

## **SUMMARY OF PROOF OF EVIDENCE – URBAN DESIGN**

**FABRIZIO MATILLANA AADipl MSc PGDip ARB**

**Chartered Architect**

**APPEAL BY SAIRAM (HOLDINGS) Ltd**

**AGAINST A REFUSAL OF PLANNING PERMISSION AT**

**FORMER STANMORE AND EDGWARE GOLF CENTRE, BROCKLEY HILL, STANMORE, HA7 4LR**

**APPEAL REF: APP/M5450/W/22/3299650**

**LPA ref: P/3088/20**

**SEPTEMBER 2022**

## 1. QUALIFICATIONS AND PROFESSIONAL BACKGROUND

- 1.1. My name is Fabrizio Matillana. I am a chartered architect registered at the Architect's Registration Board (ARB) since 2013. I have worked in private architectural practice since 2010 in London. In 2020 I joined the public sector as Principal Urban Designer in Enfield Council and since 2021 I work at Islington Council.
- 1.2. I have been instructed by the London Borough of Harrow (LBH) as an independent urban design witness to give evidence in this appeal.
- 1.3. In my 10 years private architectural practice I have worked at AJ100 firms and for Royal Academician Farshid Moussavi OBE. In Enfield Council, I led the urban design advice for the borough's most high-profile schemes including Meridian Water Phase 1 and Edmonton Green Shopping Centre. I also worked on other major projects in green belt, brownfield, strategic industrial land, tall buildings, and mixed-use schemes. In Islington, I joined the New Build Team advising on the New Building Housing Programme, responsible for delivering new council housing via estate regeneration.
- 1.4. I am currently Deputy Team Leader of Design and Conservation at the London Borough of Islington. I am responsible for leading the design and conservation advice for major applications, managing a team of design and conservation officers, running the Design Review Panel and advise on design matters on policy and strategic projects.
- 1.5. Relevant to this appeal, I have experience working on projects on sensitive settings as architect in private practice and as urban designer in a Local Authority. This includes projects on Green Belt, Site of Nature Conservation Interest, Conservation Areas, and Grade II, II\* and I listed buildings.
- 1.6. I have an AA Diploma from the Architectural Association School of Architecture (AA Dipl ARB/RIBA Part I and II), a Postgraduate Diploma in Professional Practice & Management in Architecture (PGDip ARB/RIBA Part III) from the Bartlett School of Architecture and a Master's in Science in Spatial Planning from the Bartlett School of Planning (MSc.).

## 2. SCOPE OF MY PROOF OF EVIDENCE

- 2.1. This evidence is to present my views on the second reason for refusal (RFR 2).
- 2.2. RFR 2 states: *"The proposed building, by reason of its design and form, would appear as unsympathetic and obtrusive in an open setting, to the detriment of the character and appearance of the locality within the context of a Green Belt site, contrary to policy D1, G2 London Plan (2021), policy CS1.B of the Harrow Core Strategy (2012) and policy DM1 of the Development Management Policies (2013)."*

- 2.3. I agree with the stated reason for refusal.

### **3. DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE, ITS SURROUNDINGS AND RELEVANT DESIGNATION**

- 3.1. I undertook a site visit on 22nd of August 2022 accompanied by Case Officer Nicola Rankin and her manager Bettina Aneke.
- 3.2. The site is a former golf centre club house and driving range located to the west of Brockley Hill. The overall site is 1.63 hectares, with a former golf course and open field to the north covering most of the plot. The former golf club house building with parking space and hardstanding are located to the south.
- 3.3. The current state of the site is unkept and overgrown, following a fire that destroyed the club house building in June 2020. This has left the residual structure exposed and with a considerable amount of debris and litter building up.
- 3.4. The site is within the Harrow Weald Ridge Area of Special Character (HWR AoSC) and Green Belt land. It is also a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC).
- 3.5. The site is characterised by open field with a tree line along its perimeter. Its east side is towards Brockley Hill A5 road. To the north, the site is adjacent to Pear Wood Nature Reserve, to the south; Cleopatra Close Park and to the east; Stanmore Country Park.

### **4. IMPACT TO CHARACTER AND APPEARANCE OF THE SITE AND SURROUNDING AREA**

- 4.1. This proof of evidence presents why the appellant's design has been deemed unsympathetic and obtrusive to the open setting, to the detriment of the character and appearance of the locality.
- 4.2. The design and character policies listed in RFR 2 are reviewed and how they have been breached.
- 4.3. Fundamentally, the appellant's scheme has not regarded adequately the sensitive context, which is Green Belt and HWR AoSC, with its proposal and instead undertook a limited 'design led approach' which favoured its operational requirements, to the detriment of the scheme's relationship with its setting, resulting in harm to the open character.
- 4.4. This insensitive design is evident in the scheme's larger footprint and siting due to the Banqueting House requirements, which encroaches beyond the former golf club house, its sited closer to the entrance, and presents a scheme that is taller and wider.
- 4.5. This harm is visible from outside the site from viewpoints 1, 2 and 3 identified in LVIA and from within the site

- 4.6. The scheme also presented a limited typological referencing, not following barn typology in form and layout, as suggested by the DRP, resulting in a design with an incongruous massing, height, and materials within its semi-rural context.
- 4.7. The building's design and form therefore resulted in a scheme that harms the open character of the area, characteristic of the Green Belt and HWR AoSC designations.
- 4.8. In terms of landscaping and hardstanding, there is harm to the open character from outside by siting the building closer to Brockley Hill, breaking the continuous landscape of the golf course with a proposed new mound within the Banqueting House site boundary and enlarging the hardstanding to accommodate the traffic requirements of the Banqueting House, further eroding the open field setting.
- 4.9. Compared with the existing former golf club house and its residual structure, the appellant's scheme causes harm to the character and appearance to the site due to its insensitive design.
- 4.10. Working on sensitive settings require a careful response to the opportunities and constraints of a site. The site offered possibilities to make the constraints of open character key features from which a high-quality design scheme could have emerged. The appellant did not develop this to the level required of sites with sensitive character.
- 4.11. The appellant's scheme is therefore contrary to the design policies from the NPPF, NDG, London Plan and Harrow DM that prioritise context, character, and typology to inform high quality design and 'well designed' places. Therefore, the design is unsympathetic to Green Belt and HWR AoSC and therefore not compliant with NPPF, London Plan and Harrow DM policies protecting these sensitive areas from harmful development.

## **5. POLICY CONFLICT**

- 5.1. The scheme conflicts with character policies of the London Plan G2, Harrow Core Strategy CS7 A and Harrow Local Plan DM 6. These policies clearly define the open character of the area and state that insensitive development will be resisted. The appellant's scheme, in my view, did not develop a sensitive scheme and therefore is contrary to these policies.
- 5.2. The scheme conflicts with design policies of the London Plan D3 1, 11 and 12, Harrow Core Strategy CS 1B and Harrow Local Plan DM1 in not following a 'design led approach',

resulting in an unsympathetic development that harms the character and appearance of the area.

- 5.3. In terms of the NPPF, it is conflict with paragraphs 126, 130 and 134. Reference to the NDG has also been made to illustrate how the NPPF design policies are meant to be interpreted to deliver 'well designed' places.
- 5.4. While the NDG is guidance, the scheme is conflicts with 3 of the 10 characteristics: Context, Built Form, and Identity.
- 5.5. These non-compliances resulted in a scheme that is unsympathetic and causes harm to the character and appearance of the site, its Green Belt and HWR AoC designations due to its building design and form.