

Extract of email sent by Barton Willmore on 10/09/2020 in respect of wind/microclimate matters

Regarding wind, our client's consultants RWDI have reviewed the document provided by BRE. The document highlighted three concerns that were considered to be unresolved by the reviewer as follows:

- A. Walking use wind conditions west of the existing Sovereign House entrance in the context of the cumulative surrounding buildings;
- B. Standing use conditions on private balcony spaces; and
- C. The lack of quantitative evidence of mitigation for an area of standing use conditions in the café seating space.

In response to the above identified points, please see the below commentary:

- A. For clarity on point one, the area being referenced is to the western side of the entrance foyer (Figure 1 - attached) for the existing Sovereign House, east of the Site on Vastern Road. In the context of the cumulative schemes (excluding 80 Caversham Road and Vastern Court schemes), wind conditions in this area are predominantly suitable for strolling use (yellow contours in Figure 2 - attached), with a small area of walking use conditions (pink contours in Figure 2). BRE's comments are accepted where it is stated that these conditions would be windier than suitable for an entrance location and made windier by the interaction of the Proposed Development with cumulative schemes, however, the entrance is located some metres further east in an area of sitting use conditions (green contours in Figure 2) that would be considered suitable for an entrance location. The area west of the entrance foyer would not be an area reasonably expected to be frequented by pedestrians (we consider that the only entrance in this location is an emergency exit door, where for this use wind comfort is not a key concern) and therefore has not been considered an entrance or pedestrian thoroughfare. Additionally, existing landscaping in this area has not been accounted for within the assessment and would be expected to shelter this area from the effects of the Proposed Development – it is anticipated that with the planting of the scale seen in this location will result in a drop of one comfort category would be seen in these areas. In the context of the existing surrounding buildings and in the context of the cumulative schemes including 80 Caversham Road and Vastern Court, wind conditions in this area would be calmer. While this has been raised with the reviewer, RWDI would be happy to highlight this in more detail in the report to remove any suggestion that this has been overlooked.
- B. Point two is one of a difference of opinion between RWDI and BRE and RWDI note that their approach has been widely accepted by numerous London boroughs and peer reviewers. The justification for standing use conditions on balconies is that occupants at height would be expected to be more tolerant of windier conditions due to the exposure this location inherently incurs. Additionally, the use of the balcony will also be constrained by the prevailing weather conditions on any given day and would therefore be expected to be used when appropriate weather conditions prevail. Large outdoor amenity spaces are assessed more strictly as these spaces may be expected to be suitable for amenity use regardless of the prevailing weather conditions and being located at ground level.
- C. As discussed with the reviewer, where there are no instances of strong winds it is commonly accepted practice to assess the likely suitability of wind mitigation measures using professional judgement based on experience of similar development. RWDI therefore reaffirm their assessment that the proposed landscaping scheme and the border treatment incorporating a wall to the west of the café space and balustrade formed of dense railings to the north of the café space, would constitute an appropriate level of wind mitigation for the highly localised area of standing use conditions at the north-eastern corner of the spill-out space.

In RWDI's experience a verbal discussion with the reviewer may be a beneficial and positive approach to resolve these remaining areas of concern. I would be grateful therefore if you could please share the above with BRE and subsequently arrange a call with them, so that our client's consultants RWDI can have a detailed discussion on these elements.

Figure 1



Figure 2

