

## **Mortlake Brewery Community Group**

Minutes of meeting held on Monday 6 February 2017 at 7.30pm at The Jolly Gardeners

**Present:** Robert Orr Ewing (chair), Francine Bates (secretary), Tim Catchpole (committee - planning), Peter Eaton (committee – architect liaising with developer), Howard Potter (committee - transport), Kate Woodhouse (note-taker), Cllr Paul Avon, Tim Barker, Michael Cooling, Marianne Costigan, Roland Crouch, Linda Duberley, Frances Feehan, Simon and Helen Gordon-Smith, Romaine Hartop, Frances Heavey-Cook, John Holmes, Andrew Howard-Smith, Mike Keefe, Graham Kench, Wendy Kyrle-Pope, Auriol Lee, Mel Le Vesconte, Ben Mackworth-Praed, Christopher Mala, Ann Nickson, Roger Offord, Stephen Robinson, Matthew Smith, Lynden Swainston, Brian Timbrell, Caroline Timbrell, John and Sue Ward, Sue Weaver, Steve Webb, Mark Worledge and about 20 others

**Apologies:** David Deaton, Helen Deaton, Una O'Brien, Steven Mindel

### **1 Welcome**

Robert Orr Ewing welcomed everyone to the meeting. Francine Bates, Peater Eaton, Tim Catchpole, Howard Potter and Kate Woodhouse who are members of the core group committee introduced themselves.

### **2 Minutes of the meeting** held on 9 January, previously circulated, were agreed subject to item 7 'the MBCG represents the views of local organisations ...' being changed to 'the MBCG is an umbrella group for local organisations ...'. All matters arising were covered in the agenda.

### **3 Report on meeting with the Council**

Robert Orr Ewing reported on a meeting he and other Committee members had with Lord True, Cllrs Paul Avon, Peter Buckwell and Pamela Fleming, two council planning officers and a council education officer from Achieving for Children. The group raised three points about the proposals for the site in the Local Plan causing considerable concern in the community

- density of a secondary school for 1000 pupils and 1000 units of housing
- loss of heart of community by building on green space and the loss of the proposal to link Mortlake Green and the river
- transport and traffic implications for the area.

The Council's response was to state they wanted to stick to the original development brief as far as possible but things had changed since 2011. Lord True said he had a statutory duty to meet the educational needs of the borough and that there were no other options in the borough for a secondary school site other than the Mortlake brewery. The group suggested that this was not the case and that Barn Elms should be considered. The group were then asked by Lord True to produce a paper outlining alternative sites.. The Group accepted this request (see below under Secondary School).

#### 4 **Responding to the Local Plan**

Tim Catchpole reported that he has drawn up a response to the Local Plan for the Mortlake with East Sheen Society, and that this response is supported by the Mortlake Brewery Community Group. The Local Plan is a large document, with only two pages on the Brewery development. There are 12 bullet points, MBCG agrees with nine and disagrees with three which are departures from the site Planning Brief agreed with the Council in 2011. At present, the eastern end of the site will have the bulk of the housing and community hub, the western end will be lower density with a school. A year ago the draft Local Plan stipulated a primary school. This has been changed to a secondary school for 1000 pupils. This change is likely to mean building on all the playing field. The green corridor from Mortlake Green to the river is no longer included in the Plan, the proposal for 1000 housing units would not allow space for it.

Tim will send his response to the Local Plan by 15 February. He urged everyone at the meeting to send their own individual responses to the Plan, a point which Robert emphasised.

Tim noted that there are alternative sites for the school, for example Barn Elms (to be discussed later in the meeting. Ann Hewitt pointed out that the Local Plan now said 'the retention and/or re-provision ... of the playing field' and asked if this meant the field might be moved to another site. Tim Catchpole said he had missed this insert would include this query in his comments on the Local Plan. Linda Duberley said she had bumped into Cllr Pamela Fleming who had told her categorically that the playing field would not be built on. The Planning Brief in 2011 said the playing fields would remain, this has been changed in the Local Plan.

Peter Eaton also emphasised the importance of making comments on the Local Plan by 15 February and stressed it was not necessary to wait for the exhibition of the developer's plans. **Action All**

#### 5 **Update on the Developer's work**

Peter Eaton reported that the developer is preparing for the exhibition in March [**dates have been changed since the meeting – see covering email**]. Peter will urge the developer to ensure the times of the exhibition make it accessible to as many people as possible, perhaps spread over two weeks and open in the evenings. There may be a second exhibition some months later with a modified plan in the light of comments from the community.

The developers are aware that traffic and transport are fundamental. They have conducted lengthy studies on the junctions at Chalker's Corner and with Mortlake High Street. They have proposals about speeding traffic going west at Chalker's Corner which could include taking land from Chertsey Court. TfL, Richmond Housing Partnership and the Council seem receptive to this. The pavement would be retained.

Peter informed the developer of MBCG's recent meeting with the Council. The developer is proceeding with the design for a secondary school as requested by the Council.

In response to questions, Peter explained that comments on the Local Plan due in by 15 February will be seen by an inspector from the Department of the Environment who will report to the Secretary of State in about six months' time. There is a statutory duty for the planners to consider the views of the local community which is why it is so vital to make these known now.

Robert hopes that there will be representatives from the Council at the exhibition. Cllr Paul Avon said that the Council will be presenting the rationale for its proposals to the community and be clear about why this decision has been taken. He will request that Council officers attend the exhibition to be on hand to deal with questions and comments.

The Council aspires to providing 50% affordable housing for new developments, but does not always meet this.

Peter also reported that he met with Colin Wilson and Hermione Service (?) from the GLA to discuss six points about the site: density, the secondary school, the combined effect of these, loss of open space, traffic and possible lack of green corridor to the river. The GLA also has a duty to take into account the views of the community and the committee felt that it was important to let them know the views of the MBCG at this stage. The GLA will be formally consulted about the development in a Stage 1 report. The Mayor may well call in the proposals for the site in a Stage 2 report once the planning application is submitted.

## **6 Further updates**

(a) Density – nothing to report since the last meeting

### **(b) Transport**

Howard Potter reported that he has not had any news about the developer's proposals. If the proposals for a secondary school, cinema and retail go ahead the traffic will increase considerably. The area has a low rating on the Public Transport Accessibility Level (PTAL) scale used in planning. Traffic generated by the A316 and the frequently closed level crossing, will add 50% to the level of traffic in the area. The developers will have to produce an impact statement on traffic with plans to support improvement to public transport. They will have to show they can meet statutory requirements for traffic management. Currently Richmond allows parking at a ratio of 1:1 for cars and housing units, other boroughs tend to have a lower ratio. Housing units without allocated car space would not get residents' parking permits elsewhere locally.

Howard said that traffic management will be included in the exhibition with videos to demonstrate proposals. These should be treated with caution as they can look appealing without being realistic.

A third runway could mean more trains and more down time at the level crossing. The repairs to Hammersmith Bridge are likely to take place during demolition and construction of the site but will be completed before the development comes into full use. Plans to improve bus routes, ie 22 extension to Barnes and extending route of 209 should be proposed to ease car use. However TfL is struggling financially as its government grant has been withdrawn.

Peter Eaton emphasised that concerns about traffic can be included in comments on the Local Plan.

**(c) Secondary School proposal**

In Una O'Brien's absence Tim Catchpole reported that they had met with Matthew Paul from Achieving for Children who are responsible for education in Richmond and Kingston. Mr Paul emphasised the urgent need to expand secondary school places for the growing population in LB Richmond, Tim and Una had emphasised that the Group was not opposed to expanding and improving secondary school provision but the Mortlake site was not suitable for a new school of the size proposed. They asked what contact there was with LB Hounslow and RB Kingston when planning the new school. Mr Paul said there had been some consultation. However, few children from Richmond go to schools in Hounslow and Wandsworth with more coming from these boroughs to Richmond. Matthew Paul reiterated that the Mortlake site was the only option for a new school. However, he said there will be further consultation with Planning authorities and neighbouring boroughs before a final decision was taken,

In response to Lord True's request to identify other options MBCG will be meeting with the planners to discuss the secondary school and other possible sites. There are three sites to the west: by Twickenham Bridge, the Richmond and London Scottish rugby ground and the London Welsh rugby ground which could be considered They are all owned by council. However, the best site is Barn Elms which is also in council ownership. It is designated as Metropolitan Open Lane, but this is not an insurmountable obstacle. It would need the consent of the Mayor of London and neighbouring boroughs to build a school on Barn Elms. A school at Barn Elms would need 1.5ha as it could use the 30ha site for playing fields. One reason LB Richmond chose Mortlake for a secondary school, is because the playing field has only Other Open Land of Townscape Importance (OOLTI) status which is easier to overturn than MOL.

Richmond Park Academy, Grey Court and Christ's, the other secondary schools on the Richmond side of the borough all have spacious grounds, a school in Mortlake would not. There are two new

secondary schools in the borough. Turing House School has recently opened and Richmond upon Thames School is due to open in September 2017. The borough would receive funding for a new school but not for additional expansion in present schools. According to Matthew Paul it is more cost-effective to build a six-form entry school than a four-form entry one.

Barn Elms is currently shared between Richmond and Wandsworth. Facilities are duplicated: an all-weather running track for Richmond and a grass one for Wandsworth, but with good field event facilities; eight tennis courts for Richmond, fourteen for Wandsworth. There is scope for rationalisation particularly now that Richmond and Wandsworth are sharing services. There are four possible sites at Barn Elms:

- by the junction opposite the Red Lion, MBCG's preferred site as it is most accessible and least disruptive and would complete the buildings on that junction;
- the tennis courts and clubhouse owned by Richmond
- Grass track soon to be used for the construction of the Thames sewer
- Beside Rocks Lane beyond Beverley Brook and the tennis courts, a long narrow site.

There may be local opposition in Barnes, ten years ago the proposal to sell Barn Elms into private management was overturned after local objections. The land would be used more frequently as there is minimal use during the week, and the weekend clubs could continue. The all-weather track could benefit from throwing facilities. State schools need to compete for students and the students of a school on the Barn Elms site could have high quality facilities. This site would be much more attractive than Mortlake. Francine emphasised that we should be pressing the Council to build a school of the highest quality with state of the art facilities and not pursue a sub-optimal solution on an over-crowded site.

The committee will consult with Barnes Community Association about this proposal.

(d) **Environment**

Ann Hewitt reported that the playing field is designated an OOLTI and would not qualify as MOL as it is too small. There is a new designation, Local Green Space, which is the equivalent of MOL, also known as Green Belt. This designation has only recently been introduced so is surrounded by some confusion. The designation for the playing field cannot be changed as it is part of a site allocated for development. The land on Chertsey Court is also an OOLTI.

It is important to raise the issue of the playing field when commenting on the Local Plan. If the field were built on it would halve the open space in Mortlake.

All the trees on the site have Tree Preservation Orders on them. Ann may organise a bat walk later in the year, there are plenty of places where they can roost.

A resident observed that the level of pollution at Chalker's Corner is very high with recent reports commenting on the detrimental effect of breathing such air.

**(e) Communication and leaflet drop**

Francine said the committee had produced a leaflet urging residents to respond to the Local Plan by 15 February. Most of the leaflets had been delivered or handed to commuters at Mortlake station. However, some leaflets still needed to be distributed and volunteers to help with this would be welcome. She said that the council needs to understand the strength of feeling locally. She said the Group's website was an important source of information [www.mbcg.co.uk](http://www.mbcg.co.uk) and that information about the development was now filtering out more widely including an article written by Una O'Brien in a new magazine called River Tribe which is being distributed locally, She urged everyone to talk to neighbours about the site and the importance of visiting and commenting on the public exhibition. Francine said the Group will be developing a Facebook page and Twitter account and help would be welcomed to develop these initiatives.

**7 Boat Race House planning application**

The earlier application was unanimously rejected by Planning Committee. This proposal could have influenced the height of buildings on the Brewery site. A new application is in for a one-storey and less intrusive extension which is more reasonable. The building is for sale.

**8 Dates of next meetings**

Monday 27 March and Monday 8 May at the Brewery Sports and Social Club. TBC