

MAYOR OF LONDON

Nicholas Rogers AM
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Our ref: MGLA020721-7321

Your ref: NJR/FG

Date: 6 July 2021

Dear Nicholas,

Public Hearing for Stag Brewery, Mortlake

Thank you for your letter of 1 July following the plenary meeting of the Assembly.

I always take the work and the opinions of the Assembly very seriously and seek to take them into account in decisions that I reach. In this case, there are a number of competing issues in deciding when to proceed with the public hearing for Stag Brewery, Mortlake.

I would first note that the date for the hearing has been pushed back from 16 July to 27 July in order to try to accommodate the preference of residents and others to attend in person. The basis for the deferral was to move the hearing beyond 19 July given the prospect of the lifting of the current Covid restrictions and hence being able to allow more people into City Hall. I appreciate the point you make about school holidays, and this is why we are not proposing to push it back further into August. We have also introduced a process to enable people to attend and engage with the hearing remotely as well as in person, so people's ability to attend City Hall in person on a given date will not inhibit their ability to be involved in the process.

I understand that Greater London Authority (GLA) planning officers have met with local groups and representatives over the course of the past year. As noted, the scheme has been amended to address particular areas where it would not meet current policy requirements and residents have been consulted on these amendments. The hearing will give interested parties the opportunity to make their case and make clear their concerns in an open forum and will ensure decisions are made transparently.

You highlight in your call for a further deferral that this would enable meaningful discussion between resident groups, the GLA, Richmond Council and developers – so that the residents' proposed amendments can be properly and formally considered. There is no mechanism for formal consideration of proposed amendments such as changing the school from a secondary school to a primary since these have no formal basis and do not form part of a planning proposal. While residents may wish to discuss alternative proposals, as the decision-making planning authority I am required to determine the scheme before me in accordance with the development plan in force, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The planning team have reviewed proposals and sought ways to incorporate appropriate changes into the scheme, however, they have concluded that the scheme stands to be considered as currently submitted.

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Given this, deferring until September would, I believe, raise issues around the timely nature of decision-making. You will be acutely aware of the challenge facing London in terms of housing delivery, and the planning system has an important part to play in addressing this challenge. This includes determining planning applications without undue delay as is required by national policy and I have to consider carefully the benefits of delaying decision-making against the risks this creates and the potential benefits that such a delay could achieve.

As such, and while I appreciate this is not the decision that you have advocated for, I must conclude that the hearing should proceed on 27 July 2021.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Sadiq Khan', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Sadiq Khan
Mayor of London

Cc: Andrew Boff AM, Chair of the London Assembly