

**DEPUTATIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC**

A period of not more than 15 minutes shall be allowed to each ordinary meeting for the hearing and deputations from members of the public. Each deputation may be heard for a maximum of five minutes following which the Cabinet Member may speak in response. It shall then be moved by the Mayor and voted on without discussion that the deputation be thanked for attending and its subject matter noted.

**(i) Deputation concerning Park House development, Old Shoreham Road**

Dr D Barker (Spokesperson)

“From HydeMartlet’s *Statement of Community Engagement* you may think local residents are largely in favour of this scheme. The fact that more than fifty firm and considered objections, many more signatures, have been received by the council shows just how far local feeling has been misrepresented in this matter. Local people have the strongest objections to these plans and will not acquiesce in them as they stand.

72 units are far too many – socially and environmentally – for both current and for prospective residents. We have all seen the plans, we all know the area. This is an unprecedented density of occupation and an unprecedentedly large building. All our objections spring from this point.

I refer Councillors to written objections on the inability of the local infrastructure to support so large a scheme. Shops are not easily accessible – especially with pushchairs, let alone by disabled people; public transport is not readily amenable; surgeries are full. This is a suburban area, not a city centre. To provide only 24 parking-spaces is either naïve or cynical. There will inevitably be greatly increased pressure on local parking both north and south of the A270, especially given the displacement of an extra 16 spaces on Hove Park Gardens. The traffic-lights at the crossroads – backed up to Hove Park Villas in the rush hour – will be even more hard-pressed to cope with an increase in service vehicles, inevitable delivery lorries and taxis, without any extra car-traffic, let alone the dream of 100 bicycles. How many more accidents must there be?

72 units on this site mean a building which is too large as seen from the outside and too small as lived in on the inside. The plan is for poky units with poky outdoor spaces – balconies and terraces which open straight onto the main road. Read HydeMartlet’s own noise survey if you think these could be usable. Residents do not sit out in front gardens opposite.

72 units entail a vast visual impact on the area. At five storeys the building would overlook and dominate all the neighbouring properties – even flats. It would be as high as most established nearby trees – those, at least, that HydeMartlet doesn't propose felling – and a storey and a half higher than tall private houses. It would reach unacceptably close to the pavement. At present the established tree-line makes a continuous sweep from Hove Park to the Recreation Ground. HydeMartlet proposes replacing what is essentially a continuation of the suburban parkscape with a lowering and unrelieved urban façade hardly screened by the miniature elms it proposes to squeeze uneasily between the building and the pavement.

72 units, finally, means that the Edwardian Park House itself must be destroyed and we wonder why. Many similar period properties have been refurbished in the area. This one, surrounded by established palms, is not only attractive but architecturally in keeping with the area. It would convert readily into desirable flats.

But this bloated scheme – pushed aggressively in the face of local opinion – has regard to nothing except the number of units that it can pack onto the Park House site. The concerns of residents, neighbours, visitors and passers through have been treated as afterthoughts. Concessions have been both laughable and cynical. This is not an appropriate use of this attractive and important site. On behalf of more than 50 local households, I urge Councillors to reject this application.”

**RESPONSE FROM COUNCILLOR GEOFFREY THEOBALD  
Provided at the meeting of Full Council on 29 January 2009**

“I do have to say to you, as I expect you already know, the application has been submitted and is being assessed by officers and the decision on this application will be made by Members of the Planning Committee.

The comments that you have made and indeed there have been two petitions I think, if not three, presented to the Mayor this afternoon and all these will be taken into consideration and assessed before any decision is made. As I expect you know one resident is able to come along and talk for, I think it is three minutes, to the Planning Committee to express your views.

You may rest assured that your comments will be taken into account by officers when they come to a decision as to what to recommend the Planning Committee to do and then it is a matter for the individual Members of the Planning Committee to vote.”