



St Quintin and Woodlands Neighbourhood Forum

INFORMATION ON DEVELOPMENT IN LATIMER ROAD

Development proposals

Residents and businesses in Latimer Road are hearing about a planning application for the redevelopment of Unit 10 Latimer Road. The application will be decided by RB Kensington & Chelsea and the closing date for comments from the public is July 10th 2020.

The St Quintin and Woodlands Neighbourhood Forum/St Helens Residents Association will be **objecting** to this application. This note from the Forum/residents association explains the background, and we hope will be helpful in updating residents on the wider picture of the future of Latimer Road.

What is the neighbourhood forum and plan?

The StQW Neighbourhood Forum was set up in 2012 by the St Helens Residents Association. Both bodies share the same membership of 365 local residents and a small number of businesses living or working in the area on our letterhead above.

RBKC Council 'designated' the area and forum in 2013, meaning that the forum was given legal powers to prepare a neighbourhood plan for the area. This plan was drawn up between 2013 and 2015 with the views of local residents fed in through meetings at St Helens Church hall and two rounds of formal public consultation.

Following an 'independent examination' of the Draft Neighbourhood Plan, a local referendum was held in February 2016. The Plan was supported by 92% of those who voted on a 23% turnout of all those on the electoral register in the neighbourhood area.

RBKC has since adopted the neighbourhood plan as part of the Borough's 2019 Local Plan. All planning applications in the neighbourhood are decided by the Council, now taking into account policies in the StQW neighbourhood plan. This will apply to the current application at Unit 10.

The whole neighbourhood plan can be downloaded from the RBKC website at <https://www.rbkc.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/neighbourhood-planning/current-projects/st-quintin-and-woodlands>

The section of the neighbourhood plan on Latimer Road has an overall objective ***To regenerate Latimer Road as a successful mixed use street, combining commercial and housing use, keeping buildings occupied and in active use, and restoring its original street form.***

The Plan includes a set of planning policies which the Council will have to take into account when deciding the application for Unit 10. These policies are:

LR1) To allow residential use of upper floors in redeveloped B class buildings at Units 1-14 Latimer Road, provided that the ground (and any mezzanine floor) remains in commercial use.

LR2) To allow A1/A2/A3, A4, D1 and D2 class uses, along with any B class use other than B2 and B8 (over 500 sq.m) within Latimer Road, where such uses contribute to the vitality of the street and to the wider neighbourhood area.

LR3) To encourage building uses which support the creative and cultural industries, and which contribute to the Royal Borough's policies on Cultural Placemaking and RBKC Core Strategy Policy CR6.

LR4) In the context of mixed use policies for Latimer Road, to encourage uses which will increase employee numbers on site (as opposed to warehousing and storage) within the full range of A, B and D class uses.

LR5) In order to restore the original urban form of the street, to allow increased building heights on the western side of Latimer Road subject to:

- i) Consideration of heights of nearby buildings which range from four storey at the southern end to two storey at the northern end, and taking account of building heights in LBHF**
- ii) Meeting RBKC and national requirements on standards of daylight, sunlight, and visual privacy for occupants of new development and for occupants of existing properties affected by development**
- iii) No harmful increase in the sense of enclosure to existing buildings and spaces and neighbouring gardens**

These policies, and especially LR5 (in red) will be important in the Council's decision on the Unit 10 application. Yet the Planning Statement submitted with this application has not attempted to address them. This makes it easier for objections to flag up where the application is not 'policy compliant' with the StQW Neighbourhood Plan.

This policy on building heights followed discussions at open meetings of the forum/residents association. The Imperial College 'Gradpads' were already built at that stage. Hence the view of local residents that increased building heights were acceptable where the western skyline was already blocked but should taper down towards to the two storey terraced houses on the west side of Latimer Road, towards North Pole Road.

This is what is meant by the wording '*consideration of heights of nearby buildings and taking account of building heights in LBHF*' (which range from the Imperial site to terraced housing in Eynham Road).

Sub clauses ii) and iii) of StQW Policy LR5 are also important. One of the main objections from the StQW Forum/St Helens Residents Association will be that a 6 storey building at the position of Unit 10 in the street does not take sufficient account of this policy. We have already said this to the developers.

CGI image of Unit 10 proposals



Houses on the east side of this section of Latimer Road are three storey (albeit quite high storeys). We don't consider a 6 storey building on the western side to be *restoring the original urban form of the street*.

Other development proposals in the street

Last autumn, RBKC planning officers agreed to work with the StQW Forum on a Supplementary Planning Document for the street. The idea was to draw up a 'design code' which would set some guidelines for redevelopment of Units 1-14.

These light industrial, office and warehouse buildings are in separate ownerships and each owner can choose if and when they wish to invest in redeveloping their property. There was a moment a few years back when a single speculative developer saw potential in the street and sought to buy up several of Units 1-14 for a larger scale development. But building owners (sensibly in our view) chose not to sell.

The StQW Forum welcomes the idea of a set of design guidelines for the street, and would help to organise consultation with residents and businesses to achieve a result that had local support. Regrettably a combination of staff shortages in the RBKC Planning Department and the onset of Covid 19 has meant that work on this project has stalled.

Meanwhile other developments are planned for Latimer Road.

Unit 1 Latimer Road

In May 2019 the Council granted planning permission for the redevelopment of Unit 1, with a new building of four storeys with B1 office space on ground floor and 8 residential flats on upper floors) This proposal was discussed at a StQW/SHRA open meeting at St Helens church hall in February 2019. During the RBKC consultation there were more supportive comments than objections. Work on the building has not yet started. A CGI image of the completed building is shown below.



Proposals for Unit 11

Jonathan Mizzi of Mizzi Studios at Unit 11 Latimer Road has been considering redevelopment of his existing building for some years.

He is now finalising a set of plans for pre-application consultation in early July. Since we cannot convene a meeting at the church hall, the StQW Forum and Jonathan Mizzi hope to hold a Zoom session at **2pm on Friday July 3rd** at which his proposed scheme can be presented (Zoom link to be circulated beforehand). It will be a mixed use scheme, with office space on lower floors and residential apartments above.

Joining the Neighbourhood Forum

Joining the Forum/St Helens RA needs only an email to sthelensassn@aol.com. You will then be added to the membership/ mailing list and will receive newsletters and info on forthcoming open meetings. Membership is free.

Having a neighbourhood plan in place gives local residents more chance to influence development in the area. The Council is adding 'New Homes' on several sites across North Kensington, to meet housing targets. Objections to Unit 10 plans will need to explain why these conflict with StQW policies as well as RBKC Local Plan policies.