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Joe Harding

**Berkeley Homes (Oxford & Chiltern) Limited**

Berkeley House,  
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10 July 2020

Dear Joe,

Re: 53-55 Vastern Road - Daylight and Sunlight additional review response (Version 2)

**Introduction**

Eb7 have been instructed to respond to the comments in the BREs review of additional material on daylight and sunlight relating to the proposal at 53-55 Vastern Road. The BREs review is dated 16<sup>th</sup> of June 2020 and responds to the Daylight and Sunlight letter by eb7 dated the 18<sup>th</sup> May.

There is a good level of consensus with our findings in the BREs letter, so this letter will simply provide further context and information where we feel it will be helpful in the Local authority's review of this document.

***Loss of Daylight and Sunlight to neighbouring properties***

*7-12 Lynmouth Court*

We agree with the BRE in that the technical impact, based solely on reduction of light to the ground and first floors of 7-12 Lynmouth remains moderate adverse. The BRE accepts that existing levels to these windows are unusually lightly obstructed in their letter. These higher than normal existing levels mean that it is possible for there to be larger reductions in light, whilst retained levels remain acceptable. The BRE do not mention the retained levels in their letter so I have reiterated this from our previous letter for the reader's information.

*"All rooms on the ground and first floors (bar one that is limited by neighbouring flank wall) have at least one window that retains a VSC in excess of 22.3%, a level that we feel is entirely reasonable given the flexibility suggested on the BRE guidance for this emerging urban context. It is generally considered that the 27% VSC target set out in the BRE guidance is more appropriate for a suburban context. The design response to this property is visible in that buildings F and G of the proposal which sit directly in front of 7-12 Lynmouth Court have been limited to 2 to 3 storeys in height to allow light to reach this neighbour."*

Whilst there are technical moderate effects based on the reduction of light only, given the unusually high existing daylight levels, reasonable retained VSC levels with the proposal in place and considered design response, we feel the effect on this property is acceptable.

### ***Sunlight to Surrounding Gardens***

The BRE discussed the effects on the garden of 2 Lynmouth Road as the property would be particularly effected. The letter also reiterated the fact that the garden is small and has walls around it, making it sensitive with regard to sunlight amenity. Our assessments indicated the minimal effect that the proposal has on the sunlight to this property during the summer months and we acknowledge that there would be a noticeable effect in spring and autumn.

We would again like to reiterate that this effect was a key consideration throughout the design and whilst it was not possible to fully mitigate it, significant changes were made to improve levels of direct sunlight to these gardens when they would be most used, in the summer months. The most notable design response was to block A which sits directly to the south of these gardens. A large section to the north east of block A was cutback to 2 storeys to maximise light to these gardens in the summer months. The building has been reoriented and made as efficient as possible to reflect the proposed cutback.

Whilst this doesn't fully remedy the effect on the 21<sup>st</sup> of March when the BRE assessment is taken, it does significantly improve direct sunlight levels throughout the summer when the garden will be most used to a point that we feel is acceptable.

### ***Daylight and Sunlight within the Scheme***

The BRE acknowledges the improvements made to daylight within the scheme following the changes made as a direct response to the suggestions in the previous review. One room that is mentioned as still having a levels of daylight slightly below the suggested levels is room BC09 on the ground floor with an ADF of 0.9%. This has been reviewed with the design team and the option to improve this would be to convert the balcony above to a Juliette balcony, taking away the private amenity space within that flat. The change would need to be applied to a number of flats in order to show that the elevation was consistent and on balance we feel that having daylight levels marginally below those suggested to one unit would be preferable to removing the private external amenity space to a number of units on the scheme as a whole.

### **Summary**

Throughout the design evolution process the scheme has been altered to improve levels of daylight and sunlight to its neighbours and future occupants. Whilst it has not been possible to fully meet the BRE targets in all cases, the resultant scheme had a very good level of compliance that we feel should be considered acceptable in line with the flexibility suggested within the guidance.

Yours sincerely,



John Barnes