

Campbell, Danielle

From: Glasgow, Michael
Sent: 14 December 2018 13:23
To: Campbell, Danielle; Rowe-Jones, Joyce; Green, Jacquelyne
Subject: FW: Objection to: 18/AP/1604

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
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Please can this be added as an objection to 18/AP/1604?

Thanks, Mike

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, December 14, 2018 12:19 PM
To: Glasgow, Michael
Subject: Objection to: 18/AP/1604

I would like to object to the updated Canada Water Masterplan – 18/AP/1604 (as it exists on 1st Nov 2018).

1. Introduction

Few people could disagree that Canada Water needs some regeneration. The shopping centre is dated and does not live up to its potential as a vibrant shopping and social centre for Rotherhithe and Surrey Docks. There is certainly potential for new homes in the area, and a particular need for affordable homes. At the same time, the current transport and health infrastructure is creaking under the existing needs of the population – and no one would want to see this development exacerbate these issues.

A new development must fit with the historical context of the area – that of a low-lying residential area with influences from both its dockworker and Scandinavian trade history. It should benefit local people as well as creating an attractive offering for potential new residents. At present, it does not do this, which I will outline below.

2. Tall Buildings

There are currently eight very tall buildings in the proposals; that is buildings over 60m. Currently there are three tall buildings in Canada Water. Regina and Columbia Points (62m each, but around 4m below ground level – so appear shorter), and Ontario Point at 78m. Seven of the new very tall buildings will be over 100m, with the tallest at 138m, standing as tall as the two current tallest buildings stacked on top of one another – a shocking change for a low-lying area. The slight reduction in heights of three of these buildings feels like a superficial offering to the concerns of locals. Indeed, five of these buildings, if built today, would count themselves among the 60 tallest buildings in London.

Tall buildings change the feel of an area – while many of us appreciate the view of Canary Wharf across the Thames, few of us would want to live there – now that will be forced upon residents. Tall buildings create large shadows over existing buildings, create wind tunnels, disrupt local wildlife, affect mobile signal and, more importantly, create a feeling of being closed in – unable to see through into the distance.

3. Transport infrastructure

Transport is creaking in Canada Water. There are queues into the station and to the platform on an almost weekly basis. Local residents are already often prevented from entering the station due to congestion caused by the morning switch of people from the Overground to the Jubilee line within the station. This will get worse as London's population continues to grow (particularly in areas served by London Overground). Buses are full and unable to move along Lower Road and Jamaica road due to heavy congestion. Cars are similarly unable to move through the area quickly. The Rotherhithe roundabout is a choke point because there is no solution to the traffic limitations of the Rotherhithe tunnel.

This, like other aspects of infrastructure, will be stretched by planned developments in the local area - the Grosvenor Development at the Biscuit Factory, Convoys Wharf, Timber Yard in Deptford. The cumulative effect of these developments on top of the thousands of homes planned for Canada Water, will overburden our local transport infrastructure.

The development, laudably, wants to cut car use in the area. However, older residents, those who are disabled, and those with young children will often need a car, not to mention anyone who works in a trade requiring a van (plumbers, builders, electricians, taxi drivers etc). The masterplan already cuts 900 parking spaces from the existing stock, while promising "limited car parking ... for residential use". This will cause people to park further out, affecting communities all around Rotherhithe and Surrey Docks and forcing the council into expanding controlled parking zones across the wards.

4. Other infrastructure

In order for the lot of local people to be improved by the Masterplan, they need more local resources than they had before – instead the plan proposes that the same amount of resources are shared among a greater number of people. Our cinema will be knocked down and a replacement built. Our Seven Islands Leisure Centre will be knocked down and replaced by another leisure centre (with a shorter pool – against the wishes of local residents).

The lack of a new health centre will mean that the four-thousand plus residents that enter the area simply add to the waiting times for the existing local healthcare centres.

Water pressure is already negatively affected across the Surrey Docks by the demand of housing – this will only get worse when a huge number of new buildings are provided. There appears to be no mitigation in the plans.

The masterplan will involve a lot of building and roadworks, and this should be used to ensure that all local homes in the area can access fibre access broadband. This should be added to the plan.

5. Plot A1

The latest changes to the masterplan came with a letter from British Land which said "The tower element of Plot A1 has been carefully considered ... forming part of an existing cluster of tall buildings around Canada Water". This is disingenuous. The tower proposed is 129m. The existing towers are 78m (Ontario Point), 62m (Regina Point) and 62m (Columbia Point) – though the latter two towers appear lower due to lower ground level. To the proposed tower is 65% taller than the tallest building around it, and more than twice as tall as the other two "tall" buildings. This does not make it "part of an existing cluster" any more than a 5 storey flat would fit beside 2-3 storey homes.

At 129m, the proposed tower on A1 would tower over the Grade-II listed Victorian Dock Office on Surrey Quays Road, which is two storeys, plus two more at the clock tower. This would draw attention away from the most important building in the area.

This tower also threatens to create many additional hours of darkness for residents in Columbia point (it has been suggested this may be as much as 2.5 hours per day for residents with South facing windows). The shadow would also negatively impact the Canada Water basin – encouraging algae growth and killing wildlife.

6. Plot A2

The Leisure centre on A2 was not the local community's preferred option. A 2016 consultation run by Southwark put more people in favour of rebuilding Seven Islands Leisure Centre on its current site than any other option. 75% even said they would be happy with this option even if there was no leisure centre for 3-4 years, however, it is unlikely reconstruction would take this long.

The proposed leisure centre is largely underground and lacks the level of real sunlight that the current site benefits from. It also lacks adequate disabled access – the four Blue Badge parking bays that are being offered on Deal Porters Way are more than 50m from the entrance (50m is the maximum recommended in the Sport England Accessible Sports Facilities guidance). Furthermore, the noise associated with deliveries to the leisure centre is likely to be extremely disruptive for residents living right behind it, on Hothfield Place.

7. Plot K1

Plot K1 provides nearly all of the affordable/social housing for the initial phase of development. It is tucked away on the edge of the development – furthest from the shops and other amenities – exacerbating the rich/poor divide in the area. This is made worse by the increased density of homes in this area compared to most of the rest of the masterplan. The whole nature of pushing all the affordable housing in one border site will fail to create mixed communities and damage social cohesion.

The site overlooks two schools, which presents safeguarding issues for local school children. It's height also puts it at odd with local buildings, which are 2-3 storey townhouses, compared with the six-storey buildings proposed in the K1 development.

8. Public Opinion

According to the feedback received by British Land in January 18, we can see there remains a lot of public concerns which have not been addressed by recent changes.

The most common concern was "tall buildings" – of which there were 123 responses of concern, meaning 44% of total responses. This was followed by "public transport capacity" (108 responses, 39% of respondents), "density" (73 responses, 26% of respondents) "lack of provision of social infrastructure" (58 responses, 21% of respondents) and "school provision and insufficient capacity" (53 responses, 19% of respondents).

Tall buildings (which received only 19 positive comments vs 123 negative ones) have only been superficially changed (a few storeys removed from the very tallest building). If you tally the 123 negative responses with the 36 concerns about "Impact of tall buildings" and 16 concerns about "Tall Building locations", you end up with 175 concerns (before you add in the 73 density concerns – which are clearly related). The most popular aspects of the

development were the “Parks and Green spaces (64 responses) and the Town Square (59 responses) – both the complete opposite of tall buildings and high-density living.

There are no solutions to the “Public transport capacity” outlined in the masterplan. They cannot run more trains through the area, and there is a heavy reliance on transport modelling done by TfL in 2011.

No additional school provision can be provided as it looks as if Bacon’s College has no interest in expanding its intake. Even if they were to expand, do we really want a school graded inadequate in 2017 (by Ofsted) as the only secondary school in the area?

9. Conclusions

For the reasons outlined above I feel that planning application 18/AP/1604 should be rejected. While it offers much-needed homes in the area, it fails to mitigate the impact that 3,000 new homes will have on existing residents, and is likely to make Canada Water a less attractive place to live for locals.