



**RAYNES PARK AND WEST BARNES
RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION**
SERVING THE COMMUNITY SINCE 1928

**Re: Appeal by Redrow Homes
Site Address: 265 Burlington Road, London, KT3 4NE
in the London Borough of Merton**

Planning Inspectorate Appeal Reference APP/T5720/W/20/3250440

PROOF OF EVIDENCE

submitted by

THE RAYNES PARK AND WEST BARNES RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

OCTOBER 2020

CONTENTS

- 1. Summary**
- 2. Introduction**
- 3. The Proposed Design is, architecturally, contrary to LBM's Design Policy DM D2.**
- 4. The Proposed Design is in conflict with LBM's Design Policies for Tall Buildings**
- 5. The Proposals would add considerably to traffic congestion in the area, contrary to Merton's Transport Policy DM T2 and Design Policy DM D2.**
- 6. The Proposals do not meet LBM's Planning Guidance for Housing Mix, Sites and Policies Plan July 2014 Policy DM H2 and draft Local Plan Policy, H 4.3.**
- 7. The proposals seek to change the land use from Retail and Employment to Residential, contrary to Employment Policy DM E3**
- 8. The Appellant's Proposals are damaging to the Environment, with an enormous Carbon Footprint, in direct conflict with LBM's declared Climate Emergency.**
- 9. Flood Risk**
- 10. Conclusion**

Reference Documents

Appendices 1, 2 & 3

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THE RAYNES PARK AND WEST BARNES RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

1. Summary

- 1.1 The Appellant's proposals are in breach of numerous policies in LBM's core Planning Strategy and Local Plan. In particular, Spatial Design Policy CS14 sets out the architectural requirement that all development needs to respect, reinforce and enhance the local character of the area and that tall buildings, where they will have a detrimental impact on this character of the Borough, should be resisted.
- 1.2 Whilst taking fully into consideration Policy 3.4 (Optimising Housing Potential) of the GLA adopted London Plan (2016) ¹ and Chapter 5 (Delivery of Sufficient Supply of Housing) of the latest version of the NPPF (2019) ², we do not believe that the various policies for the delivery of sufficient homes have any substance in justifying the Appellant's proposed flagrant breaches in Merton's Design Policies.
- 1.3 Our Association's members are also rightly concerned over building on the floodplain. Our area has a history of flooding, going right back to time when the suburban streets in Raynes Park and West Barnes were first built. Very recent flooding in our neighbourhood goes to prove that, despite all the assurances of developers, the Environment Agency and Thames Water that things will not be made worse, experience shows that the various mitigation measures put forward are to no avail.
- 1.4 We also are concerned that the current planning policies do not address the need to tackle the causes of climate change.

¹ The London Plan, The Spatial Development Strategy for London, Consolidated with alterations since 2011, Dated March 2016, p 100)

² Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, National Planning Policy Framework, Dated February 2019, p 17

RAYNES PARK AND WEST BARNES RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

2. Introduction

2.1 I am John Elvidge, Chairman of the local residents' association, which has a membership of approximately 1800 households in the Raynes Park and West Barnes wards. We have an unbroken record of service to our community since being established in 1928.

2.2 We aver that the Appellant's proposals are in breach of numerous policies in the London Borough of Merton's core Planning Strategy and Local Plan.

3. **The Proposed Design is, architecturally, contrary to LBM's Design Policy DM D2.**

3.1 Most buildings in West Barnes ward are two or three storeys high. Whilst some closer to the site are four or five storeys, the highest structure within one kilometre of the site is just seven storeys high, this being the turret for the B&Q wind-turbine.

3.2 The proposed tower blocks would thus be in stark contrast and very deleterious to the existing townscape.

3.3 The average footprint density of buildings is characteristically suburban in the vicinity and is approximately 25% of the non-public area of the townscape. However, the footprint of the proposed development takes up 75% of its site.

3.4 The proposals are therefore in direct contravention Merton's Design Policy DM D2,³ as follows:

- The proposals would not relate positively and appropriately to the siting, of rhythm, scale, density, proportions, height and massing of the surrounding area. (Policy DM D2, a- i)

³ Part of Merton's Local Plan, Sites and Policies Plan and Policies Maps, 09 July 2014, p 84

RAYNES PARK AND WEST BARNES RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

- They are inappropriate to the architectural forms and language of the wider setting.(Policy DM D2, a-ii)
 - The proposals would cause visual intrusion to existing development, in flagrant breach of Policy DM D2, a-vi.
- 3.5 Our observation is that visual intrusion is of considerable concern to our members and other residents in the vicinity.
- 3.6 The degree of visual intrusion that so concerns many residents can be seen in the Appellant's "Townscape and Visual Appraisal", Part 2, View 5, on page 37.
(See Appendix 2)
- 3.7 Self-evidently, as one's view point moves further to the east, the screening effect of the lower blocks is reduced, both increasing the amount of visual intrusion and also spreading the intrusion more widely throughout our suburban streets.
- 3.8 In our Statement of Case, we have also provided our own illustration of this, as it would be seen from the West Way / Brook Close junction. (see Appendix 2)
- 3.9 The streets with the most deleterious degree of visual intrusion would be Adela Avenue, Brook Close, Claremont Avenue, Cavendish Avenue, Linkway, Seaforth Avenue, West Barnes Lane and Westway. Raynes Park High School and the Sacred Heart Primary School would both similarly suffer due to the non-compliance with Policy DM D2.(See Appendix 2)

4. The Proposed Design is in conflict with LBM's Design Policies for Tall Buildings

- 4.1 The Appellant's proposals are comprised primarily of tall buildings as defined in LBM's draft Local Plan (October 2018, Stage 2 Consultation).

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- 4.2 Paragraph 5.1.12 of the draft Local Plan ⁴ also states that tall buildings outside the town centres of Wimbledon, Colliers Wood and Morden are unlikely to be acceptable.
- 4.3 LBM's Local Development Framework (LDF) dated July 2011, LDF Tall Buildings Background Paper 2010 ⁵ and Spatial Strategy Policy CS 14 ⁶, set the guidance for the appropriateness of Tall Buildings in the borough. These make clear that tall buildings are generally not appropriate within the borough due to its predominately suburban low rise character. The existing townscape in the West Barnes ward precisely matches this description.
- 4.4 We note that the policy also it states that tall buildings of exceptional design and architectural quality may be appropriate in town centres and also that tall buildings in industrial areas such as Shannon Corner may be appropriate, where they contribute to employment uses. However, neither of these possible exceptions is applicable to Appellant's design.

5. The Proposals would add considerably to traffic congestion in the area, contrary to Merton's Transport Policy DM T2 and Design Policy DM D2.

- 5.1 The Application Site is beyond reasonable walking distance of both Raynes Park and Motspur Park Railway Stations and has limited bus service connections. In consequence, it has a low Public Transport Accessibility Level (PTAL) rating between two and three. ⁷
- 5.2 High density developments, should be close to good public transport links. The Application site, therefore, is seriously deficient in the availability of public transport.
- 5.3 With regard to the local road network and traffic congestion, the Appellant's proposals would obviously add to the traffic congestion in Burlington Road.

⁴ Merton's Local Plan, Stage 2 Consultation draft, October 2018, p 5-6

⁵ Merton's Local Development Framework, Tall Buildings Background Paper, 2010, p 4

⁶ Merton's Local Development Framework, Core Planning Strategy, Adopted July 2011, p 144

⁷ Merton's Local Plan, Stage 2 Consultation draft, October 2018, Policy N3.4, Raynes Park, p 15 (159)

RAYNES PARK AND WEST BARNES RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

- 5.4 To make matters worse, the Appellant also proposes to use the existing vehicle access from Burlington Road, for both “in” and” out” movements.. However, this access point is already subject to an “Egress Only” restriction, due to the hazardous nature of the junction and its proximity to the level-crossing. The level-crossing is already the cause of considerable traffic congestion and long queues in the area.
- 5.5 LBM Policy DM D2 a) ⁸ requires that development proposals shall not adversely impact on the road networks, safety or congestion, particularly on strategically important routes. The proposals are therefore in contravention of this policy.
- 5.6 We are aware that it is both residents and businesses in the area that are also concerned about this potential impact on their environment, lives and enterprises.
- 5.7 For these reasons, the Application is also in conflict with LBM’s Design Policy DM D2 a), xiii. ⁹

6. The Proposals do not meet LBM’s Planning Guidance for Housing Mix, Sites and Policies Plan July 2014 Policy DM H2 and draft Local Plan Policy, H 4.3.

- 6.1 The proposal is to build 456 flats, of which 117 (26%) would be one bedroom units, 290 (64%) two bedroom units and 49 (11%) three bed units.
- 6.2 The target mix set out in Merton’s Sites and Policy Plan ¹⁰ is 33% one bedroom, 32% two bedroom and 35% Three or more. These have been slightly modified in the draft Local Plan to 33%, 33% and 34%, ¹¹ . The proposals are thus in clear conflict with this planning guidance and would consequently fail to deliver an adequate proportion of “family” (i.e. 3 bedroom) units.

⁸ Part of Merton’s Local Plan, Sites and Policies Plan and Policies Maps, 09 July 2014, p 84

⁹ Part of Merton’s Local Plan, Sites and Policies Plan and Policies Maps, 09 July 2014, p 84

¹⁰ Part of Merton’s Local Plan, Sites and Policies Plan and Policies Maps, 09 July 2014, p 48

¹¹ Merton’s Local Plan, Stage 2 Consultation draft, October 2018, Policy H 4.3. p 4.15

RAYNES PARK AND WEST BARNES RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

7. The proposals seek to change the land use from Retail and Employment to Residential, contrary to Employment Policy DM E3

- 7.1 The Application Site is currently occupied by an office block and retail carpark. Whilst the former has been empty for many years, the latter is in constant use. Merton's Employment Policy DM E3 for Protection of Scattered Sites ¹² recognises that there a major financial incentive for landowners of such sites to seek a change of use to "Residential".
- 7.2 The Policy notes that such changes can damage the delicate balance between delivering new homes and the opportunities for business and job growth in the borough
- 7.3 The Policy suggests that where this is the case, the applicant may be required to provide alternative sites for employment and community uses or to provide equivalent employment, in terms of jobs and floor space.
- 7.4 The area around the site has already suffered from significant loss of employment opportunities through the conversion into residential developments. It also suffers from increasing demand for school places, GP surgeries and other community facilities.
- 7.5 It is therefore certain that Applicant's proposals would represent further loss of potential for employment land use and will at the same time exacerbate the demand on already stretched community facilities.

¹² Part of Merton's Local Plan, Sites and Policies Plan and Policies Maps, 09 July 2014, p 67

8. The Appellant's Proposals are damaging to the Environment, with an enormous Carbon Footprint, in direct conflict with LBM's declared Climate Emergency.

8.1 The Density and Height of the Development militates against maximising sustainable onsite energy generation

On 10 July 2019, Merton Council passed a motion, declaring a climate emergency and set the target of making Merton carbon neutral by 2050.

The Appellant's Energy Statement shows an annual shortfall in achieving carbon neutrality of 366.1 Tonnes of CO₂ per year (of "Regulated emissions"), plus an additional annual shortfall of 228.5 Tonnes of CO₂ (of "Unregulated" emissions). This is a total annual carbon-footprint of 594.6 Tonnes of CO₂ released to the atmosphere.¹³

Two of the more effective means of generating sustainable energy on-site, would be the use of photovoltaic (PV) panels and/or ground-source heat-pumps. However, these are discounted by the Appellant as being not feasible.¹⁴ We submit that this again demonstrates that the high rise and high density nature of the proposals are inappropriate.

8.2 The Massive Embodied Carbon Footprint

Within the context of climate change, the Application neither assesses the embodied carbon footprint nor seeks to mitigate its effects.

A high rise development, such as the one proposed, inevitably will require large quantities of cement, concrete and steel, all which generate large amounts of carbon dioxide during manufacture. Even assuming the most optimistic carbon efficiency for such construction materials and methods, we estimate that the amount of embodied carbon for this

¹³ Appellant's Revised Energy Statement, October 2019, Table 3, p 4

¹⁴ Appellant's Revised Energy Statement, October 2019, Paras 7.7 & 7.21, p 26 & 29

RAYNES PARK AND WEST BARNES RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

development would exceed, 11,000 tonnes of CO₂. This would be impossible for the London Borough of Merton to offset (see Appendix 3).

9. Flood Risk

- 9.1 The Application Site is within fluvial (river) flood zones 2 and 3 ¹⁵and therefore at risk of surface water flooding. Such a location would be suitable for some types of development but not, we suggest, for high-density residential use.
- 9.2 Despite the impression given in the Appellant's Flood Risk Assessment, our area has a long history of flooding. Indeed, one of the key reasons that the Raynes Park and West Barnes Residents' Association was established in 1928 was due to flooding in our area. This has been an important issue ever since; most recently on 23 August 2020, when Westway, Linkway and several other streets in our area were subject to flash flooding. (see Appendix 1).
- 9.3 Our members are therefore rightly concerned that, despite the assurances that may be given by the Environment Agency and Thames Water that surface water drainage in the area is adequate, the actual experience in West Barnes ward is that surface water flooding is an ever present risk. The continuous increase in hard surfaces in the area and impediments to the flow of flood water only serve to exacerbate this risk.

¹⁵ Merton's Local Plan, Stage 2 Consultation draft, October 2018, Policy N3.4, Raynes Park, p 15 (159)

10. Conclusion

The Appellant's proposals are thus in breach of numerous policies in LBM's core Planning Strategy and Local Plan. In particular, Spatial Design Policy CS14 sets out the architectural requirement that all development needs to respect, reinforce and enhance the local character of the area and that tall buildings, where they will have a detrimental impact on this character of the Borough, should be resisted.

We submit that the Appellant's proposals scheme would represent total failure of these policies and that the appeal be refused.

John Elvidge

Chairman, Raynes Park and West Barnes Residents' Association

RAYNES PARK AND WEST BARNES RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

1. The London Plan, The Spatial Development Strategy for London, Consolidated with alterations since 2011, Dated March 2016.
2. Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, National Planning Policy Framework, Dated February 2019
3. Part of Merton's Local Plan, Sites and Policies Plan and Policies Maps, 09 July 2014
4. Merton's Local Plan, Stage 2 Consultation draft, October 2018
5. Merton's Local Development Framework, Tall Buildings Background Paper, 2010
6. Merton's Local Development Framework, Core Planning Strategy, Adopted July 2011
7. Merton's Policy N3.4, Raynes Park.

APPENDICES

1. Flash Flooding Event on 23 August 2020 and Flood Risk Map
2. Illustrations of Visual Intrusion
3. Assessment of Carbon Emissions Footprint

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APPENDIX 1 Flash Flooding Event on 23 August 2020 and Flood Risk Map



Grand Drive



Westway



Westway

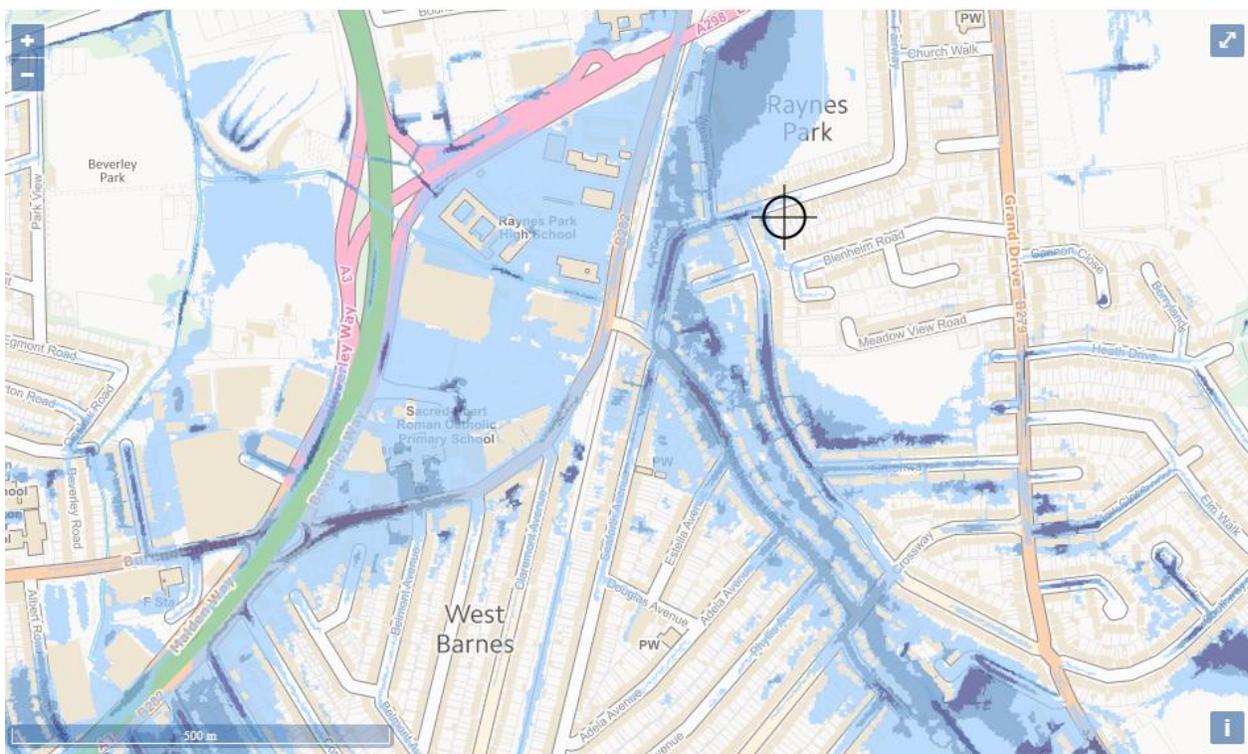


Westway Close

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Linkway



Environment Agency Surface Water Flood Risk Map

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APPENDIX 2 – Illustrations of Visual Intrusion



Image taken from Appellant's "Townscape and Visual Appraisal", Part 2, View 5, on page 37

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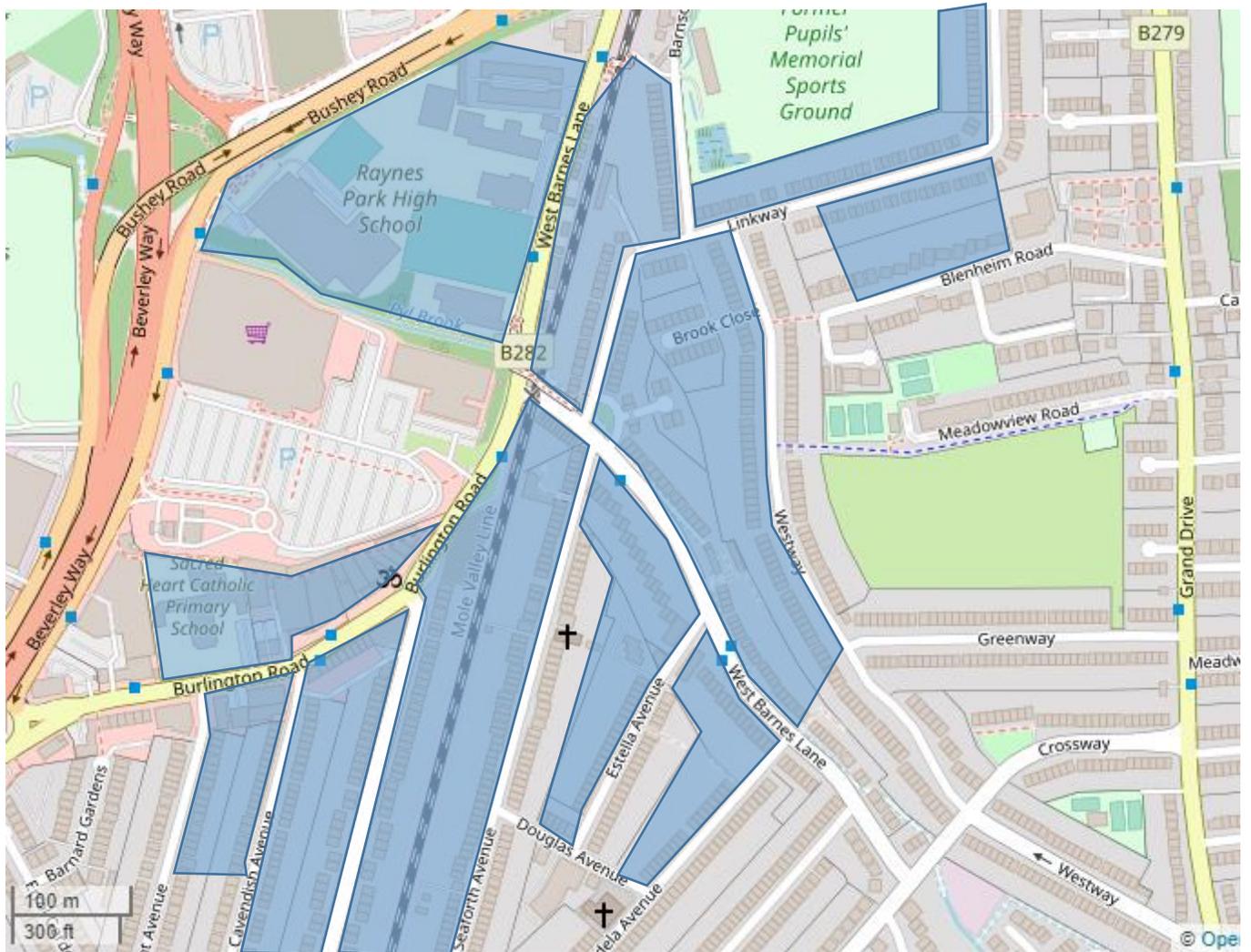


RPWBRA's own illustration of Visual Intrusion at West Way / Brook Close junction

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Extent of Worst Visual Intrusion

The areas shaded in blue indicate where the worst degree of visual intrusion would be caused by the non-compliance with Design Policy DM D2. The highest building in these areas is 4 storeys high.



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APPENDIX 3 – Assessment of Carbon Emissions Footprint and example of offsetting

ANNUAL CO2 EMISSIONS			
Regulated CO2 emission per year		366.1	tonnes
Unregulated CO2 emission per year		228.5	tonnes
Total CO2 emission per year		594.6	tonnes
	i.e.	594,600	kg
Average young tree sequesters *		11	kgCO2/year
Say, average 50% lower when trees younger than 30 Years		5.5	kgCO2/year
Trees required therefore		108,000	Trees

EMBODIED CO2			
For calculation, say, 25 tonnes CO2/dwelling (very optimistic)			
Number of Flats		456	Dwellings
Embodied CO2/dwelling **, say,		25	tonnes CO2
Total Tonnes CO2 Embodied		11,400	tonnes CO2
	i.e.	11,400,000	kg
Average Tree sequesters (as above)		11	kgCO2/year
Say, average 50% lower when trees younger than 30 Years		5.5	kgCO2/year
Trees required therefore		2,073,000	Trees

NOTES			
* Numerous sources of data range for age and species, 4.5 - 22 kg/year of sequestered CO2.			
** Examples of Embodied Carbon Dioxide per typical conventional dwelling			
CITU Leeds		50 - 80	tonnes/dwelling
Building & Social Housing Foundation		50	tonnes/dwelling
BEDZED (Sir Peter Hall, FBA, UCL)		67.5	tonnes/dwelling