

THE FRIENDS OF BROMPTON CEMETERY & THE SEAGRAVE ROAD REDEVELOPMENT PLAN

The Friends of Brompton Cemetery are encouraging their 450 members to object to the Planning Application for Seagrave Road, Earls Court. With the impending redevelopment of the Earls Court exhibition complex to create new offices, housing and shops, the site of the car park facing Earls Court 2 is to be transformed into a high-density housing development.

The Planning Application from Capco, owners of the Earls Court and Olympia exhibition centres, seeks to develop **eight large buildings on the Seagrave Road site** to accommodate 808 residential units. This would include a virtual wall of six- to eight-storey blocks, and a 16-storey tower, directly adjacent to historic Brompton cemetery. The development will overlook a large area of the cemetery, where burials are still being conducted, and destroy the fine western vista which is now, rarely for this area, relatively free of buildings.

While we agree that the redevelopment of the site offers many benefits, the Friends of Brompton Cemetery strongly object to the scale of the present plan. **We feel that the proposed buildings are too tall, too many, and too close to the cemetery.** We would like the developers to reconfigure the plan, to lower both the density and height of the units, and move them back from the railway line and cemetery.

We hope that our members – and anyone else with an interest in the area – will also object. Brompton Cemetery, established in 1840 as the fifth of London's 'Magnificent Seven' 19th Century garden cemeteries, is **Grade I Listed** in the English Heritage Register of Historic Parks and Gardens and a **Grade I List nature conservancy area** within the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea. Its protection is a matter of international concern.

Brompton is a **working cemetery** with recent interments, as well as the graves of some 205,000 souls, great and good, humble and meek. Notable interments include those of suffragette Emmeline Pankhurst, tenor Richard Tauber, shipping magnate Sir Samuel Cunard, V&A founder Sir Henry Cole, cricketer John Wisden, auctioneer Samuel Sotheby – and the Nutkins family whose name amused Beatrix Potter. It is a place of quiet, contemplation and gentle recreation for the many people who walk and cycle through the grounds every day. In this context – whatever its impact on the local economy, transport and the environment – the current proposal is intrusive and insensitive in its proximity to this special site.

The Friends therefore urge our members – and their families, neighbours, friends and colleagues – to object to this proposal, in writing, online or by e-mail. As so often, information about this scheme was late and slow in coming, and the consultation period is short: please take action before the deadline of **23 September 2011**.

Committee members have spent many hours reviewing the proposals, and attending public and private meetings to ascertain the details of the plan. These briefing sheets summarise our findings and recommendations. Please consider these points in framing your response.

We sincerely hope that everyone with an interest in Brompton Cemetery and its immediate environs will comment on the proposed redevelopment plan immediately.

SEAGRAVE ROAD PLANNING APPLICATION

Please respond by Friday, 23 September 2011.

Please quote Planning Application Reference Number 2011/02000/FUL

Many letters have more impact: please encourage everyone you can to write individually.

Different letters have more impact: please compose your own letter from these notes.

THE FRIENDS OF BROMPTON CEMETERY STRONGLY RECOMMEND THAT:

- The range of buildings facing the Cemetery should be no more than four storeys high, and the tower block (Building B) no more than five; this is consistent with buildings now standing south of the site.
- The number of residential units on the site should be reduced substantially.
- The development should be free of buildings within 200 yards / 180 metres of the cemetery boundary.
- There should be a substantial green space on the side of the site facing the cemetery.

PHRASING YOUR LETTER

You might begin with: "I wish to comment on this application with special reference to its potentially harmful impact on Brompton Cemetery, especially in the context of the Cemetery's being a Grade I Listed site, with Grade II* buildings and Grade II memorials, and a site of Nature and Borough Conservation Importance. I object most strongly to the application on the following grounds ... "

If you wish to be very brief you may simply say that the proposed buildings are much too high, much too dense, and too close to the cemetery boundary. This wall of buildings will overlook recent burials, compromise a much-valued public green space and nature conservation area, and destroy a fine vista in a heritage site of international importance.

Chapter and verse with reference to the complete application:

- Brompton Cemetery is a Conservation Area, Grade I Listed site on the English Heritage Register of Historic Parks and Gardens, and a Site of Nature Conservation Importance (SNIC) designated Borough Grade I within the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea, with rich, varied and vulnerable wildlife.
- The cemetery lies within the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea (RBKC), the Seagrave Road site in the London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham (LBHF).
- The proposed heights run strongly counter to the joint Councils' draft Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) guidelines for the appropriate height levels for buildings, being at least twice the height of other residential buildings in the area.
- The buildings' height and density should fail under the guidelines in the Draft London Plan, Policies 7.4, 7.7, 7.8, and 7.12, and because the Application is premature in the light of unfinished local consultations, studies and plans.
- The proposed density of buildings disregards the principle frequently iterated in the draft SPD that there should be a clear line of sight from the Seagrave Road car park area through to St Luke's Church, Redcliffe Square.
- The proposed heights run strongly counter to the requirements in the Inspector's Report on the Examination in Public into the LBHF core strategy, Development Plan Document, regarding: (a) the importance of protecting and enhancing the character and appearance of the cemetery; (b) the context of the existing townscape and heritage assets in the area, particularly the views from the north-western quadrant of the cemetery.
- The height and design of the buildings are grossly out of character with the surrounding area, most notably the proposed 16-storey glass-clad tower.
- These buildings will reduce natural light into the cemetery by day, and increase noise and light pollution by night, to the detriment of nesting birds, bats and other wildlife.
- It is inappropriate, and insensitive toward the bereaved, to build so close to the cemetery boundary that the units overlook areas where burials are still taking place.

SEAGRAVE ROAD PLANNING APPLICATION

To comment online, view the proposal and download key documents: www.lbhf.gov.uk/seagraveroad

To view the printed documents:

Hammersmith Town Hall, King Street, London W6 9JU, Monday to Friday, 9.00-17.00

To view and download the developers' summary of the application: www.myearlscourt.com/seagrave-road

To download these notes in Word and PDF formats: www.brompton-cemetery.org.

To comment on the proposal in writing:

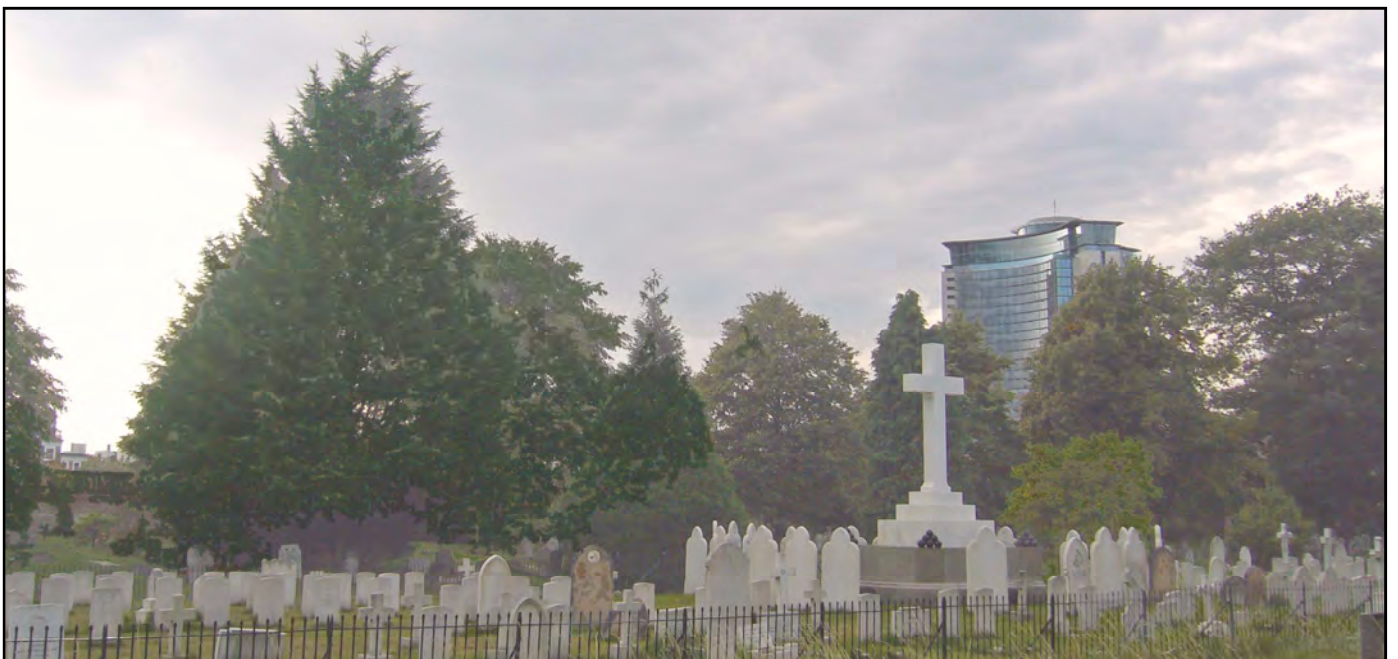
Mr. John Sanchez, Deputy Team Leader (Earls Court and West Kensington Opportunity Area), Development Management Service, Hammersmith Town Hall Extension, King Street, London W6 9JU

You may also consider writing to Members of Parliament, local councillors and members of the London Assembly. Just type in your postcode on www.writetothem.com to identify your elected representatives and write to them directly online; the postcode for Seagrave Road is SW6 1RP.



(ABOVE) Artist's impression of the proposed range of buildings to face the north-western quadrant of Brompton Cemetery, with the 16-storey tower block B immediately behind (*Seagrave Road Masterplan 2011*).

(BELOW) The actual view today, looking toward Seagrave Road, with the Guards' Monument and war graves in the foreground, and the 28-storey Empress State Building to the north-west, behind the cross (August 2011).





(LEFT) Satellite view of the Seagrave Road parking lot, Brompton Cemetery, Earls Court 2 exhibition hall and the Empress State Building.

The cemetery lies within the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea (RBKC), the Seagrave Road site within the London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham (LBHF).



(RIGHT) The current proposal, with Buildings A to D facing the western side of Brompton Cemetery. "Seagrave Road will provide 808 new homes spread across eight new buildings designed as a series of modern mansion blocks and town houses. They will be linked by new streets, a large garden square and a variety of courtyard gardens." (*Seagrave Road Planning Application Summary, August 2011*)



(LEFT) Artist's impression of the view from Building F toward Buildings B and C, and the green space in the centre of the development (*Seagrave Road Planning Application Summary, August 2011*)

(RIGHT) Artist's impression of the proposed complex from an aerial perspective, with the railway and cemetery to the west, Earls Court 2 exhibition centre and the Empress State Building to the north (www.capitalandcounties.com)

