

RBKC Planning Application PP/23/06575

Kensal Canal Side / Sainsbury's Supermarket site redevelopment proposal by Ballymore and Sainsbury's.

Members of The Golborne Forum have been following the developments on the Sainsbury's/ Gas Works lands since they were mentioned in the late 1990's. The various proposals have been explored and discussed at a number of meetings over the past few years. In November 2023 Sainsbury's and Ballymore submitted their planning application. There is a third landowner, Berkeley Group's brand St William also has a stake in the development but has not yet submitted their planning application.

The Golborne Forum recognises that there is a need for increased provision of homes in the Borough, both in the social rented and the market sector. However this proposal does not meet this aim without serious impact on the community not only in the short and the immediate term but also the long term! The Forum would welcome proposals that ensure the development is safe, has limited and timed impact on the environment and health concerns, is in tune with the sense of community and history of the local area and meets the housing needs of the socially rented sector as well as the market sector in an equitable and impactful way.

The Consultation closes 12 January 2024. You may have your own opinions on this application and I would strongly recommend that you access the RBKC Planning portal on <https://www.rbkc.gov.uk/planning/searches> using PP/23/06575 as your search number. Note that this site can sometimes seem slow to process.

With reference to this application, The Golborne Forum has submitted an objection. The details behind the reasons for this objection follow the summary below.
In summary:

The Golborne Forum objects to this planning application PP/23/06575 because:

1. We are asked to comment on a planning application which the wider community knows is incomplete as it involves only two of the principal parties on this site.
2. The decontamination approach and solutions for the site is unsatisfactorily addressed and therefore risks creating serious health issues for the local community, and a wider catchment
3. The transportation infrastructure solutions do not resolve major issues around the needs of the emergency services, the proposed new residents and retailers business, their clients and the wider community who need to use Ladbroke Grove as their principle transportation route; private vehicle, public transport, cycling and walking. The resulting traffic chaos will contribute to poorer health outcome for local infants, children, adults with underlying conditions and the general public.
4. The super density proposed changes for the worse the skyline, puts pressures on local services and infrastructures, amenity services and green space provision.

5. It gives insufficient attention or provision for green space amenity and increased tree cover necessary for a healthy environment.

6. It provides little safeguards for existing architectural and historical prominence and sense of place.

The Golborne Forum objects to this proposal;

Hybrid application

- There are 3 sections of this brown field site but this application is applicable to only two of the principal owners of the site.

- This application provides an incomplete picture of what will eventually be the final development of this extensive but restricted site as it is bound by a canal to the north and a railway line to the south, with land restrictions to the east prohibiting any access or egress to Wood Lane and only one access point from Ladbroke Grove (canal path access should not be considered as part of the access provision).

Soil contamination and remediation

- The site has a long history of contamination; the remediation plan is insufficient to explain how it will deal with soil decontamination, movement and clearance of contaminated soil, effective and safe management of the process going beyond dust control and air contamination and air pollution. There are insufficient safeguards in this plan to ensure the health and quality of life for individuals living in, around and near the development; in RBKC and the wider environment while doing little to address chronic under provision of truly affordable social housing and social housing.

Access and egress and public safety

- Accessing and leaving the site is insufficient for this proposal and there remains a third of the site for future development which would put further strain on plans as outlined here.

- The intersection of what is called the Sainsbury Roundabout where it meets Ladbroke Grove and near to Kensal Road junction with Ladbroke Grove is currently unable to cope with the smooth movement of traffic at times of high demand. It can already take 20 minutes and longer to move north from Ladbroke Underground Station up Ladbroke to this roundabout on a TFL bus in congested traffic.

- The proposals to have what is effectively a single High Street leading from the point of access to the newly provided supermarket while also allowing for motorised deliveries to the supermarket, new shops, residential tower blocks and building will not be able to cope with the usage at times of high traffic volume.

- This will result in stalled traffic backing up along Ladbroke Grove heading north and

south and along Kensal Road accessing Ladbroke Grove and will result in increased air pollution in what is effectively residential areas and routes of access to and from schools for children and adults who are walking. It also means that public transport will be less reliable and attractive to users to encourage them out of their cars. The consequence of this will be a continued deterioration of air quality for residents of this part of west and north London and is particularly serious for vulnerable infants and children.

- This will also create difficulties for cyclists for whom there is insufficient consideration of travel routes on Ladbroke Grove and into / out of the Kensal Canal Site proposed residential and commercial development. Additionally it is likely to drive more cyclists onto the Canal Path which is a shared route with pedestrians – this path was not designed for shared use and in the recent past, cyclists were not permitted to access the route. Now that they do it is clear that there are issues with cyclists and pedestrians sharing this existing provision. There is no evidence that there are plans to upgrade this canal path in the development, to the east or to the west.

- This congestion at the entry/egress point is an issue for emergency services vehicles. It will slow response times, impede access, and feasibly make it impossible to gain access by road at times of heavy usage. There are no obvious solutions to potentially life limiting events.

Super density of housing and population

- Only 2 of 3 principals in this site are applying for planning so this is an incomplete and misleading view of final development proposals for this site

-The application is not clear about final social housing and affordable housing provision split along with market housing, but the information that is provided indicates that it is insufficient to meet current legal requirement for approximately 35% affordable housing and much less that the Mayor of London plan's expectations. It is also unclear how social and affordable housing is to be defined – but is sufficiently vague as to be an irrelevant question. It is sufficient to point out that it is inadequate to meet the needs of the Borough.

-Provision of replaced a supermarket and then a “ parade of shops and business on a new High Street” concept creates additional demands by daily visitor numbers and demands on the local services both by private vehicle, delivery vehicles and public transport before allowing for cycle and footfall demands on the roads footpaths and canal paths

- In this part of the development there is a plan for five tall buildings at 29 stories each, as well as a number of surrounding blocks. The height of these tower blocks in neither in keeping with the local area nor with the intentions of RBKC. They will impact negatively on the skyline, in issues of overshadowing on the Cemetery and for residents in Kensal House.

- The plan for up to 3500 new residences would create a possible 5000 + new residents and the subsequent demands on other services; transport, environment, schools, surgeries, sporting facilities (indoor and out), green space provision and tree cover – this does not include forecasts for additional future development on the remaining 1/3 of the site not part of this application and planning must take into consideration possible future demands on the site and its services

Provision of green space and tree cover

- This plan puts insufficient stress on the provision of ground level greenspace and grass areas, nor does it go far in addressing the concern of the wider community for increased mature tree cover which is recognised as an important part of supporting communities with cleaner air and increased shade in times of increasingly high temperatures and sunlight.

- The loss of Canalside House so that its footprint can become a green park like space is a loss to the community of an important affordable space for community organisations. It is also a loss of an architectural feature which shows the area's history and is a building which proves to be a welcome visual reminder of RBKC's northern access route. There is much talk of a "landmark building" at this junction and yet one already exists but is under threat of demolition. This building should be preserved to meet this aim.

- It is not clear how access to the canal footpath will be enhanced and designed to ensure that the path is integrated into the plans for this area. It seems to lose out to designs for the built environment rather than enhancing the natural environment with grassed areas and tree cover.

Architectural and Place impact

- This site is at the heart of a number of key historic sites for this area: Kensal Green Cemetery, The Boat House Activity Centre, Canalside House, Kensal House, Canal footpath and access.

- The plans do not enhance and indeed they destroy some of these features. The main issue is the density of building for the area and infrastructures extant and needed in the future for the implementation of the plan as submitted. Reconsideration is needed for the provision of the amount of truly social and affordable housing as well as the need for market housing in RBKC, of green space and tree coverage and amenity space.

- Underpinning these objections and concerns are the lack of clarity of safe and effective soil decontamination and any resultant airborne contamination which will result from this or any process required to ensure the site is safe for residential development and public use.