



Open Letter to Cllr Peter Mason, Leader Ealing Council

Dear Peter,

We note that on 4th August a formal planning application has been made by John Lewis Partnership (JLP) in respect of their West Ealing Waitrose site.

Further, we understand from meetings with you and other members of the cabinet and JLP's own comments that they have been in pre-application discussions with Ealing Council about their plans for this site for some time.

The planning application JLP has lodged, (number 233076FUL) includes a number of buildings considerably taller than the local plan site-specific guidance in your new local plan: a plan you assured STT would carry weight once published. So although JLP went through a public consultation exercise, they have clearly not listened to public feedback, nor have they adhered to the site-specific guidance of 7-13 storeys given by Ealing Council in your local plan, when considering height. The height JLP have applied for exceeds that by over a third.

You were very clear (tweet dated 27h February 2023) that Ealing Council would not be bullied by JLP into accepting buildings higher than stipulated in the local plan. You also made a pre-election promise to clamp down on towers in the borough.

As you know there is a considerable weight of local public opinion against tall towers, as evidenced by the huge number of objections to the controversial Manor Road development. It's clear that the vast majority of Ealing residents are against this level of overdevelopment. So whilst most people support appropriate development on that site, this must be proportionate and adhere to the democratically implemented local plan.

As James Murray MP quite rightly told JLP in the meetings STT attended with JLP over the last 9 months, the London Plan says developers need to 'optimise' sites by Crossrail (Elizabeth line) stations, not 'maximise'.

Can you now reassure the many concerned local residents and supporters of Stop the Towers that Ealing Council will not be entertaining any application for the West Ealing Waitrose site, or indeed the Hastings Road Majestic Wines site, which exceeds the draft local plan height limits of 7-13 stories?

Furthermore, the JLP application includes the demolition of the current Waitrose building, which is less than 18 years old.. This is contrary to Ealing Council's recently announced

policy on sustainability, which favours refurbishing existing buildings over redevelopment. Please reassure us that you are going to stand up for this policy also.

And importantly Peter will you now publish the necessary outstanding five-year land supply figures and the missing housing trajectories that will enable a robust refusal by the Planning Committee or are you going to risk maintaining this defenceless position that results in a presumption in favour of development, and which cost the council, and local residents dear at the Manor Road planning inquiry.

Finally we are disappointed that JLP has chosen the height of the summer holiday period to quietly submit this application. Will you support our request that the deadline for public comments on this application be extended to allow the many people otherwise engaged during this holiday time to comment?

We look forward to hearing from you,

With best wishes

Justine Sullivan and Denise Collier,
Co-Chairs, Stop the Towers