

Community Wins Riverside battle with developer

We have just heard that the Secretary of State has accepted the Inspector's recommendation and rejected the Rockwell appeal.

A lot of very hard work over nearly 3 years by Charlton Together and its members, including the Charlton Society, has finally paid off! Let's not forget that, prior to the appeal, we also had to reverse the approval of the Rockwell proposals originally adopted by planning officers at both Greenwich Council and the GLA (as a matter of interest, in the latter case the Mayor's eventual rejection of his own planning officer's recommendation was the only one out of a total of 28 that had been called in under both Johnson and Khan; all the others were approved).

However, having been won round, both Greenwich and the GLA demonstrated admirable commitment and hired the calibre of lawyers needed for the job. There can be no doubt that the latter's role, in particular, was central to today's outcome.

Although we have not had time to read the Inspector's report, we believe that without the motive force supplied by an active, interventionist and passionate community we would not be where we are today.

Today's rejection of the cynical design and consultation standards adopted by Rockwell and its ruthless disregard of the approved Charlton Riverside Masterplan - in whose development the community also played a vigorous part - is, we hope, a sign of the times. It should at least have a critical impact on the current and prospective planning applications for Charlton Riverside, many of which adopted the Rockwell model. In conjunction with the looming impact of Covid-19 on planning and design standards generally, it would not be surprising if the future of both will be seen to have reached an important turning point today.

Roden Richardson, Vice-Chair

THE CHARLTON SOCIETY