

Osterley and Spring Grove Ward Councillors Tony Louki, Unsa Chaudri, Richard Eason
Syon Lane Developments Public Inquiry Presentation
15 March 2022 at Hounslow House

The Councillors for Osterley and Spring Grove Ward have followed, pursued and worked with individual residents, residents' associations and amenity groups since the protagonists of the two developments publicly revealed their schemes in May 2019, almost three years ago. I am Councillor Tony Louki.

Between us, we have a combined 22 years of representing this part of the Ward. I was a Ward councillor and worked with residents and businesses on Syon Lane during the planning application process for the existing Tesco in 1992.

As Ward Councillors, we are not against any development, but are averse to schemes that are not fit for the area, for the needs of their local residents. Representatives should expect the best for their residents and the future occupiers of any homes developed. We should not settle for less, and urge support for a development which would be above sufficient in terms of quality and the infrastructure to support it.

We should like the Inspector to consider the content of this address and to also appreciate the expert presentations and arguments to be made by and on behalf of the people of our neighbourhoods in North Isleworth, these next few weeks. This will not just be a David and Goliath occasion against resource and bought in pros but one to be argued by real experts who know every bit of pavement, all directions of traffic, every inch of station platform, the total time it takes to get a doctor's appointment, the full sniff of air pollution.

Osterley and Spring Grove Ward currently has just over 13,400 residents, a combination of these proposals could almost increase this by 50% without the required capacity to cope. The developments as they stand are too big, the equivalent of landing something with a population the size of Frimley, a town in the Secretary of State's constituency, here in Isleworth.

Both proposals are schemes that are out of time.

The applicants have failed to adjust to pandemic conditions as much as they have ignored absolutely any ideas offered by our residents. Consultation resulted in what looked like pre sale marketing brochures and mealy digital promotions accompanied by loaded questions whose so far unpublished outcomes say more about the local community's take and proposer's imperatives than any amount of persuasion likely to be offered by the developer during the coming weeks of your Inquiry.

The developer promised scale models but these were never delivered thus leaving it to the Osterley and Wyke Green Residents' Association to spend its limited resources on commissioning an accurate piece.

These applications are the largest ever seen in such a relatively small geographical space, anywhere in the borough. The developer jumped the gun before the ink on the draft revisions to the Hounslow Local Plan were hardly dry and the Secretary of State had yet to appoint an Inspector to lead that public inquiry.

Whichever way presented, these developments would be an adjunct to the Northumberland Estate, Syon Lane, Oaklands Avenue and the Wyke, not the eastwards facing Great West Corridor as, because of our largely residential nature, it has little in common with the rest of the stretch to Chiswick Roundabout.

Like residents, Ward Councillors are not averse to development on either site but do have numerous concerns, serious questions and genuine worries about infrastructure, traffic, transport, housing heights, size, mix and design.

The Planning Committee of 8 April 2019 will not be revisited but we would welcome closer examination of assertions and proposals suggested in these schemes, now being touted as the scale equivalents of the Death Star and Battersea Power Station but without Gilbert Scott's glamour although sinister as Darth Sidious.

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Please assess the valid points raised by all parties including those raised by Historic England on the impact of the proposed developments. Their impact, not just from the Thames, Osterley Park, Kew, Syon Park but also those familiar and comforting to the more plebian of the Gillette Tower visible from hundreds of homes around the Great West Road and its approaches. I also raise the loss of open aspect to and from the Grade II listed, Sutcliffe and Farmer Centaurs Pavilion should this scheme go ahead.

Please take a very close look at the road and public transport proposals. Transport for London maintained its reservations on both, but particularly the Homebase scheme. Subway painting and lighting is no substitute for pedestrian safety nor the convenience that residents and workers at Sky HQ have clamoured for over the years, surface crossings of the A4.

We are glad that the findings of the Design Review Panel, critical of both schemes, will now get a proper airing. Their highlighting of both schemes' shortcomings, advising, but ignored by the developer. The Panel was certain that, for such a huge amount of new housing, "*the Tesco footprint compromised their ability to provide good enough public realm*". They saw no clear vision for the two sites nor a commitment to improve crossing at Gillette Corner. The panel maintained their concerns about limited and unmanageable amenity space and safety, particularly concerned with how potentially unsafe these cut throughs between blocks are likely to be.

Please spend time on the Design Review Panel analysis on quality and the way anyone would be able to maintain comfort living in "*semi dual aspect*" flats more than 27% of the units on the Homebase site would have this feature; just one window on, really, just one aspect.

We are very concerned about the impact of these schemes to the existing 20 properties at Northumberland Gardens, opposite Homebase and further homes at Rothbury Gardens and Hexham Gardens. Each maisonette will be overshadowed and each will have windows affected, all by at least 20% and some by as much as 40% and over. Along with limiting light to more than a quarter of potential new properties, the ten storeys height and bulking of this development will darken the living rooms and bedrooms of our existing residents.

Transport and infrastructure are significant concerns at these sites. We understand that these are within an Opportunity Area, some form of development would be welcomed but the balance in this situation is askew.

The developer talks of *average* PTAL but Transport for London have assigned a Public Transport Accessibility Level rating of just above 1 in Osterley. The Transport Assessment stated that most of these sites are at PTAL 2 but *might*, after many unfunded and descope projects, become a PTAL 3. Since the planning decision, further cuts to South Western Railway services would cancel any forecast improvement.

There are no guarantees for the referenced and promoted train schemes. There is no TfL money for the previously vaunted West London Orbital. With any Department of Transport resource now being allocated northwards, the proposed Southall Link to Crossrail is destined to remain a household waste and aggregate service. Without real and proper infrastructure not available for such proposed development densities, we would not, in the least, regard this a sustainable development.

Reviewing the traffic studies, the report talks of much longer queues to access sites and the Great West Road than observed at present and suggests that the impact on the local road network may be significant. TfL do not believe nor trust the developer on their suggested number of servicing trips for this site, leaving neighbours, residents, pedestrians and other road and footway users with potentially illegal and dangerous on-street servicing of the store.

Whilst welcoming cycle storage spaces, currently fairly average tracks along the Great West Road mean that road is not safe to cycle on through well used and already dangerous junctions with poor air quality at present.

Limited car parking at these development sites will force occupiers to park in neighbouring roads impacting on existing residential amenity. It is neither acceptable nor correct that current residents should have to

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experience long hours operation of controlled parking zones in a few years' time because of poor planning today.

The developer speculates that Covid outcomes may reduce transport usage. TfL already predicts transport numbers will be in excess of the pre-Covid baseline in 2025; that this scheme, if approved, would begin to be occupied at that point yet it appears this later modelling has not been considered. Traffic reports were carried out in pre Covid scenarios; car use has shot up dramatically in the past year so this modelling no longer paints a true and accurate picture of the local road network and its air quality.

Travelling by tube in a normal year from Osterley Station or indeed Boston Manor, commuters are familiar of waiting at the platform trying to board London bound Piccadilly Line trains, with each one arriving at full capacity. That base line is estimated to increase with the potential of 4,000 people trying to get on; or similarly, travelling towards Waterloo from Syon Lane.

It has been suggested the Community Infrastructure Levy will help pay for the services required to compensate for shortfall in transport, health and recreational provision over and above the meagre elements offered within the applications. While this is aspirational it is often not realised in practice.

At paragraph 11.5 of the Homebase site report, the CIL amounts quoted for are, £11.1m for Hounslow and £4.2m for London. Never, ever enough to pay for safe, healthy and sustainable neighbourhoods. The second report quotes an estimated £21.2m for Hounslow and £9.3m for London for the current Tesco site but this will be piecemeal and not guaranteed.

Some form of development at these sites could be acceptable, however, we have not been presented with any proper idea of the infrastructure required to support these. The developer cites the *15 minute neighbourhood* without any proper nor researched evidence. Osterley tube 22 minutes away, Boston Manor 32, the nearest doctors 25-30 minutes, the nearest dentists 18 minutes and these are all over subscribed.

In 2025 no councillor would honestly be able to begin to tell their constituents why they cannot get a GP appointment or school place because this inadequate scheme did not provide the proper infrastructure.

The developer proposes a significant under provision in communal amenity space at the Homebase site of just below 5,000 sqm, considerably below the benchmark standard. This under provision is considered acceptable purely because of the need to fit in a supermarket. Too much in too small a place, to the detriment of future occupiers. 2,370 sqm of play space should be provided for 240 children, yet just 500 sqm less than that. Strangely, the developer considers it acceptable to make up provision over half a mile away on the other side of the railway track, into Brentford End.

We should also add that there has been absolutely no discussion with Osterley and Spring Grove Ward Councillors nor our residents on any amenity needs or suggestions for legally agreed community provisions arising out of these developments. We would argue s106 contributions should be directed towards improvements at Osterley Park or Jersey Gardens, much closer to the proposed 1600+ units Tesco site.

We as local Ward Councillors believe this scheme is not right in its current form. We ask the Inspector to strongly recommend to the Secretary of State that he should insist that the developers have to make the time to go back and get it right, most people are now in the market for bigger units to allow for working or recreating from home. This proposed scheme was developed long before this shift in work life. The high density needs to be properly justified and balanced in the context of recent new builds and pipeline approvals elsewhere in the borough.

Public transport use at present is at a record low, and more people are driving, please send this back to the applicants and get them to truly engage with the community. A Grampian Condition, similar to other large development proposals such as at the Old Kent Road sites which cannot be fully built out until the Bakerloo

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Line extension starts, has been proposed by us Ward Councillors and this is something we believe should be of merit, if some of the consents were to be upheld.

Through various interactions of the Local Plan there has been local consensus formed that there should be no developments higher than six stories by established 1930s developments or more than 10 stories within the Great West Corridor proper. We appreciate that there is significant housing pressure meaning local wishes cannot always be fully met, however, we feel the dis-benefits of this current scheme outweigh the limited number of positives and the scheme should better reflect local wishes at these key sites. We would hope that, the evidence presented at this Planning Inquiry will confirm what many other ordinary folk already know, that very high buildings do not make for sustainable and peaceful communities.

There could be alternative and more in keeping schemes to submit but these have not been considered by the applicant. These developments are still not ready and if, as applied for, are not refused on grounds of non-compliance with the current and operational National Planning Policy Framework, Local Plan, amenity, impact on neighbouring properties, inadequate and unguaranteed traffic and transport management; no direct contribution to rail improvements; lack of amenity and inadequate alternative space, then they should be.

Should the Secretary of State be mindful of approving these applications, preferably very much amended, in this most sensitive area, more stringent conditions are required, not least a great need for bringing forward the Access Review before any further work is done.

Revisions sought would include,

1. No occupation of either site until the completion of public transport improvements and renewals in the Great West Corridor Opportunity Area; a Grampian Condition. We ask that the condition is tied in to all of these, 1 the Piccadilly Line upgrade, 2 the West London Orbital, 3 Great West Road bus improvements, 4 the Southall Rail Link. We believe that this will protect our current and future potential residents by ensuring the infrastructure is in place before development is built out.
2. Installation of TfL and Hounslow Highways junction works at Gillette Corner, Wood Lane, Busch Corner and Thornbury Road.
3. A Construction Plan guaranteed not to disturb residents on Northumberland Estate, Syon Lane, Jersey Road, Wyke Estate and Great West Road.
4. A s106 legal agreement to endow an upfront fund of not less than £3m to support an independent Osterley Sports Network CIC, to develop and maintain sports and recreation in Osterley and Spring Grove Ward, significantly absent from these applications.
5. A s106 legal agreement of no less than £1.5m to support improvements to Jersey Gardens and £1.5m for Osterley Park.

This development will impact the area like no other for decades to come. It has to be done right. There are too many clear indications that these developments are inappropriate, by a large margin.

Thank you.