



GLIAS

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Greater London Industrial Archaeology Society

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For the attention of Mary O'Shaughnessy

BY E-MAIL

Dear Planners

**Site at Bow Wharf Adjoining Regent's Canal and Old Ford Road
Applications Nos. PA/11/03371 and 03372**

Thank you for consulting the Greater London Industrial Archaeology Society on this development application for new housing. We note that this is of lower density than the gross overdevelopment of the previous proposal, but we still think the scheme is too large, so as to damage the special existing character of the site.

1) The 3-storey former warehouse is one of the most distinctive buildings on the canals of east London. The proposed 5½-storey Building B will overpower it by its relative height, while its tiers of projecting balconies and crude mansard dormers will dominate the scene and distract from the warehouse's qualities. See Proposed Site Elevation 03. Its having a pitched roof does not redeem it. This building should be reduced by two storeys.

2) The present wharf has a feel of open space that supports the open character of views from Stop Lock Bridge. This will be lost, because of the scale of Building B. The proposed 'landscaped piazza' will be tiny, and no mitigation.

3) The listed Stop Lock Bridge is an important surviving example of this type of cast-iron bridge. It was not designed for heavy vehicles, so the northern access road carries a 3-tonne weight limit. The development must generate more traffic than hitherto, and the Transport Statement expects certain traffic to enter or leave the southern part of the site via

the northern access road and this bridge rather than from the east. Yet the Statement does not mention the weight limit and it discusses the manoeuvres of a transit van of 3.5 tonnes weight. Since Building A on the north side of the canal bridge must presumably be accessible for refuse and fire-fighting vehicles (though that seems not to be discussed), the access road from the north must take large vehicles nearly to the bridge.

Weight limit signs at the bridge would be unsightly and possibly not obeyed. We therefore ask for carefully designed physical width-restriction measures at the beginning and end of the bridge, to prevent all but the smallest vehicles from passing over it.

4) The narrows in the canal to the east of Stop Lock Bridge is the stop lock that was historically an important feature of this canal junction. Two lock gates are still there, but their exposed parts are badly in need of restoration, while the walls of the gate recesses are in need of repair. This is at the centre point of the site and it should be a condition of any development that the stop lock is put into good order, since British Waterways own both the site and the canal. The landscape plans do not show the gate recesses, which ought to be featured.

Yours faithfully

Malcolm T Tucker
Caseworker
for GLIAS