

41-59 Battersea Park Road

Architect's Proof Of Evidence

Executive Summary

Alan McCartney

LBW Ref: 2022/1835

PINS Ref: APP/H5960/W/24/3358065

Revision 01 - March 2025

Howells

Executive Summary

- 1.1.1 This Proof of Evidence has been prepared by Alan McCartney, Partner at Howells, in support of the appeal submitted by Watkin Jones Group (WJG) relating to the proposed redevelopment at 41–59 Battersea Park Road.
- 1.1.2 The Appeal Scheme seeks to deliver a mixed-use development comprising Purpose Built Student Accommodation (PBSA), affordable housing, community/commercial floorspace, and high-quality public realm. It replaces a previously consented scheme (the Extant Permission) with a revised proposal that in my opinion better responds to site constraints, context, and policy expectations. My evidence addresses matters of design, height and massing, and neighbouring amenity, with a particular focus on the relationship of the Appeal Scheme to New Mansion Square and other surrounding residential properties. Based on a review of the design evolution, site context, policy compliance, and comparative assessment against the Extant Permission, I conclude that the Appeal Scheme represents a clear and measurable improvement in several respects.
- 1.1.3 The proposal meets the design criteria established in the Site Allocation, including enhancement of public realm, activation of key frontages, integration of green infrastructure, and the creation of a visually attractive, functional and contextually responsive scheme. The Statement of Common Ground confirms compliance with these policies, and Council officers have supported the design approach through the determination process.
- 1.1.4 The design of the Appeal Scheme has evolved over a five-year period through extensive engagement with officers at Wandsworth Council, the GLA, the Wandsworth Design Review Panel, and local community stakeholders. The scheme was presented three times to the Design Review Panel, which commended the quality of the design response and positively acknowledged the applicant team's responsiveness to feedback.
- 1.1.5 In terms of amenity, the Appeal Scheme performs as well as, and in several respects I consider better than, the Extant Permission. Enhanced separation distances, improved orientation and massing, and detailed architectural responses minimise overlooking and protect privacy. The relationship with Simper Mansions has been carefully addressed, and where closer proximity occurs, the impact is limited and well mitigated. Only a small number of windows (14 (0.75%) of approximately 1,850 across the New Mansion Square development) experience a notable change in outlook, and even these are secondary bedroom windows. The modest increase in height between the Extant and Appeal Scheme is not perceived as overbearing given the distances and visual angles involved.
- 1.1.6 Regarding the impact on shared amenity spaces, the Appeal Scheme maintains or improves the relationship relative to the Extant Permission. Key interventions include the removal of balconies facing New Mansion Square, use of half-height windows, and stepped massing. The height increase is modest and has negligible impact on outlook from either the eastern deck or southern lawn due to existing separation distances and intervening buildings. The Council's concern regarding an overbearing impact is not supported by the evidence or the responses received during the pre-application and review processes.
- 1.1.7 In conclusion, I consider the Appeal Scheme clearly complies with the development plan, including Policies LP1 and LP2 of the Local Plan, London Plan Policies D3 and D4, and national guidance at Paragraphs 135, 137 and 138 of the NPPF. It represents a significant improvement over the Extant Permission in terms of design, amenity, and public benefit. It has been shaped through a rigorous, inclusive design process, informed by ongoing consultation with officers, expert panels, and the community. Where changes in proximity and outlook occur, they are addressed through a combination of existing site conditions and design mitigation. The resulting development is appropriate to its urban setting and delivers clear planning and placemaking benefits without causing undue harm.
- 1.1.8 Insofar as they relate to my discipline, the Council has raised matters of amenity, outlook, privacy, and perceived overbearing impacts; however, for the reasons set out in my evidence, I consider these have been appropriately addressed and that the Appeal against non-determination should be allowed.

