existing materials on site. Other measures referred to as being intended to manage resources, and which come to some degree under planning control, are to work constructively to ensure that domestic waste is disposed of and recycled in line with the Council's waste management procedures, and measures to promote sustainable water drainage.

The measures however fall short of what might be expected for a development on this scale. Policy BLT 31 refers to the need for developments to maximise potential for energy generation from renewable resources and resource conservation. There are no renewable technologies incorporated within the scheme. The choice of a system based on energy-efficient gas boilers has not been justified, whilst there are potentially more energy efficient systems available. The GLA Mayor has referred to a hierarchy of energy heating systems based on progressively more efficient technologies. Also no energy audit of the buildings has been provided as required by BLT 31. Policy BLT 11 includes a list of ecological design principles, which the Council wishes to encourage. The GLA make a similar criticism for failing to include an energy demand assessment.

Regarding sustainable drainage systems, the provision of water butts for rainwater harvesting and porous pavements are positive steps, though the site would mainly be drained by a traditional gravity system. It is also likely that infiltration type drainage e.g. soakaways, would be impractical because of the land contamination issue. However, it is disappointing that a greater reduction in the existing very high level of site coverage with impermeable hardstanding, and high water runoff, could not have been reduced further by introducing more grass and soft landscaped areas.

### **Conclusion**

The proposed scheme is considered an excessive and over intensive development of the site. It would remove two large unattractive buildings, but replace them with 16 large buildings, the scale and bulk of which would be harmful to the suburban character of the existing area. There would be benefits in the form of a large addition to the Borough's number of dwellings, including affordable housing, increased employment opportunities, some of which would be taken by local people, and the decontamination of a polluted site. However, this is achieved with very little respect being given to the site's context, including its impact on important views from Bushy Park, and also at the expense of a poor and cramped layout with inadequate spacing. The scheme's density would

substantially exceed the typical levels of the surrounding area and also the levels considered appropriate in the GLA's London Plan density matrix. Symptoms of the scheme's cramped design would include the lack of adequate amenity space or playspace, the visual coalescing of gaps between buildings, mutual overlooking, the dominance of hardstanding, the overbearing impact of buildings, and sub-standard servicing and turning areas. The views from the Grade I listed Bushy Park would suffer particularly when the trees shed their foliage due to the appearance of a wall of development from the Park. The visual impact would also adversely affect the amenities of residents facing or backing towards the site. In the scheme's favour, the attention to design detail has been imaginative, and though this would help to reduce the monotony of the facades, this would be insufficient to alter the fundamental objection to the scale.

One result contributed to by the development's scale, would be an excessive amount of office space. Although the Council has a strong policy designed to retain employment space, EMP 4, this policy, as well as others, take account of access, parking and traffic implications. Given that this location is not in any recognised centre and is only moderately accessible by public transport, without any significant improvements to existing public transport, it is likely that large numbers of car dependant office staff would arrive, many commuting from outside the area. The retail/restaurant would also be regarded as too large to be located outside a local centre and this would be harmful to the Council's overall retail strategy.

With a maximum parking standard particularly limiting the number of office workers parking on site, and an increase in the office floorspace, it is likely that there would be excessive parking and traffic congestion in the residential roads to the north of the site. In these circumstances it is considered that parking at the maximum standard should be provided on site, rather than approximately 90% as proposed.

The Transport Assessment demonstrates that the road network would be capable of accommodating the traffic generated, but no adequate information is given on pedestrian flows from the site. This might result in the need for increased bus services for which the developer would be expected to fund at least part of the increase. The proposed re-alignment of Sandy Lane would be acceptable in principle to highways engineers.

Although 40% of the dwellings would be within the affordable category, the mixture of tenure and bedroom numbers would not match with housing needs in the Borough. Also there would be inadequate provision of wheelchair housing.

Investigations into land decontamination are on-going and the information submitted by the applicant to date has been following the right lines, but as no condition covering any final remedial strategy can be imposed at this stage, this would form further grounds for refusal.

There are concerns raised by Thames Water that the discharge of foul sewage might overload the existing drainage system causing flooding.

Contributions by legal agreement would be sought for education and health facilities, but in the absence of any consent or agreement, the failure to provide them would form grounds for refusal.

Officers and the GLA have faulted the methodology by the acoustic consultants in calculating noise levels inside the new development and consider that levels may exceed those specified in government guidance. There are also concerns that the applicants have not taken rigorous enough steps to design energy efficient buildings and about potential damage which may be caused to trees at the rear of Cedar Road houses.

The applicant has shown a willingness to make contributions towards provision of play equipment at the School House Lane Park and other unspecified improvements to Bushy Park.

I therefore recommend that the **APPLICATION WOULD HAVE BEEN REFUSED**, had it not been appealed for non-determination, for the following reasons

- The proposal would by reason of its bulk, siting, density and design, result in an inappropriately excessive and cramped development, out of scale with its surroundings, which would adversely affect the predominant character of the surrounding area. It would result in inadequate, cramped and poor quality amenity space, overbearing in relation to the streetscene and internal spaces, excessive hardstanding, lack of designated play space, mutual overlooking between habitable rooms within the development, and sub-standard servicing and vehicular turning areas. This would conflict with Policies ENV 19, 24, 26, HSG 11, 17 and 18, REC 7 and TRN 23 in the adopted Unitary Development Plan and Policies BLT 11, 16, 18, TRN 2, HSG 11, 17 and 18 and CCE 10 in the emerging Unitary Development Plan: First Review and Policies 4B.1, 4B.3, and 4B.4, 4B.7, 3C.22 in the London Plan.
- The proposal would by reason of its bulk, siting, density and design adversely affect the setting and views from the Grade I listed Bushy Park, would adversely affect the setting of the Bushy Park Conservation Area and the open aspect of Metropolitan Open Land and public open space opposite the site. It would thereby conflict with Policies ENV 3, 5, 10 and 12 in the adopted Unitary Development Plan and Policies ENV 1, 10 and 11 and BLT 2 in the emerging Unitary Development Plan: First Review and Policies 3D.9, 4B.11 in the London Plan.
- The proposed development would by reason of its bulk, siting and density result in an unneighbourly, overbearing and visually obtrusive impact on the amenity of residential occupiers in Cedars Road, School House Lane, Bushy Park Road and 2 to 2d Sandy Lane, and this would be contrary to Policy ENV 24 in the adopted Unitary development Plan and BLT 16 in the emerging Unitary Development Plan: First Review.
- The proposal includes an excessive amount of office space, which by not being in or adjacent to a recognised local centre or within an area with high public transport accessibility, would be insufficiently accessible to modes of transport other than the car, and this would have a deleterious impact on traffic congestion and the local amenity. The Proposal would thereby conflict with Policies STG 3, STG 7, EMP 1 and TRN 23 in the adopted Unitary Development Plan and Policies STG 3, STG 11, TRN 1, TRN 2, EMP 1, EMP 2 and EMP 4 in the emerging Unitary Development Plan: First Review and Policy 3C.1, in the London Plan.
- The proposed mixture of subsidised affordable housing units in terms of their tenure and size, would fail to accord with the Council's housing needs, and as such fail to comply with Policy HSG 6 in both the adopted Unitary Development Plan and the emerging Unitary Development Plan: First Review, Affordable Housing SPG 2003 and Policy 3A.4 in the London Plan.
- The proposed development makes inadequate provision for wheelchair users both in number and in relation to housing tenure, and this would be contrary to Policy HSG 8 in the adopted Unitary Development Plan and the emerging Unitary Development Plan: First

Review and Policy 3A.4 in the London Plan.

- The proposed development would provide insufficient car parking provision on site, which in the case of several spaces would be accentuated by sub-standard manoeuvring aisles, and there would be sub-standard provision of parking spaces for disabled uses, and the likely outcome would be excessive parking and traffic congestion in nearby residential roads, which would adversely affect the local amenity, the free flow of traffic and road safety. This would be contrary to Policy TRN 22 in the adopted Unitary Development Plan and Policy TRN 4 in the emerging Unitary Development Plan: First Review.
- In the absence of any adequate information being provided on projected pedestrian flows from the site, it has not been possible to assess the potential for enhancing bus services in the site's vicinity resulting from the proposed development, and to seek an appropriate contribution towards mitigation of the impact on the highway infrastructure from increased use of the private car. This would thereby fail to accord with Policies STG 11, TRN 9 and TRN 23 in the adopted Unitary Development Plan and Policies STG11, TRN 2 and 13 in the emerging Unitary Development Plan: First Review and Policies 3C.1, 3C.3, 3C.19 in the London Plan.
- The applicant has failed to demonstrate that there would be sufficient capacity in the foul sewerage network to accommodate the additional foul sewage discharge from the development, and this may result in flooding and an undue burden being placed on the network and the resources of the relevant statutory bodies. This would be contrary to Policy ENV 38 in both the adopted Unitary Development Plan and emerging Unitary Development Plan: First Review and Policy 4A.13 in the London Plan.
- In the absence of adequate mitigation measures being proposed, the siting of the proposed car park near the south-eastern site boundary, would severely compromise the retention of yew and ash trees in the immediate vicinity of this boundary, and their loss or any substantial harm to them, would be detrimental to the amenity of nearby residents and the area generally. This would be contrary to Policies 8 and 22 in the adopted Unitary development Plan and Policies ENV 9 and BLT 14 in the emerging Unitary development Plan: First Review.
- The inclusion of the proposed retail/restaurant unit would be harmful to the Council's retail strategy, which seeks to enhance and consolidate the commercial viability of local centres and designated shopping frontage. It would thereby be in conflict with Policy SHP 4 in the adopted Unitary Development Plan and Policy TC2 in the emerging Unitary Development Plan: First Review. And Policies 3D.1 and 3D.2 in the London Plan.
- The applicant has failed to adequately demonstrate that noise levels for future occupiers inside the proposed development would be within acceptable levels advocated in government guidance and this would be contrary to Policy ENV 37 in the adopted Unitary Development Plan and Policy BLT 30 in the emerging Unitary Development Plan: First Review and Policy 4A.14 in the London Plan.
- In the absence of any agreement to make an appropriate contribution towards the shortage of school places in the local education area, the proposals would place an undue burden on local education facilities and this would be contrary to Policies HEP 9, and HSG 18 in the adopted Unitary Development Plan and Policies HSG 18 and CCE 8 in the emerging Unitary Development Plan: First Review and Policy 3A.21 in the London Plan.

- In the absence of any agreement to make an appropriate contribution towards health facilities in the area, the proposal would place an undue burden on facilities, and this would be contrary to Policies HEP 3 and 5 in the adopted Unitary Development Plan and Policies CCE 2 and 4 in the emerging Unitary Development Plan: First Review and Policy 3A.18 in the London Plan.
- The applicant has failed to adequately demonstrate that the full range of energy efficiency measures and the full potential for energy and resource conservation have been thoroughly considered in designing the proposed buildings. The proposal therefore fails to comply with Policy ENV 40 in the adopted Unitary Development Plan and Policy BLT 31 in the emerging Unitary Development Plan: First Review and Policies 4A.8, 4A.9 and 4B.6 in the London Plan.
- In the absence of a strategy having been agreed by the Local Planning Authority for the remediation of contaminated land, the applicant has failed to demonstrate that appropriate measures would be put into place to ensure that the development would be implemented without harm being caused to public health or the local environment. This would be contrary to Policy ENV 36 in the adopted Unitary Development Plan, Policy ENV 6 in the emerging Unitary Development Plan: First Review and Policy 4A.16 in the London Plan.

#### **Standard Informatives**

IL05 - Decision Drawing Numbers – 02G, 03B, 04B, 05D, 06B, 07B, 08B, 09B, 10B, 11B, 12B, 13B, 14B, 15A, 16C, 17A, 18B, 19A, 20A, 21A, 22A, 23A, 24A, 25, 26, 28, 29A, Environmental Statement with Technical Papers –Land and Groundwater Pollution, Utilities, Foul and Surface water Drainage Strategies, Flood water Risk Assessment, Archaeology, Non-technical summary, Transport Assessment Volumes 1 and 2 and Outline Travel Management Strategy, Sustainability Report, Lennon Planning Planning Statement and John Thompson Design Statement all received 11 August 2004

#### **Background Papers**

Application forms and drawings

Letters of representation

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