

The Directors
Ice Wharf Company Ltd
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Regents Wharf Development – Review of Daylight and Sunlight Assessment Executive Summary

The GIA daylight and sunlight study has been undertaken in line with the general principles set out within the BRE Guidelines, has employed the full suite of recommended assessment methodologies and has used data that is of a quality commensurate with the scale and nature of the proposed development. The report identifies a large number of windows that do not meet the standard assessment criteria and in response, focusses heavily on the references within the guidelines that acknowledge the need for a flexible approach when applying the criteria.

Further reference is made to precedents for adopting reduced target values for retained levels of daylight and in line with these, a lower target value is used. However, with the proposed development in place, 44 of the windows belonging to the neighbouring buildings fail to achieve this reduced target. Further tests are applied in an attempt to examine the impacts using different techniques and reference is made to the architectural design of the impacted buildings suggesting it is this that is the primary reason for the low levels of daylight.

This review has identified numerous instances where it is considered that the ‘flexible’ interpretation of guidance has been pushed way beyond what is reasonable and as a result, many rooms will be left with significantly reduced levels of daylight. Whilst it is acknowledged that a degree of impact on the amenity of neighbours is often unavoidable when developing in dense urban environments, there does have to be an acceptable limit nevertheless. In this case, GIA’s assessment has identified that there will be significant impacts, but has tried to justify that this is acceptable. However, the fact that GIA’s analysis shows one of the main living rooms of an apartment within Ice Wharf to be left with no natural daylight whatsoever, highlights just how far beyond reasonable limits the interpretation of results has been pushed. Notwithstanding the significant impacts to the 40 or so rooms highlighted by the report, the fact that the proposed development would leave at least one main living room completely devoid of daylight would be in complete contradiction of the Council’s planning policy. On this basis alone, it is the conclusion of this review that the application should be refused.

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