

Wandsworth Society

2020 0011 Homebase Swandon Way SW18

2016/7356 (S73 Minor Material Amendment)

There are elements of the proposed amendments to the 2016 application that we welcome -

- the proposal to provide Build to Rent accommodation
- the increase in the number of affordable homes, and the
- provision of additional open space

We also believe that the proposed changes to the elevations and massing are well-considered and will improve the appearance of the development.

Our principal objections to the 2016 application were that the development was too tall, too dense and too bulky; the proposed amendments do not address these concerns.

The proposed changes to the elevations and massing do reduce the bulk of the development. However, the heights of main buildings remain the same, and the density has been considerably increased. The number of dwellings per hectare has risen from 388 to 466 (u/ha), an increase of 20%.

The density of the 2016 scheme was in the highest range of the London Plan density matrix, the proposed density at 466 u/ha is significantly outside the range (215-405 u/ha).

The applicant identifies the site as Central in London Plan Policy 3.4 terms (Planning Statement para 8.9), acknowledges that the plan '*promotes densities of up to 405 u/ha*', then proposes that the amended density of 466 u/ha is acceptable '*given the highly accessible location of the site, and its location adjacent to extensive public amenities along Old York Road.*'

We do not disagree that Old York Road has its attractions or dispute that Wandsworth Town Station and the 28 and 44 buses provide useful connections to central and southwest London. We disagree strongly that this justifies a housing density significantly above the highest range of the London Plan density matrix.

March 2020

This is contrary to London Plan Policy 3.4 which says '*Taking into account local context and character, ... and public transport capacity, development should optimise housing output for different types of location **within** the relevant density range ...*' – not above it.

We also object strongly to the reduction in commercial use floor area from 2,348 sq m to 1,572 sq m, a 33% decrease. The applicant describes the scheme as a mixed-use development. We think it likely that the commercial floorspace in the development is there only to occupy space that would be difficult or impossible to use for residential accommodation. We would like to see a mixed-use proposal where uses other than residential form a greater part of the development.

We do not consider that the proposed increase in housing density and the decrease in the commercial use floor area can be considered minor material amendments. We believe that development at this scale is inappropriate for this site and reiterate our principal objections that the development is too tall, too dense and too bulky.

March 2020