

# Publication from Siân Berry: Letter to Mayor recommending he refuse planning for the MSG Sphere

Siân Berry or type unknown

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Dear Sadiq,

### MSG Sphere planning application GLA/4752/01

I am writing to recommend you refuse the referable planning application submitted by Stratford Garden Development Limited to develop Madison Square Gardens (MSG) Sphere, a multi-use entertainment and leisure building with an illuminated external display, on the land off Angel Lane, Stratford. As planning report GLA/4752/01 details, construction proposals involve significant impacts on safety, public access, and residential amenity.

Proposals for the MSG Sphere to operate all year round, displaying illuminated advertisements at up to 96 metres in height on an exosphere covering five acres of land, pose considerable risks to local residents as well as to visitors and users of the venue. The increase in crowds to Stratford Station will increase health and safety risks at a station that is already one of the busiest and stretched in Britain.[1]

The proposed LED surface illumination poses further risks to rail safety via glare. This was outlined in an objection lodged in 2020 by Crossrail. The impact of constant illumination on students living in nearby student accommodation is also very concerning. This was emphasised in a representation submitted in 2020 to the London Legacy Development Corporation (LLDC) by ROK Planning on behalf of Unite Students, with developer-funded blackout blinds suggested for the mitigation of light pollution in student accommodation.

Notwithstanding the detrimental environmental and social impacts of proposed plans, [2] there also appear to have been issues with the democratic processes leading to LLDC approving proposed plans in March this year. For example, correspondence between developers and LLDC in 2017 came to light in 2019, demonstrating that LLDC had discussed strategies for managing “local resistance” following the submission of the application, collaborating on strategies for publicity drives in Newham, and providing a place for MSG representatives on the Stratford Overview Board. 3 Public trust in the planning process for this venue has therefore been eroded. It is vital that this trust is restored through appropriate intervention in your Stage 2 planning response.

Based on the serious risks to health, safety and wellbeing that this planning application poses, it is my recommendation and hope that you reject it in the interests of the local community.

Yours sincerely,

Sian Berry

Green Party Member of the London Assembly

cc Jules Pipe, Deputy Mayor for Planning, Regeneration and Skills

[1] <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-59414795>

[2] [https://www.queenelizabetholympicpark.co.uk/-/media/lldc/local-plan/extra-party-statements/14-pr\\_057-001-matter-12-statement-by-stop-msg-sphere.ashx?la=en](https://www.queenelizabetholympicpark.co.uk/-/media/lldc/local-plan/extra-party-statements/14-pr_057-001-matter-12-statement-by-stop-msg-sphere.ashx?la=en)

[3] <https://www.newhamrecorder.co.uk/news/lldc-under-fire-over-msg-sphere-e...>

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