

HOW TO STOP THE TOWER

A guide to objecting to Rockwell Property's planning application for The Glassmill, 1 Battersea Bridge Road

A considerable number of objections have already been made against Rockwell Property's planning application on Wandsworth Council's website. On the next page we have summarised the planning arguments made against the scheme.

Additional objections to the scheme are really important to show the strength of community feeling against the proposals. Whilst the 'official' date for comments has passed Wandsworth Council will continue to register and assess new objections right up to the planning committee decision.

Objecting to the plans is easy. Residents should write to the planning officer managing the application setting out their concerns. These should clearly state that you object and the reasons why. At this stage, the value of objections comes from:

- (1) The total number objections registered with Wandsworth Council.
- (2) The individual nature of those objections.
- (3) The personal dimension as much or perhaps more than the rational arguments.

This is about creating evidence of the breadth and depth of harm that the development will have on people who live in the area. Whilst some of this evidence of 'harm' will not be strictly planning arguments, they help elected members who sit on the planning committee understand the impact and strength of feeling, which supports their motivation to refuse the plans; they will then have (we believe) more than adequate grounds to base their refusal on.

How to comment

- **Register your objection on the Wandsworth Planning Portal** – you can find this by searching for the application reference number on <https://wandsworth.gov.uk/planning/search> and keep clicking through the links until you find "View Associated Application Documents & Make Online Comments for Live Applications" where there is a "Make a Comment" button.

OR

- **Email your objection:** Send it to wandsworthplanningapplications@richmondandwandsworth.gov.uk
- **Include the planning reference number:** 2024/1322.
- **Refer to the site address:** The Glassmill, 1 Battersea Bridge Road, SW11 3BZ.
- **Provide your personal details:** Include your name, address, postcode, and contact details. Note that these will be redacted when published on the Wandsworth Council website.
- **State your reasons clearly:** Outline specific objections such as scale, height, environmental impact, traffic concerns, or heritage issues. There is no need to use technical language; ideally relate them to planning matters but make it personal to you.

- **Use evidence:** You can support your objections with reference to relevant policies, but this is not strictly necessary. Your personal observations about how the plans will impact you and your community are better evidence.
- **Make it personal:** If your personal circumstances or lived experience means that the impact is worse for you than other people then explain that fact. For example, if you have a health condition, are a carer for a vulnerable person, or are a cyclist or have children and have been involved in a road traffic collision in the area with an HGVs, etc.
- **Ask the Council to take an action:** At its simplest you are asking for them to refuse or reject the plans, but if it is appropriate, you could ask them to request more work or information from the applicant (Rockwell Property). For example, if you are worried about construction impacts then ask for a detailed Construction Methodology Statement to be provided before a decision is made. Or if you do not think the affordable housing promises stack up then ask if they can share their assessment of the applicants housing offer and whether it can actually be delivered.
- **Stay concise and focused:** Keep your objections brief and to the point, focusing on the most critical issues. One page is enough – it does not need to be long or comprehensive.
- **DO NOT criticise the Council or councillors:** We should work on the basis that they are on our side and will represent our interests – if anything, thank them for their hard work and anything else that you believe they are doing well that is relevant.
- **Keep a copy:** Retain a copy of your objection for your records.

A template email

The email template below gives you a starting point – however, please do not use this exact form of words. The more individual and personal you can make it the better.

SUBJECT LINE:

Objection to The Glassmill, 1 Battersea Bridge Road, SW11 3BZ (Ref: 2024/1322)

EMAIL COPY:

Dear Sir or Madam,

I am writing to object to Rockwell Property's planning application for the redevelopment of The Glassmill site at 1 Battersea Bridge Road, SW11 3BZ, with the planning reference 2024/1322.

I live at [INSERT ADDRESS] and am deeply concerned about the proposals and how they will affect me and the local area. I am copying in my local elected representatives for their reference.

[SET OUT REASONS FOR OBJECTION]

[SET OUT ANY PERSONAL CIRCUMSTANCES THAT MAKE THIS PARTICULARLY BAD FOR YOU]

I would therefore ask that [INSERT YOUR REQUESTN THAT THE COUNCIL REFUSE THE APPLICATION AND ANYTHING ELSE YOU FEEL THEY NEED BEFORE THEY TAKE A DECISION].

Please can you acknowledge receipt of my email and keep me updated about when a decision will be taken on whether the plans can go ahead.

Yours sincerely, Etc.

... and copy your email to your political representatives

It is really helpful if you copy your email / letter to your MP, the leader of the council, and your ward councillors (or at least some of them). You can use the [WriteToThem](#) website to find who they are if you are not sure.

- **Cllr Simon Hogg, Leader of the Council** (who also has planning in his portfolio) – Cllr.S.Hogg@wandsworth.gov.uk
- **Marsha de Cordova**, MP for Battersea – marsha.decordova.mp@parliament.uk

Battersea Park Ward – the area to the east of Battersea Bridge Road

- Juliana Annan (Labour) - cllr.j.annan@wandsworth.gov.uk
- Tony Belton (Labour) (who is also Chair of the Planning Committee) - Cllr.T.Belton@wandsworth.gov.uk
- Maurice McLeod (Labour) - cllr.m.mcleod@wandsworth.gov.uk

St Mary's Ward – roughly the area to the west of Battersea Bridge Road

- Jessica Lee (Labour) - cllr.j.lee@wandsworth.gov.uk
- Jamie Colclough (Labour) - cllr.j.colclough@wandsworth.gov.uk
- Caroline de la Soujeole (Conservative) - cllr.c.delasoujeole@wandsworth.gov.uk

Planning arguments

The list below summarises the planning arguments that have been made – in detail – by various groups against the planning application for The Glassmill, 1 Battersea Bridge Road. As these arguments have already been submitted to the Council, they should be assessed by the planning officers and – in planning terms – it is not necessary to make them repeatedly. For objectors they provide a starting point for thinking about how the proposals will affect you and why you personally object to the scheme. We suggest that you only use a few reasons that really matter to you!

Scale, Height, and Massing

- **Inappropriate Scale and Height:** The proposed 34-storey building is significantly taller than the surrounding buildings, creating a dominating visual impact on the local area and landmarks such as Battersea Bridge.
- **Contrary to Local Plan:** The proposal does not align with the Wandsworth Local Plan 2023-2038, which sets an appropriate building height for the area at 7-12 storeys.

Housing

- **Affordable Housing:** The proposal offers only 35% affordable housing, falling short of the 50% target set by the London Plan, without a viability statement to justify this shortfall. In addition, as the housing offer is made 'subject to viability' there seems to be no guarantee that this offer will actually be fulfilled.
- **Inappropriate Housing Mix:** The proposed housing mix is criticised for its high proportion of small flats (1 to 2 bedrooms) which does not meet the local need for family homes. We expect that a lot of the homes will be sold to investors rather than owner-occupiers. Elsewhere in London this has resulted in empty, unused housing.
- **Single Aspect Units:** A significant portion of the affordable units are single aspect – they only look in one direction – which does not comply with Wandsworth Council's Local Plan and results in substandard housing.

Impact on Heritage and Visual Amenity

- **Heritage Sites:** The development will negatively impact ten historic buildings within a 400m radius, including the Grade II listed Battersea Bridge and Albert Bridge.
- **Visual and Townscape:** The proposed height of the building will significantly alter the visual character of the area, conflicting with local policies aimed at preserving the townscape and heritage.
- **Lack of Justification for a "Metropolitan Marker":** The developers claim that the site serves as an opportunity for a "Metropolitan Marker" building but provide no evidence or rationale for the necessity or value of such a marker in this location.

Daylight, Sunlight, and Overshadowing

- **Loss of Light:** The development will severely impact daylight and sunlight for neighbouring properties. Full impact assessment data is missing, making it difficult to evaluate the true extent of the impact. We believe that there will be significant impacts on 6 Hester Road in particular.

Environmental Impact

- **Air Quality:** The site is within the Wandsworth Air Quality Management Area. There are concerns about managing nitrogen dioxide and particulate matter emissions during construction and we do not have a clear picture of how the applicant plans to mitigate this due to the absence of a detailed Construction Management Plan.

- **Carbon Emissions:** Incomplete and poorly presented carbon emission data undermine the claimed environmental benefits. We question the applicant's 'Whole Life Carbon Assessment' figures are questioned for being overly optimistic.

Construction Impact

- **Noise and Vibration:** We have significant concerns about noise and vibration during demolition, excavation, and construction phases, especially from pile driving, which could affect nearby structures including the Grade II listed Battersea Bridge.
- **Traffic and Transport:** Increased construction traffic, including hundreds of heavy goods vehicles, will exacerbate traffic congestion and pollution. This poses safety risks for cyclists, pedestrians and other vulnerable people as well as having unknown impacts on the local transport network.
- **Emergency Services Disruption:** Our expectation is that construction will likely block or narrow Battersea Bridge Road, a critical route for emergency services and causing knock-on problems with congestion elsewhere in the transport network.

Community and Social Impact

- **Community Disruption:** The construction phase, estimated to last 35 months, will cause significant noise, vibration, dust, and general disruption, affecting residents' quality of life. The lack of a detailed Construction Management Plan as part of the application process means we do not know if or how the applicant plans to deal with these problems.
- **Lack of Local Investment:** Whilst the application promotes some proposed improvements to the area immediately around the building, our view is that these are really for the residents rather than the wider community. Our view is that the development plans lack meaningful investment in the local area, which might realistically include wider improvements to the Thames Path or local landscape, so there is minimal benefit to the existing community.

Wind Microclimate

- **Wind Conditions:** The proposal could lead to uncomfortable wind conditions for pedestrians around the site, particularly during the winter.

Amenity and Privacy

- **Overlooking and Privacy:** The height and design of the proposed building, including the roof terrace, will lead to significant overlooking issues, impacting the privacy and quiet enjoyment of nearby residential properties.

Financial Viability and Precedent

- **Limited Development Capacity:** The site is acknowledged by the developers as having "limited development capacity," yet the high acquisition cost (£45m) drives the need for an over-scaled development to justify the investment, highlighting a fundamental mismatch between the site's capacity and the proposed scale.
- **Financial Unsustainability:** The developer has overpaid for the site and aims to recoup costs by building a high-density, high-rise development. We believe that the underlying financial unsustainability of the plans means that it is more likely that any planning consent will be sold on or watered-down rather than built out as proposed. Basically, we believe the applicant will bank the precedent for height that the plans create and then do something even less attractive with the site.

- **Precedent for Future Development:** Approving this project would set a negative precedent, encouraging further inappropriate high-rise developments along the south bank of the Thames, contrary to Wandsworth Council's planning rules for the area and community interests.

Consultation

- **Manipulative Community Engagement:** We do not believe that consultation with the community has been substantive, meaningful, or genuine. Questionnaires have been biased, illustrations of the development have been misleading, and promotional materials that obscure the project's true impact in an attempt to manufacture support.

Other

- **Battersea Heliport.** The impact on Battersea Heliport's flight paths has not been adequately addressed.