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From: Alex [REDACTED]
Sent: 29 March 2023 10:36
To: Town Planning
Subject: Fw: Objection - 2022/3796

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Kind Regards,

Lex

From: Alex
Sent: 29 March 2023 09:32
To: tplan@elmbridge.gov.uk <tplan@elmbridge.gov.uk>
Subject: Objection - 2022/3796

Planning Application 2022/3796 16-18 Oatlands Drive.

I would like to strongly object to the above planning application. In addition to considering the 2022/3796 application, we would also object on the basis that the developer is submitting a series of other applications along the street (4-6 / 8-14 / 16-18 Oatlands Drive) that, so far in combination, will add around 120 flats replacing 8 family homes. This in itself is drastically out of character with the neighbourhood and will result in changing the look and density of the street, which is, in effect, the entrance to Elmbridge as you come over Walton Bridge. This means it will change the character of Walton-on-Thames. I also note the developer continues to try and make amendments to the scheme to make it more profitable that fundamentally change the character of the buildings.

We would request that you are consistent with your rejection of this application, as you were with the original application for 8-14 Oatlands Drive. We believe that if such applications had been submitted as one larger combined application, rather than on a piecemeal basis, then the public outcry would have been much bigger and the government inspector would, most likely, have upheld your decision instead of favouring the developer. **I would also like to note at this time the development on 8-14 Oatlands Drive does not visually align with the site plan submitted as part of the application with the buildings appearing much closer to the road than originally planned and the amount of space between the buildings and the cowley sale greatly reduced leaving the site fully developed not taking into account and requirement for green space, wildlife and trying to improve the environment by maintaining green spaces.**

Specific to this application, we would like to object on the following grounds:

1. THE PROPOSED BUILDING

1. The size, massing, bulk and proximity to the pavement and borders of the proposed development will have a completely overbearing and detrimental appearance to the front of Oatlands Drive and the side of Bridge Street. It will negatively affect views from Walton Bridge and New Zealand Avenue due to its sheer size and prominent position.
 1. The proposed building is even closer to the listed building opposite and as such has a hugely detrimental effect on the street scene, which is already marred by the reality of the 8-14 Oatlands Drive consented development.
 2. The rear block is much larger than either of the 8-14 Oatlands Drive consented development's rear blocks and will be a significantly over massed site when viewed from the greenbelt area. This block needs to be split into two smaller blocks allowing provision for more green space and less intrusion on the adjacent residential property.
2. The site has essentially no outside amenity for future residents. The only small area of outside space is at the very rear of the land. Due to the steep slope, this land is close to the water table and flood zone. This is shaded, boggy and entirely unsuitable for recreational space.
3. The density of 90 dph is more than twice the target by Elmbridge Council. There is insufficient space in this plot for the proposed development, as demonstrated by the lack of parking, lack of green space, and proximity of the proposed rear block to the flood zone. The fact the developer cannot meet Surrey County's request for a wider pavement (for all the cyclists, residents with mobility issues, prams etc) is further ratification.
4. The basement level of the rear block has doors/windows apparently opening into the flood zone. This area is boggy, shaded, ridge-ridden land year-round and will not provide a usable outside space or healthy quality of life for future occupants.
5. The proposed flats are very close together, and given they are effectively a visual continuation of the 8-14 & 4-6 Oatlands Drive flats, (which are already below Elmbridge 22m apart recommendation), will make the totality of the sites cramped and overcrowded, resulting in a lack of light and privacy.
6. It is unclear as to the width of the roadway into the development, and whether the roadway can accommodate simultaneously, larger vehicles.
7. It is very clear that the proposed development size is too large for the plot, resulting in a very cramped space with the following implications:
 1. There is little green space compared to the existing residential site,
 2. The rear block is over massed and considerably larger than 8-14 Oatlands Drive consented development, There is inadequate parking provision,
 3. The close proximity of the flats to the pavement will not allow for any pathway widening, e.g. safe cycle lanes,
 4. The lack of incorporating any suitable and significant amenity space for residents.

2. THE RESULTANT IMPACT

- a. This development will add further to the influx of traffic into the very busy bottleneck junction at the end of Oatlands Drive and Walton Bridge
 1. Cars approaching from the junction wishing to turn right into the development will have to wait to cross the lane of oncoming traffic which will invariably cause tailbacks into what is already a high risk junction with a history of accidents.
 2. Congestion at this junction will only get worse upon the completion of all the flats already under construction in the Walton, Hersham, Molesey and Weybridge areas. This has not been taken into account in the traffic survey, while any detailed traffic surveys for the area are out of date.

3. Independent studies have shown that there is a shortfall in parking for all the proposed developments from 2-18 Oatlands Drive. This will lead to a significant parking overspill, which will invariably target Ashley Close. This will be the case since Ashley Close is the only proximal road that is not either a private road or a single lane road. Ashley Close is already overwhelmed with non-resident parking such that both sides of the road are totally congested, which is a major road safety concern (near misses are frequent). Surrey Highways have been repeatedly notified of this matter.
4. The continual search for parking spaces (by the proposed development residents) into Ashley Close has an inherent road safety risk. This relates to those searching vehicles trying to cross over a very busy, fast moving traffic, from the proposed development into Ashley Close and back.

b. The overall view from Walton Bridge and the greenbelt area will be adversely affected. The developer of the new flats currently being built at 8-14 Oatlands Drive claimed they would not be visible from the bridge, but they already are a huge eyesore and are not even at full height.

1. The developer claims that the larger flats are justifiable, because there are other large buildings in view in the distance. But this comment is very misleading, since it refers to the town centre buildings e.g. Sainsbury's, which are in the distance. This proposed tower block would be adjacent to greenbelt, Cowey Sale and opposite much smaller houses on both roads.

2.

3. THE IMMEDIATE PROXIMITY TO LISTED BUILDINGS AND GREENSPACE

1. The residential properties opposite are either listed buildings or buildings of architectural significance. No attempt has been made by the developer to incorporate vestiges of these building designs.
2. The houses from 4-18 Oatlands Drive all have or had large 100-year-old established gardens with many protected trees adjoining Cowey Sale and the greenbelt at the rear. Removing these spaces and replacing them with predominantly buildings and hardscaping will have a hugely detrimental effect on biodiversity and the environment. It is understood that noted Shepperton Council have raised their objection to these developments.

4. OTHER IMPORTANT MATTERS

1. The impending expansion of the ULEZ, meaning people will have to currently pay £12.50 to cross Hampton Court Bridge, which will undoubtedly make Walton Bridge considerably busier. The traffic survey (which is out-of-date) supporting the location of these flats does not take this, or the hundreds of new flats into consideration. No new builds at this junction should be allowed until the effects of these changes can be fully assessed.
2. The developer is applying for each development separately. But the overall effect of this proposal, the flats replacing 8-14 Oatlands Drive, and the proposals for 16-20 Oatlands Drive will have a combined effect of completely overpowering what was a street of smaller, detached houses, set well apart with large green gardens to the street scene with many tall trees.

5. SUMMARY

1. We urge Elmbridge Planning Department to recommend rejecting this proposal. It is not a compatible design, takes no account of the adjacent listed and architecturally significant buildings, but rather proposes a huge overdevelopment.
2. Any development at this location should be of a sympathetic design to the surrounding houses and the blocks currently under construction and not be an over massed development. The density of 90 dph is more than twice the target by Elmbridge Council.
3. There should be provision for more landscaping rather than bricks and concrete with the consequential adverse impact on nature and the living conditions of future residents.
4. The combined effect of parking shortfall on the 8-14 Oatlands Drive consented development and the 2-4 & 16-18 Oatlands Drive proposed developments will have serious road safety implications. Firstly all the over spill parking will gravitate to Ashley Close which is already experiencing gross over parking for such a small road. Secondly the volume of traffic entering and exiting the proposed development site into Ashley Close will introduce a high road safety risk. It is noted that there have been no recent, comprehensive road safety risk assessments to incorporate the changing road conditions re the impact of this and other developments in the area
5. Once again, we would urge the council to be consistent with their original rejection of 8-14 Oatlands Drive, and reject this application. The series of proposed developments at 8-14, 4-6 and shortly 16-18 Oatlands Drive would catastrophically change the nature of this part of Elmbridge from a family orientated neighbourhood, with lots of green space, to a series of large, characterless blocks of flats with little or no outside amenity for residents.
6. If these developments are allowed to go ahead, the street scene will be one of large tower blocks which will ultimately destroy the character of this area of Walton-on-Thames. We understand that this was never part of the EBC plan for the area, but is being imposed on us by commercially driven developers, one application at a time

I trust the above firmly sets out why this planning application should be rejected and the fragmented approach to the planning applications firmly sets out the developers plan to trying a navigate through the planning application process with no regard for any of the local residents. This can be seen by their desire to add roof terraces after the original planning application to further increase profitability.

Lex & Raya Blakeley-Glover

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