

28th February 2020

Dear officer,

**Ref: Sackville Trading Estate planning application form MODA
BH2019/03548**

I have been following this 2nd application since it first came forward, actually from pre-application stage, as this is a Major development scheme with a capital M. It abuts Goldsmid Ward and will have a significant and detrimental impact upon it. Councillor Allcock and I have, serious reservations about this scheme and have discussed these at various times with members of the Hove Station Neighbourhood Forum (who support the scheme but with some reservations), members of Hove Gold and with local residents on the Clarendon and Ellen Estate and the surrounding area and also the Newtown Road area all of who would be greatly affected by the development.

The application is for a brownfield site in a very central part of Hove, near to Hove Station, much of which is listed and declared as a Heritage Asset and to Hove Park. Both myself and Councillor Allcock very much welcome a development on this site as there have been several failed applications before and it could provide a really exciting affordable and sustainable residential and employment opportunity for residents of Hove. Unfortunately, this 2nd application, although there have been some minor improvements, doesn't do that, especially as it has only 10% affordable rental units and a disappointing amount of employment and retail space, although slightly more than in the 1st application. The creation of truly affordable homes in the current housing crisis along with sustainable employment must be a priority for our city.

Appearance – height

The frontage to Sackville Road makes an effort to blend in but the tower blocks at the centre and back of the site are far too high and close together and create a canyon effect. It has already been stated that the wind between these tower blocks could be quite uncomfortable for both residents and pedestrians and that is still the case.

This is a tall buildings designated area – DA6 – of heights up to 6 storeys and it would have been appreciated by local residents if this had been adhered to. CAG/Heritage have stated that the altered plans are still very oppressive as there are 13 buildings of 10-15 storeys and they will have a significant impact on the Heritage sites nearby. The 13 tower blocks tower still have few, if any, redeeming architectural feature, and nothing has been done to change that. Indeed, it has been said that the appearance of this development will make it look as if 'Croydon has come to Hove'.

It is also considered by CAG that it will be harmful to 'designated heritage assets' such as Hove station and the surrounding conservation areas. The views to the sea from Hove Park – a locally listed heritage asset will be lost entirely as can be seen in the photos on the application site. Another worrying point is that there are still issues over lights as many units will still only meet minimum BSE sunlight recommendations or fall just below them.

We also note that there has been only a very insignificant increase in the amount of private amenity that each unit would have. This is deeply worrying on a site of this density where residents will be cheek by jowl effectively.

Lots of landscaping would help on this site but it's depressing to read how difficult it will be for trees to survive in an environment where there will be little daylight for much of the year, which trees need in order to thrive. The range of trees which can be planted, but which again may not thrive, is very narrow and so there will be little diversity.

Impact on local area

There is little doubt that this Major development will have a significant impact on the local area and beyond. Some of the blocks are nearly twice the height of the Clarendon and Ellen estate and this will greatly affect views in the surrounding area.

The biggest impacts will be on the local transport system and general infrastructure – schools, GP surgeries, parking etc. The junction at Sackville Road and Old Shoreham Road is exceptionally busy and whatever adjustments are made they are unlikely to resolve the issues that arise, especially if the Toad Hove Valley application is granted whereby the junction would just become gridlocked. Sackville Road itself is already very busy and large numbers of cars entering it from the MODA site will present serious difficulties and we still do not feel reassured by the measures in the 2nd application. We are told that S106 money will sort all of this out but there is little detail offered that provides reassurance on this matter – moving bus stops and giving money to residents towards the cost of a bike doesn't quite solve the problem.

Parking is a serious concern as it is unlikely that large numbers of residents will opt for cycles or public transport, as has been implied. Naively, I thought that the Mayfield Care Community residents would not have cars as most would be in their 70s, but I was assured by one of the directors of the homes that the majority of residents did in other Mayfield homes. There will also be carers, delivery drivers, workers etc all coming to the site, via the one and only entrance in Sackville Road. As all the surrounding roads have little extra capacity for parking one wonders where all the cars that travel to this development will go. It is stated that gaps have been left so that in the future routes can be created that link the site up with Newtown Road, a road that is already hard pressed with traffic and parking issues.

The pollution from all the extra vehicles is also a worrying aspect of this development, especially as the council have just declared a Climate Emergency. There needs to be more emphasis on avoiding more pollution in the city and creating a sustainable environment. At first the developers stated they were incorporating a Medical Centre into the development but on closer questioning it became clear that they meant a gym. As local GP

surgeries are at full capacity one wonders where the extra residents will go for medical treatment?

We would respectfully ask that the committee refuses this application and asks the developers to go back to the drawing board again and make more significant changes than they have done so far, particularly with regard to the massing, height and density of the tower blocks, private amenity and wind issues etc.

Kind regards

Councillor Jackie O'Quinn Goldsmid Ward
Chair of Licensing

Councillor John Allcock Goldsmid Ward
Chair of Children and Young People Committee

