



Shrewsbury Park Residents' Association

Planning Matters

1. Reasons for commenting on planning applications:

- The SPRA constitution supports commenting on planning applications
- SPRA has commented on planning applications since Article 4 Direction designation (1995 on) in response to residents' concerns about consistency
- Residents were consulted on the original 1996 Guidance, the 2013 CAMS and the 2016 Guidance and these documents are the agreed outcomes of that process (therefore they are treated as agreed by residents of the Estate as a whole)
- The Council encourages comments from residents and amenity groups
- Other amenity and residents groups provide comments on planning applications in their areas
- An RBG decision to approve an application is final, i.e., there is no appeal mechanism if the decision turns out to be incorrect
- The SPRA is only allowed to comment during the consultation and must not involve itself at any other time as it is a legal process
- If an applicant appeals a decision to Bristol, the SPRA can't comment if it hasn't previously. However, SPRA comments submitted at the consultation stage are automatically submitted to Bristol
- Planning Officers may not have the detailed knowledge of the Laing Estate that SPRA does and caseloads may mean researching the relevant detail is unrealistic. SPRA comments include the relevant Planning rules for ease of reference
- Some new RBG planning officers have replaced the many who left in April and the newcomers probably do not have the knowledge and experience of the conservation area of those who have left
- SPRA comments help to protect the group value of properties and property values
- SPRA suggests whether the application meets RBG's planning rules, i.e., the comments are not based on whether the application is 'liked' or 'disliked'
- Where an objection is raised, it is raised against the specific proposal, not the resident. Good will is intended and SPRA comments are not personal in any way
- The majority of SPRA comments support the proposal (see analysis overleaf)
- SPRA's collective knowledge of RBG planning decisions affecting the Estate is probably greater than RBGs, and these precedents may be referenced
- Residents approach the SPRA to raise concerns and to ask us to get involved concerning various applications, e.g., driveways, extensions, walls, windows etc.
- SPRA acts impartially and consistently, commenting on all applications it is invited to comment on in a standard way. The basis of comments do not deviate from the agreed planning guidance or their aims
- Wherever possible, where an objection is raised, SPRA comments include suggestions for an alternative proposal that should meet the planning rules
- SPRA speaks for the wider interests of residents as a whole
- SPRA comments have only as much weight as any other consultee



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2. Reasons for not commenting on planning applications:

- The process of commenting may irritate the resident who has applied to do something that conflicts with the rules
- The resident may feel SPRA is the decision maker or that it has undue influence over RBG
- SPRA may be blamed by the resident and RBG for a decision by RBG to refuse

3. Caveat attached to all SPRA comments:

In response to the above, the following caveat is attached to all SPRA comments:

Residents' Association comments are provided solely as advisory and in response to a written request from the Royal Borough to comment on an application. The Association's comments suggest whether or not, in the opinion of the Association Committee, the application aligns with the published Planning Guidance for the Conservation Area. The Residents' Association provides comments on the understanding that the Royal Borough is the decision maker in all planning matters and also on the understanding that the Royal Borough does not refer to the Association's comments to explain or justify a decision to the applicant or agent acting on their behalf. Where the Committee feels an application does not meet the published Planning Guidance, the Committee may offer suggestions for how it could be modified to meet the guidance and these suggestions are intended to assist the applicant.

4. Analysis of comment in relation to the Laing Estate:

2016/2017 (year to date):	Supported:	12
	Not supported:	4

5. Useful links to relevant planning guidance:

Shrewsbury Park Estate Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Strategy (CAMS) 2013:

http://www.royalgreenwich.gov.uk/downloads/download/529/shrewsbury_park_estate_conservation_area_map_and_appraisal

Shrewsbury Park Article 4 Guidance Note (2016):

http://www.royalgreenwich.gov.uk/downloads/file/2225/shrewsbury_park_article_4_guidance_note_2016

Borough-wide Residential Extensions, Basements and Conversions Guidance (2016):

http://www.royalgreenwich.gov.uk/downloads/file/3206/residential_extensions_basements_and_conversions_guidance