



HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

TO: Mr Rose, Inspector, and Joanna Vincent, Public Inquiry Manager

CC: Brenda Taplin and Rachel Newman

11 May 2023

Re: Twickenham Riverside CPO Hearing – Submission of Witness Statement in Support of the CPO

Dear Mr Rose,

I am writing to lend my full support to Richmond Council's Compulsory Purchase Order of land at Twickenham Riverside, which I believe presents a unique opportunity to transform and revitalise the riverside for the benefit of our whole community, and for generations to come.

The future of Twickenham Riverside has been in limbo for more than 40 years, and the Hopkins scheme – championed by local groups during the design competition and unanimously voted for at Planning Committee – provides the best opportunity to finally move forward.

Our stretch of the river is one of the most beautiful along the Thames, and Twickenham residents have a huge affection for it. Yet, Twickenham Riverside feels disconnected and separate from the high street and the rest of our community. Like the hugely successful revitalisation of nearby Church Street, the Hopkins scheme provides an opportunity to regenerate the area and create a new heart right at the centre of our community.

Specifically, the Hopkins design, which received positive feedback during several periods of engagement, delivers on many of the ambitions that local residents set out during the consultation period.

Under the plans, the new riverside would be larger, greener, more open and more accessible. It would be better connected to both the river and the high street, and boast improved facilities – including new lawns and trees planted, alongside a new playground, café and shops. This would create a destination point and hive of activity on the riverside, as well as make it safer and more inviting for pedestrians.

Local businesses on the adjacent and picturesque Church Street are in support of the added footfall that the regeneration of this area would bring. Currently, the area is cut off from the town and dominated by parked cars, which act as a physical barrier between the existing open space and the river, and present health and safety risks

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for those wishing to cross from the existing gardens to the riverside. In comparison, the Hopkins scheme would include a pedestrianised events space for the public to enjoy, as well as boat houses opposite a pontoon. The open space, however, is just one part of the solution to this site, and must be seen in the wider context of the whole scheme and the positive impacts that regeneration would bring.

In addition to the greatly improved public open spaces, the scheme would also provide much-needed affordable housing. Whilst we are lucky in enough to live in one of London's most affluent boroughs, the housing affordability and cost-of-living crisis we're seeing at the national level is felt keenly in our borough, too. From young people in their first jobs, to the nurses in our hospitals and the teachers in our schools – housing has become completely unaffordable to rent and unattainable to buy. The Hopkins scheme would include 50% affordable housing at a policy-compliant tenure mix.

As a parent of two young children myself, I believe the transformation of Twickenham Riverside is a wonderful opportunity to make this precious space even more vibrant and family friendly – and create a lasting legacy for future generations to enjoy. We must not waste this opportunity and let 40 more years go by.

I urge you to allow the development to go ahead by approving the Compulsory Purchase Order, thereby ending decades of uncertainty for local residents, and capitalising on the huge potential of this important site.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Munira Wilson', written in a cursive style.

MUNIRA WILSON MP
MP for Twickenham