**FAO David Robinson: Planning Application DC/20/115160: Mais House, Sydenham Hill**

**OBJECTION**

We write on behalf of the Sydenham Hill Ridge Neighbourhood Forum (SHRNF) to add to our previous comments and to express dismay that, despite the original application being quashed at Judicial Review on 18 May 2021, Lewisham is pressing ahead so hastily with a substantially unaltered Planning Application.

Public comments by councillors, stating the issues referred to in the JR were purely technical, and the planning officer’s recommendation to approve, have taken aback those living on and close to the Ridge, who would be seriously impacted by this development were it to go ahead.

SHRNF wishes to emphasise that the grounds on which the judge found in the favour of the applicant were serious and **not** simply technical:

* ground 1: failure to give great weight to harm to heritage assets and failure consider extent of less than substantial harm as required by the PPG;
* ground 2: failure to take into account the advice of Lewisham’s own Conservation Officer;
* ground 4: failure to make background papers available;
* ground 6: failure to ask the Design Review Panel to consider the planning application in breach of legitimate expectation.

We note that, although the original application remains largely unchanged, more than 40 new documents have been uploaded. The imposition of such an extremely tight deadline for SHRNF and other local/community groups to review so much additional material is unfair and unwarranted.

In representing people living on the Ridge, SHNRF is especially concerned about negative impacts on heritage and conservation assets, highlighted by the Design Review Panel’s specialists in their new report (produced following the Judicial Review), which focuses much of its criticism on the height, design, and scale of this development. These concerns are shared by each of the amenity societies, the 20th Century society, the Council’s own Senior Conservation Officer, and SHNRF members/supporters who attended our public meeting yesterday.

The justification, of meeting its housing targets, for Lewisham’s redesignation of a suburban area to urban density, breaches the Lewisham Core Strategy Policy 15, including Metropolitan Open Land policy, Conservation Area, Curtilage of listed buildings at Lammas Green, Area of Special Character, PTAL, TPOs, building height policy and sustainability policies. In addition, Lewisham publicly highlights its keenness to address a “housing crisis **and** a climate emergency”. **We support fully tackling both these grave issues** but the nature of the proposed Mais House development renders Lewisham’s statement a contradiction in terms, as it will remove trees and green spaces, and intensify density with large buildings of mean interior spaces, both exacerbating climate change and negatively impacting the quality of life of both current residents on the Ridge and of those this development purports to benefit through re-housing. It is clear that this application disregards the requirement for a new development to **enhance** a conservation area.

Our strong objections are therefore based on the above arguments and on others highlighted by the judge in her finding a **multitude of serious errors** in the application, on the proposal's inevitable impact on the built and natural environment, and on the negative consequences for the wellbeing of residents across borough boundaries.

We request Lewisham ask the Corporation of London to withdraw the application and **redesign at smaller scale,** with attention to DRP recommendations and serious engagement with the community.

David Begley, SHRNF Convenor, and Daphne Hunter, SHRNF Secretary