

## WILLOWS ESTATE UNDER THREAT BY DEVELOPMENT.

### 1. HERITAGE.

For two years now, Willows residents, whose properties border the area known as AL21 North site in the Borough Local Plan, on the edge of Windsor, have fought to save the identity of part of Windsor's history –to prevent it being 'swallowed up' by new development and thus its identity as a separate entity lost.

The area is part of the wider Willows Estate which extends on both sides of the old Maidenhead Road (it includes the houses on the Ruddlesway Roundabout, Dairy Cottages towards Windsor Marina and the group of houses adjacent to AL21), and dates back to the Duke of Sutherland in the 1800s and later a shipping magnate Sir Dhunjibhoy Bomanji who took over ownership in 1920. The houses next to AL21, together with the former Squires Garden Centre site, was part of the kitchen garden.

The Willows Estate is a Non-Designated Heritage Asset (NDHA), and in recognition of the heritage value of the boundary wall to the estate, RBWM have required its continued monitoring and maintenance of the existing condition going forward.

Accordingly, Willows residents immediately adjacent to the proposed development have campaigned for a degree of separation between this part of the heritage Estate and the new development, so as to preserve the identity of the Willows as a separate entity and to allow the character of the Estate, as demonstrated by the distinctive structure of the boundary wall (just 1.0-1.5 metres high, buttressed, rounded coping stones), to 'shine through' **ie to be publicly visible, at least in parts of the wall.**

However, development plans state:

***4.9 .....New housing will be sited immediately to the west of the existing walled boundary to the former kitchen garden, and so would extend and integrate with this existing area of suburban housing at the settlement edge. Built Heritage Statement 2023.***

There has been tremendous support from the local community for protection of our heritage – by councillors, local groups such as the Oakley Green and Fifield Residents Association (OGFRA), West Windsor Town Forum, West Windsor Residents Association (WWRA) and by Bray Parish Council (BPC).

### 2. HOUSING

In addition to heritage issues, both the style and density of the houses proposed along the AL21 border, with 18 dwellings intended for alignment with the 3 existing properties of the Willows, is completely out of keeping with the local area on the eastern boundary of AL21, rather than matching it. Apart from poor design principles, serious loss of amenity ie overlooking/noise/light problems would result for residents on both sides of the boundary.

### 3. PROPOSALS

In the light of the above, residents of the Willows have appealed for greater recognition of both our heritage and a design and density of housing in line with existing properties, ie for:

- (i) a reconsideration of the number and style of houses along the Willows Border
- (ii) with regard to heritage, alongside existing properties towards the north of the boundary wall, and close to the pedestrian entrance to the site, we have asked developers for just modest public recognition of our heritage, by means of, for example, micro-allotments to

replace the 4 self-build properties so that the heritage wall can be seen and the identity of the Estate still maintained.

#### **4. PLEASE HELP PRESERVE OUR HERITAGE**

**Please support Willows residents in our appeal to developers, and to the Councillors on the Windsor and Eton Development Management Panel, who will have the final say on the proposed plans and therefore the future of this part of Windsor's history.**

Full details of the application can be found on RBWM's planning website, ref. 23/00582.

**Just forward this message to [planning@rwbm.gov.uk](mailto:planning@rwbm.gov.uk) and confirm your support of our concerns.**

**Thank you.**

**On behalf of Willows residents, Ann Taylor, Lindsey Jennings and Lucy Gilles.**