

Letter to Brent Planning Department re Kilburn Square Estate infill

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Contents

[Letter to Brent Planning Department re Kilburn Square Estate infill](#)

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Dear Sir/Madam,

Re: Planning Application 22/3669, Kilburn Square Estate, Kilburn Square, London

I am writing to object to this planning application and to ask you to recommend that Councillors refuse permission for it when it comes to Planning Committee.

I have been in contact with residents of the Kilburn Square Estate for more than two years, listening to their concerns regarding plans by Brent Council to build additional homes within the grounds of the estate, known as ‘infill’ development. They have consistently raised legitimate worries about the loss of amenity green space for existing residents, the height of the buildings proposed and the overall density of blocks on an already dense site.

I have also visited Kilburn Square Estate to hear from residents directly, and to see for myself the impact of the proposals on their homes, community and circumstances.

Residents have shown me how the location of proposed Blocks C and E would be: “taking away the only grass we have, they’re going to be adding more concrete to it” [and] “putting a path along all these doors [in front of people’s homes],” which residents: “don’t want as a walk area for people. They need privacy.” They are also very concerned that a new access road will be created outside existing homes.

On my visit, I clearly saw how well used the green space is, and how children use it for play. As the coronavirus pandemic has made clear, the mental and physical benefits of green space are invaluable, particularly for residents who live in flats. Building over this community garden would have a negative impact on wellbeing.

The estate is already densely populated, as it currently consists of a total of 270 residential units across six buildings. Adding a further 139 new households, all of whom will be expected to share this much-reduced communal green space, is not consistent with healthy and fair development policies for new residents, and will severely reduce the amenity of the people already living there.

Furthermore, as the Green Infrastructure and Natural Environment Chapter in the Brent Local Plan 2019-2041 (adopted 2022) shows, Kilburn Square Estate is in Open Space Deficiency Area.[1] These are defined as “areas not within 400m of any public park”. The Local Plan goes on to say: “Overall, the majority of wards fall below the borough average. Only 6 wards have equivalent or higher provision.” Kilburn Square Estate is in a ward that falls below the average, as there is “no provision of either district or metropolitan parks to the south [of the borough].” Therefore, to remove green space from a community living in an already depleted area is simply wrong.

Residents have also brought up the lack of larger family homes in the proposed development. Brent Council’s plans for the new buildings propose 70 one-bedroom, 42 two-bedrooms and 27 three-bedroom homes. No four-bedroom homes are included, which is an oversight given the need for larger family homes in Brent and across London.

Residents have been clear with me that they do want new homes provided on their estate, and they have proposed a reasonable alternative plan.

Overall, residents suggest that the Council reconsiders its proposal, and submits a new application without Blocks C and E, proceeding only with blocks A and B, and increasing the number of family homes in one of these two blocks.

For the reasons outlined above, I urge you to not approve this application.

Yours sincerely,

Sian Berry

Green Party Member of the London Assembly

[1] Brent Local Plan 2019-2041 (adopted 2022), accessed 12 Jan 2023, <https://legacy.brent.gov.uk/media/16414614/66-green-infrastructure-chap...>

[Back to table of contents](#)