

My name is Lance Poynter a long-time resident of Billing Place.

I am speaking on behalf of neighbours at Billing Place, Billing Street, Billing Road and Stamford Cottages who supported a joint objection (submitted by planning consultants, Smith Jenkins).

These streets form the Billings Conservation Area.

Our objection to the effects of the proposed scheme on the Billings is one of many, including the strong objections of both the Royal Borough and the Rt Hon. Greg Hands, MP for Fulham and Chelsea.

The Planning Officer concludes that the scheme you are considering tonight delivers substantial public benefits that are considered to outweigh the harm to designated heritage assets.

We **cannot** agree.

We believe that the report does **not** reflect **adequately**, or examine **sufficiently**, the **degree** of harm that the Scheme would inflict on the **historic** Billings Conservation Area.

The Billings Conservation area is on the southeast corner of the proposed development. We are separated from the present stadium by a green buffer, the Billings and Brompton Cutting Conservation Area.

This provides **open space**, a **Site of Importance for Nature Conservation**, a green corridor for wildlife and a green screen for the Billings.

To the north lies the Brompton Cemetery and we are set back from Fulham Road to the South.

The report finds that the scheme does 'harm' to the 'setting' of the Billings Conservation area and 'substantial harm' to the Cutting Conservation Area which, as noted, provides the green setting to the west of the Billings.

We believe that the scheme, as it stands, and particularly the raised pedestrian walkway, will **destroy** the green Cutting Conservation Area and **substantially damage** the Billings.

Both Councils have a duty to preserve or enhance these Conservation Areas.

If the scheme goes ahead unchanged, it will be the **damage**, that will be preserved for future generations **not** the Heritage, and the green space, so vital to London.

The Billings Conservation Area was **appraised** last year and the Conservation Area Appraisal adopted in October, **strengthening** the case for preservation.

The report omits this.

In making your decision you **must** therefore consider what the Appraisal finds is so special about the Billings, in order to appreciate and assess the harm.

This is what the Appraisal says in clause (1.6): to quote: “The four streets form a **charming** and **remarkable** survival of houses for the working classes”.

It finds in clause (1.8) that: “The small scale of the houses, the quietness afforded by the lack of traffic, and the absence of non-residential uses, impart a **peaceful tranquillity**, and a **spirit of intimacy to the place**, that makes it **unusually special**.”

The Appraisal comments in clause (4.9), that “Perhaps an intangible feature of this area, due to its diminutive size, is the **overwhelming view of the sky** all around.”

Clause (2.7) notes that “Outside the Conservation Area there are two important areas of green space, and the trees they contain enhance the setting of this small estate. These include the naturally self-sown Sycamores...” in the Cutting Conservation Area.

The Appraisal also highlights as special, in clause (1.8), what it describes as the Billings’ “**rural feel**”.

These are **some** of the things that are at stake and require your further consideration.

In 1.13 the Appraisal warns that The Billings is “**sensitive** to changes from without as well as within”.

The destruction of the Cutting Conservation Area and the green screen that it provides, replacing it with a raised walkway, will have a **profound** effect on the Billings Conservation Area.

And, according to Hammersmith and Fulham’s own Character Profile, the Cutting Conservation Area was adopted to, quote, “**control** any

development of the railway cutting, which forms an **important setting** to The Billings Conservation Area...”

The walkway proposed would clash, visually, with the small 19<sup>th</sup> Century houses, destroying residents’ amenity with its **physical domination** and the **sense of enclosure** it would bring,

the effect on **light** and **sky**,

the **intrusion** into the **peaceful tranquillity** of the Billings,

the **loss** of a **natural environment**,

but it would also **damage** that “**spirit of intimacy**”,

which, as the Appraisal emphasises, makes the Billings Conservation Area, to quote again,

“**unusually special**”.

The relationship of the raised walkway to the Billings is therefore particularly sensitive.

The Council and developers have recognized this to a very small extent in the changes made to the walkway in the revised plans. However, the raised pedestrian walkway would still be almost touching the Billings at the western end of Billing Place and along the Northern part of Stamford Cottages.

There will not even be room to plant trees or replace those that are to be cut down.

We believe that with your encouragement the developers **could**, and **should**, improve this part of the scheme, to lessen the catastrophic impact on the Billings Conservation Area, even if it includes adjustments or compromises to the design of the South East corner of the stadium.

We would urge the Committee to request the applicants to look again at this aspect of the plan.

PS ad lib – the montage looking Westwards along Billing Place did not show the fact that the proposed structures would be much, much nearer, did not show the removal of the trees at the end of Billing Place, and did not show the proposed walkway.