

## LONDON REGION

Ms Sian Evans  
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Planning and Regeneration  
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Our ref: P00073737

27 April 2009

Dear Ms Evans

### **CHEPSTOW, LEICESTER ROAD, REDBRIDGE, GREATER LONDON, E11 2DW**

Thank you for your email of 24 April regarding a proposed development on a site bounded by Leicester Road, Gloucester Road, and Nutter Lane, Wanstead Grove. I have assessed the proposals and visited the site.

As you are aware, this site is part of the new Wanstead Grove Conservation Area. Although the site was not within a Conservation Area at the time the application was submitted, the recent designation means the Conservation Area status is now a material consideration for your authority.

The Wanstead Grove Conservation Area is characterised by early-mid 20<sup>th</sup> century residential properties in mature gardens. Most properties are of two storeys, with a limited number of bungalows and occasional larger two-and-a-half/three storey homes.

The application proposes a development of 6 semi-detached residential properties and 18 flats on a large brownfield site at the centre of the Conservation Area. The site is bounded by residential development to the East, West and North, with an open aspect onto a recreation ground to the South.

The semi-detached properties on the Northern boundary of the site, facing Gloucester Road, are an appropriate typology in this location. This element of the development preserves the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

On the part of the site facing Nutter Lane, it is proposed to construct two separate blocks of flats. These will be three storeys in height, with a modern design approach. We have no objection to a 'modern' form of development at this location, but are concerned at the poor level of detailing offered by the current proposals. The



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buildings lack domesticity in appearance, and require further design modification to present a more residential aesthetic. Changes should also be made to the proposed materials palette. Wanstead Grove Conservation Area is suburban and domestic in its character and appearance, and new development must reflect these qualities.

We also have significant concerns regarding the poor design quality of the proposed block of flats fronting Leicester Road. The applicant has attempted to provide a more traditional aesthetic for this building, but its elevations are ill-considered and do not reflect the arts-and-crafts heritage of the surrounding Conservation Area. The poorly-detailed elevations also increase the perceived massing of the building.

While a building of this size may be achievable in this location, further modifications to the design are required to achieve an appearance which does not detract from the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

We note that the planning inspectorate upheld the Council's refusal of the previous proposed development, on the grounds of inappropriate design. This decision pre-dates the Conservation Area designation, and a higher standard of design is now required.

Time considerations have not allowed us to provide a written design critique of the proposals. However, we are more than happy to meet the developers at a meeting and articulate our concerns further.

However, at present we are concerned that the current proposals are of insufficient quality for a Conservation Area location, and detract from its character and appearance. An appropriate design may be achievable with modification, but we must object to these proposals in their current form.

Yours sincerely

**Simon Hickman**

Historic Buildings and Areas Adviser

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cc Philip Ridley, Conservation Officer, London Borough of Redbridge.



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