

Riverside Action Group presentation to the Planning Committee 24 November 2022

Speaking: Peter Newborne

I am Peter Newborne, one of local residents coordinating the 'Riverside Action Group' – RAG'. We have watched evolution of the re-development – studying the proposals to inform ourselves, and then informing our email list in periodic newsletters, together with our questions and concerns. The recipients are predominantly local residents. We were previously members of the Stakeholder Reference Group, before the SRG was dropped.

Our wish is to see the current derelict area removed and transformed in a positive way.

Regrettably, the proposed design would not do that - in a number of important respects, in particular the bigger of the two buildings proposed – the Wharf Lane building. It is a design gone wrong, deviating from the initial design at the architects' competition in 2019.

Combined with the other Water Lane building, what is proposed is predominantly a housing development - with 45 flats. Why plan for so much density of build on this site – in such a special location by the river, part of the Twickenham Riverside Conservation Area?

The Wharf Lane building would be all private flats, 24 of them, on five stories, on top of a flood protection plinth, making for six stories - taller than the buildings in King Street. The effect of the height and mass, very close to the river's edge, would be over-bearing, as the architects' photo on PAGE 6 of the visuals pack shows.

The plinth would be for flood defence, as required by the Environment Agency whom the Council officers consulted - belatedly - after the design competition – with, further, removal of an original attractive design feature, the atrium or 'winter garden'.

On the ground floor there would be a restaurant/pub. The existing Barmy Arms and Church Street and Kings Street PUBS serve clientele, without more drinkers being invited to come to the riverside – spilling out onto the nearby paved area - ignoring what the Council says in a new planning condition about a limited area - with consequent noise disturbance, below the luxury flats.

Is that the ‘exciting destination... championing the river’ - the Council’s words in its planning application – that this very special place needs?! Is this the fit for the riverside and for local people who love to visit it? Who would benefit?!?

I am not objecting to the whole scheme, but the Council’s planning application needs to be withdrawn and this part of its proposal for redevelopment of the Riverside substantially re-thought.