

REQUEST THAT THE CABINET MEMBER HEAR CONCERNS ABOUT THE NUMBER OF 'HIGH RISE' PLANNING APPLICATIONS IN YIEWSLEY, WEST DRAYTON & COWLEY

Cabinet Member	Councillor Keith Burrows
Cabinet Portfolio	Planning and Transportation
Report Author	James Rodger/Nigel Bryce, Planning and Community Services
Papers with report	None

HEADLINE INFORMATION

Purpose of report	To inform the Cabinet Member that a petition has been received from the Yiewsley Community Involvement Group raising concerns about the number of 'high rise' planning applications in Yiewsley/West Drayton/Cowley. The report also addresses concerns regarding consultation generally on planning matters.
Contribution to our plans and strategies	The report explains how various Council procedures and plans involve the public in decision making.
Financial Cost	There are none directly associated with the recommendations to this report.
Relevant Policy Overview Committee	Residents' and Environmental Services
Ward(s) affected	Yiewsley, West Drayton and Brunel

RECOMMENDATION

That the Cabinet Member:

- 1. Meets and discusses with petitioners their concerns regarding 'high rise buildings' and public consultation on planning matters.**
- 2. Advise the petitioner, given the evidence presented in the petition report, it is not the case that the Council is allowing lots of high rise buildings in Yiewsley, West Drayton or Cowley.**
- 3. Advise the petitioner, given the evidence presented in the petition report, that the Council already undertakes extensive public consultation on planning matters in excess of statutory requirements.**

INFORMATION

Reasons for recommendation

The report looks at planning submissions for buildings over 3 storeys in the last 3-4 years, with specific regard to Yiewsley, but also West Drayton and Cowley. It notes that most developments for buildings above 3 storeys have been refused planning permission.

The report explains that the Council exceeds statutory requirements for public consultation.

Alternative options considered

The chief petitioner does not advocate any solutions to the issues raised; rather she requests the opportunity to voice the concerns of the local community. This opportunity is given through the Cabinet petition process.

Comments of Policy Overview Committee(s)

None at this stage.

Supporting Information

1. The petition is stated to represent, '*The concerns from local residents and retailers about the increasing number of 'high rise' applications within Yiewsley, West Drayton and Uxbridge South Wards*'. The petition has 125 signatures and is organised by Gay Brown of the Yiewsley Community Involvement Group. The 125 signatures are on sheets of paper headed, 'Say no to High Rise'.
2. The petition has attached a covering letter (it should be noted that the letter is written in a manner which suggest it is a later add on to the petition). The covering letter raises issues other than concerns over 'high rise buildings'. These can be summarised as:
 - (i) Introduction of a 24/7 culture.
 - (ii) Lack of consultation in general.
 - (iii) A specific concern regarding methods of newspaper advertising used for planning applications.
 - (iv) A reluctance to challenge changes imposed on the local community.
 - (v) A request that the meeting be heard in Yiewsley
3. This report addresses both the headline issue raised by the petition re: 'High rise buildings' and the above five numbered additional concerns.
4. The table below highlights developments over 3 storeys that the report writer is aware of that have been determined in the last 3-4 years in Yiewsley, West Drayton and Cowley:

SITE	MAX STOREY HIEGHT	COUNCIL DECISION & COMMENT IF ALLOWED
Residential student blocks, at Brunel University, Cowley	No higher than existing University Buildings.	ALLOWED - No higher than existing University Buildings.
Porters Way, West Drayton	6/7 storeys	REFUSED
70 Station Road, West Drayton	4 storeys	REFUSED
111-117 High Street, Yiewsley	4 storeys	ALLOWED - Same storey height as two neighbouring buildings.
Honeywell Site, Trout Road, Yiewsley	5 storeys	ALLOWED – Building heights vary across the site and were influenced by previous structures on site.
Versatile House, Yiewsley	5/6 storeys	REFUSED
Tesco, Yiewsley	3/4 storeys	ALLOWED – Decision influenced by earlier appeal decision.
Harrier House, Yiewsley	4/5 storeys	REFUSED
Crusader House, Yiewsley	4 storeys	REFUSED
Stockley Park	10 storey Hotel	REFUSED

The table shows that 6 out of 10 developments were refused. The 4 allowed schemes all have building heights which are similar to neighbouring existing buildings. The evidence clearly does not point to a large number of tall buildings receiving planning permission in Yiewsley, West Drayton or Cowley. It should also be noted that there are numerous brownfield sites within the search area.

5. The petitioners concern regarding lack of consultation in general is best responded to by outlining the consultation currently carried out by the Council on planning matters.
6. There is no statutory requirement for developers to undertake pre-application public consultation. Planning officers nonetheless actively encourage pre-application consultation; in this regard developers are referred to the Councils Statement of Community Involvement. Some, but not all, developers do follow officer advice and undertake pre-application discussions with the local community. The redevelopment of the remainder of the RAF West Drayton site (where there is a planning application currently under determination) was the subject of extensive pre-submission public consultation.
7. The statutory requirement for most major developments is:
 - (a) Site notice in at least one place on or near the land to which the application relates for not less than 21 days.
 - (b) By local advertisement.

The Council greatly exceeds these requirements by writing letters to neighbours in a wide area around application sites. The aforementioned RAF West Drayton application was subject to 1619 consultation letters being issued.

8. The Council actively consults local interest groups such as the Yiewsley Community Involvement Group and the Yiewsley and West Drayton Town Centre Action Group. It should be noted that the Yiewsley Community Involvement Group were pro-actively asked by Council officers to identify the local area which they wished to be consulted on planning applications last year, furthermore, the Yiewsley and West Drayton Town Centre Action Group evolved with support from the Council.
9. At planning meetings the Council allows the public (if a valid petition has been submitted at least 48 hours before the meeting) to speak for up to 5 minutes. The right of the public to speak at planning meetings does not exist at all Councils, but does exist at Hillingdon.
10. Overall it can be concluded that the Council substantively exceeds statutory requirements with respect to public consultation.
11. The lead petitioner in her covering letter raises a concern regarding a 24/7 culture being introduced. There is no explanation given as to why the lead petitioner thinks this is the case. The petitioner indicates that this is linked to planning and licensing decisions.
12. The legislation for licensing is strictly outlined in the Licensing Act 2003. Licensing decisions can only be made with respect to the four licensing objectives:
 - A. The prevention of Crime and Disorder
 - B. Public Safety
 - C. The Prevention of Public Nuisance
 - D. The Protection of Children from Harm.

The Council has regular meetings of a licensing Committee (every 3 weeks). The Council's licensing officers consult all the relevant statutory consultees who can lodge objections with regard to the licensing objectives. In summary the Council could not consider licensing applications any differently from how it currently considers them. However, it must be stressed that licensing and planning applications are mutually exclusive. Most uses that form part of the night time economy are subject to planning applications (e.g. Changes of A1 retail uses to use as a take away, restaurant, bar or nightclub). The Council has consistently applied conditions on such planning applications to control both the hours of use and deliveries. In this regard it can only be concluded that the Council is currently imposing appropriate controls on the night time economy. It should also be noted that the Council has an out of hour's noise team who can investigate noise complaints regarding late night noise.

13. The Cabinet Member is advised that the issue of advertising in local free newspapers has been the subject of formal complaint to the Council by the lead petitioner. That Complaint has been responded to in full. The complaint has not been upheld. It is considered that this matter is now closed and that it does not need to be addressed in this report.
14. The lead petitioner comments that she considers there is a reluctance to challenge changes imposed on the local community. The Council devoted extensive resources to fight its case that the high rise development at Porters Way should be refused at appeal. The table outlining developments over 3 storeys also indicates that the Council has not hesitated to refuse applications for unacceptable development in Yiewsley/West Drayton and Cowley. The statement that the Council is reluctant to

challenge changes imposed on the community is therefore strongly refuted.

15. It is not considered that a specific meeting should be heard in Yiewsley, all petitions to the Cabinet Member are heard at the Civic Centre, which is considered to be a centrally located venue with excellent public transport links, including regular buses to Cowley, Yiewsley and West Drayton.

Financial Implications

There are none associated with recommendations to this report.

Legal Implications

The Council has carried out its statutory duties with respect to public consultations.

EFFECT ON RESIDENTS, SERVICE USERS & COMMUNITIES

What will be the effect of the recommendation?

To allow the Cabinet Member to discuss in detail the concerns of petitioners.

Consultation Carried Out or Required

No consultation is required.