

From: SHIRLEY KEHOE [<mailto:shirley.kehoe@btinternet.com>]

Sent: 09 December 2016 12:10

To: Mayor; Smith, Cllr Alan; Best, Cllr Chris; Bonavia, Cllr Kevin; Daby, Cllr_Janet; Dromey, Cllr_Joe; Egan, Cllr Damien; Maslin, Cllr Paul; Millbank, Cllr Joan; Onikosi, Cllr_Rachel

Cc: Adefiranye, Cllr Obajimi; Coughlin, Cllr_John; McGeevor, Cllr_Sophie; Dacres, Cllr_Brenda; Maslin, Cllr Paul; Hall, Cllr Alan; vicky.foxcroft.mp@parliament.uk; mayor@london.gov.uk; tom.watson.mp@parliament.uk

Subject: Opposition to new Bermondsey Proposed CPO

Dear Lewisham Mayor and Cabinet members

I understand at the call-in meeting on 15th December Lewisham Mayor and Cabinet members will once again be voting on the proposed CPO for New Bermondsey, following the call-in by the Scrutiny Committee. Having read the latest documents, and as a longstanding Lewisham resident, voter, and council taxpayer, I am writing to express my opposition to this CPO and ask that Lewisham Cabinet Members, the senior body of our elected officials, do not vote for the Recommendations detailed in the published Officers Report (Response to Call-in). My request is based on the grounds that firstly I have serious concerns about the developer Renewal, and secondly I do not believe there is a compelling case in the public interest to warrant the use of a CPO. I address each of these grounds in more detail below:

1) CONCERNS ABOUT RENEWAL

I have very serious concerns about both the secrecy of the ultimate off shore ownership of Renewal and also any special treatment they may have received due to their current/previous links with Lewisham council officers and members. I am also concerned they have no previous experience of delivering a scheme of this size.

One of Lewisham's core values listed on the councils website is that '**we are open, honest and fair in all we do**'. From the published council papers and other articles I have read, I believe you have not been open, honest and fair in this case, particularly around the ultimate ownership/shareholders of Renewal and also about past relationships with individuals involved with Renewal.

Ownership of Renewal

Paragraph 6.2.2 of the latest report states that details that the names of the trusts "have not been made public because to do so would enable the individual beneficiaries of those trusts to be identified would result in a breach of data protection" I am no expert in data protection, but fail to see how disclosing this information cannot be in the public interest. Indeed as recently reported in the Guardian at the Labour Party conference the shadow chancellor, John McDonnell, spoke about the party's commitment to curtailing the influence of offshore companies operating behind a veil of secrecy. "We will ensure that all British Crown Dependencies and Overseas Territories introduce a full, public register of company owners and beneficiaries," McDonnell said. Renewal is owned by companies registered in the Isle of Man and the British Virgin Islands but the identity of its ultimate owners has still not been made public.

If this information still can't be disclosed despite the Shadow Chancellors' comments, can Lewisham Council please confirm if the legal ownership/shareholders have any

previous relationship with Lewisham Council ie are they ex-employees or Councillors?

Renewal's Past Links with Lewisham Council Officials

Could you also please confirm if any of the council officers involved in working on this project and preparing the paperwork have declared any interests i.e. any previous longstanding relationship with current members of Renewal or its ultimate shareholders/owners? Or have any of the Cabinet Members (aside from the Mayor declaring he is a Director of the Surrey Canal Sports Foundation)?

From what I have read/researched, I understand Renewal was set up by: the former Mayor of Lewisham David Sullivan (and ex board member of Millwall FC) who I understand sold his shares to an unnamed offshore organisation and is no longer a Renewal Director; and a previous senior officer at Lewisham council Mushtaq Malik who I understand also subsequently resigned as a director and sold shares, but is now I believe Chief Executive and his daughter Jordana is now listed as the Director of Renewal. I understand that this company Renewal set up by these two senior Lewisham officers has been buying pockets of land in this area for a number of years - obviously having had a lot of inside knowledge about areas ripe for regeneration/development.

Whilst this may be perfectly legal and above board, and I am no expert in regeneration or planning, it seems to me a humble council tax payer, highly suspect that you are granting this CPO in favour of a company Renewal set up by previous senior Lewisham council officials, some of whom may stand to earn significant amounts of money from this development. Indeed it seems an absolute disgrace this is happening whilst at the same time local residents will lose their homes, local businesses their livelihoods, and the future of the marvellous Millwall Community Trust, and Millwall Football Club (both of whom have been at the heart of this community for years) will be seriously affected!

Indeed the council's relationships with individuals at Renewal have even been documented as a positive point in the documentation - the Guardian newspaper reported the following was in the PWC report "The London Borough of Lewisham have a longstanding relationship with Mushtaq Malik. He was a former senior officer and latterly an outsourcing provider ... [next sentence redacted] ... Based on the longstanding relationship between the Council and Mushtaq the Council benefits from previous knowledge of working with this individual".

I also note in the minutes from the Scrutiny Panel of 20th September that Ms Willow Winston (a resident affected by the CPO) had mentioned that a former Council Officer Abdul Qureshi was now being paid by Renewal. I can see from LinkedIn that Abdul Qureshi was former Head of Strategy & development at Lewisham Council and lists the Surrey Canal Development (now New Bermondsey) as one of his achievements!

So how many people actually working at, or getting paid from Renewal are ex Lewisham Council officials or councillors, or had strong family links with council officials (and are now set to greatly financially benefit from the use of this CPO)? It seems this company is so embedded within the council, to the extent that no other

options for developing this land are being given a look-in! – Indeed Renewal have been the only developer/organisation offered the council's freehold interest.

If you truly have the values of being **open honest and fair** I believe before any CPO can be approved you should:

- i) Make public the ultimate ownership of Renewal
- ii) Please confirm if any of the officers involved in working on this project and preparing the paperwork, or cabinet members have declared any interest with Renewal or its ultimate shareholders/owners

2) LACK OF COMPELLING CASE IN THE PUBLIC INTEREST

One of key reasons for a CPO is there must be a compelling case in the public interest. I fail to see that in this scheme. From the latest report I understand only 12% of houses are classed as affordable (which isn't even affordable to most people) and only 25% of these ie only 3% of the whole scheme to be social housing or really affordable rent (ie 60% market rent). All other increases in affordable housing are not guaranteed and are dependent on sales figures exceeding targets. So as I see it out of the **2400** new homes only 3% ie **72** homes will be social housing or what's classed as really affordable. I hardly think this is a compelling case in the public interest! Also I am unclear how many of these 72 homes are actually on the land covered by the CPO? Excuse me I am not an expert in these matters and found it difficult to determine this from the maps and paperwork? Couldn't the wider development go ahead without the CPO? I read in the paperwork that the overall wider project is not financially viable without the land covered by the CPO but I fail to understand how a developer cannot make money from building homes on the land it already owns in an area so close to central London!

So if the amount of affordable homes is not a compelling case in the public interest, then what is? Much has been made in the council papers about the benefits of new sports complex, which looks great, but I fail to see any reassurance as to how this will be affordable and accessible for current local residents? Some mention is made of facilities available to local people at discounted rates – but how do we know this discount won't be nominal and that the facilities will actually be affordable for current local residents? How do we know that this whole new complex isn't really just aimed at the **2328** new residents that will be moving in to the new housing and can afford the sky high market rents?

I also have serious concerns that the Surrey Canal Sports Foundation is not really putting the fantastic charity the Millwall Community Trust (MCT) at the heart of its future plans. I have seen it mentions they are working with other organisations, but no mention is made of the MCT. The MCT has been doing a fantastic job for years in this borough, my daughter has been involved in their activities so have witnessed their work first hand, and as a charity worker myself I greatly admire what they have achieved in the borough to help disadvantaged young people.

I also read that the Surrey Canal Sports Foundation was set up to be independent of Renewal, but how can this be the case when Jordana Malik is trustee? Also it has received a large loan from Renewal which needs to be repaid – at what level of interest? So again I do not at the moment see the Sports complex as a compelling case in the public interest for granting this CPO.

I'm sorry this email is so long but there are so many unanswered questions that I do not believe the CPO should progress and I do hope you take my concerns into consideration at Thursdays' meeting. As I have mentioned I am not an expert in these matters, and apologies if I have misinterpreted anything, but I would appreciate a response in any case to some of my specific questions. Whilst I don't oppose the wider regeneration of the area, I oppose the use of a CPO to enable a private company (which has considerable links with Lewisham Council) to profit greatly from the CPO without there being a clear compelling case in the public interest. I personally think the best way forward would be to scrap the CPO and get the interested parties together (i.e. MFC, MCT, local residents and businesses, Renewal and the Council) with a truly independent organisation to find a way forward that meets the needs of the public and the various interested parties – and not just the maximum profits for Renewal.

I have copied in the Mayor of London as he is providing funding for this scheme and think he needs to be aware of local residents concerns. I am also copying my local MP and councillors, as well as the Deputy Leader of the Labour Party Tom Watson who has previously tweeted his concern about the CPO.

I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely
Shirley Kehoe
Resident of New Cross (Brockley Ward)