

Plans 3 Sub-Committee Meeting 21/12/23

Re – Agenda Item 4.5 (23/02774/NDFLAT) Summerfield, 3 Freelands Road, Bromley BR1 3AG

Statement from Cllr Kate Lymer

Thank you, Chairman.

I would like to draw your attention to page 78 of the pack and paragraph 7.4.6.

7.4.6 (first paragraph) says that the External Appearance of the building is assessed by Officers as ACCEPTABLE. This assessment shall include the townscape context of the appearance of the building in the surrounding area, as well as the building appearance itself.

I am here this evening to argue that none of that is acceptable.

If we take the issue of townscape context first, the report says that “The surrounding context comprises of a mix of 2-3 storey semi-detached houses and 3-4 storey flatted blocks.” This correct. There are no buildings in the entire road that have 5 floors.

The existing block of flats has 4 storeys, and the block of flats to the right of it also have 4 storeys, and the block of flats next along also has 4 storeys. Together they make a row of equal level buildings. To add an extra level would stick out like a sore thumb and completely disrupt the established building height line of that side of the road.

It's not like it would be nestled away between lots of other flats, and wouldn't notice much. As you can see on p. 69, figure 3 – there are 2 small semi-detached houses to the left of the block. What you can't see in that photo is that next to them there is a row of 4 single storey garages. So you would drive into this road and on you left would be a row of garages, the two semis – and then for all the world to see a massive black box on top of the existing flats. Couldn't be any more obvious and obtrusive.

The report says that this new proposed height, scale and massing would not be dissimilar to flatted blocks in Widmore Road. So what? This is a completely different road. You can't compare a quiet residential only road with one of the main artery roads in the borough. It would be like saying that we should allow 15 storey blocks of flats being built in the Palace Estate because there are 15 storey blocks in Elmfield Road adjacent to it.

Next we will consider the building appearance that the Officer's deem acceptable. Please look at the photo (figure 5) on page 70 of your packs (wait for them to turn their pages).

The report says that the proposed zinc black clad finish (with aluminium framed windows) clearly distinguishes between the 'old' and the 'new', and is considered to be an appropriate design response.

Does that honestly look an appropriate design to you?

It looks like the Black Stone of Mecca incongruously plonked on top of a mid 20th century block of flats.

Additionally, if you have driven down this road and had a look, every single home in the road is either completely white or part white with red brick. You can get a feel for that in photos in the pack on pages 69 & 70. The proposal has nothing in common with the existing road, and would be a complete eyesore.

There are 25 local objections to this application, and I request that the Committee considers refusing this application for Prior Approval on the following grounds:

- Extra storey to building would not be in keeping with the height of other buildings on this road. Extra height will be overbearing, out of scale and obvious.
- The design is out of character with the existing building and rest of the road, and degrades the street scene.
- Will also be detrimental to the neighbouring residents outlook – particularly the houses opposite and the houses behind one of which is a listed building.

Thank you.