



16th June 2020.

Re Planning application RU.19/1659

Dear Sir or Madam,

The Egham Residents' Association objects to this planning application because of our concerns about flooding and because it conflicts in our opinion with Green Belt policy.

In February 2014 the Runnymede Hotel found itself marooned by flood water. It adjoins the Egham Meads, which had been transformed into a sizeable lake, and the hotel itself became flooded.

Against this background, it seems to us that this new planning application is in conflict with Policy EE13 in the Draft Local Plan, which states: "For new development where at least 1 net residential unit is proposed or for all other types of development, where a net additional floor space of 250sqm is proposed, development must not materially: impede the flow of flood water; reduce the capacity of the floodplain to store water; cause new, or exacerbate existing flooding problems, either on the proposed development site or elsewhere."

We struggle to see how this application can be permitted when set against these words.

Furthermore, it would build - literally - on mistakes already made by Runnymede Council in respect of the Green Belt.

It may actually surprise many people that the Runnymede Hotel stands in the Green Belt.

It replaced the much smaller Anglers' Rest public house in the 1970s and quickly sought to expand. That it was allowed to notwithstanding the site's Green Belt status caused much bemusement and agitation in Egham, and it gave rise to rumours about corruption on the council.

The mounting concern resulted in a stipulation when the hotel last sought a major expansion that it would be conditional on the demolition of an edifice of comparable size (the then Runnymede Squash and Leisure Club nearby).

We believe this principle is one that should be held on to in giving consideration to the new planning application, which proposes an

increase of between a quarter and a third in floor space.
The hotel stands as a monument locally to the weakness and failure of Green Belt policy. Further injury should not be added to that already perpetrated.

Yours faithfully,

Chris Fisher (Chairman)
Egham Residents' Association