

**SMBC5/4**



**SOLIHULL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990 etc**

**THE METROPOLITAN BOROUGH OF SOLIHULL  
(SHIRLEY TOWN CENTRE REDEVELOPMENT)  
COMPULSORY PURCHASE ORDER 2007**

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**REBUTTAL PROOF OF EVIDENCE  
RELATING TO THE OBJECTIONS OF Mr R PITHAM**

**GARY PALMER Dip T.P., MRTPI  
FOR THE LOCAL PLANNING AUTHORITY**

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Local inquiry date: 8<sup>th</sup> May 2008

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**1. SCOPE OF EVIDENCE**

1.1 This rebuttal proof of evidence deals with issues raised by Mr R Pitham.

**2. MR R. PITHAM**

2.1 The statement dated 3<sup>rd</sup> April from Mr Pitham makes reference to the basis upon which planning permission was granted. In particular the second paragraph finishes with "*the only reason advanced for this [development encroaching onto an area of the park] was that it made the development financially viable*".

2.2 In summarising the issue regarding open space, the committee report noted "*that the small quantitative loss of a greenspace is outweighed by both qualitative improvements to the park and to its surveillance and backdrop provided by the proposed development.*"

2.3 In concluding on design matters, the report noted:

*"that that adopting a perimeter block principle, benefits would be achieved as follows: defining the public spaces; active frontages to public areas; natural surveillance; car parking and servicing in secondary locations (internal to the block or in basement areas); and a network of connected routes linking Stratford Road, the development & the park. It was considered that these benefits resulting from the design provided justification for the minor loss of park. The town centre would no longer turn its back on the park, but front it."*

2.4 Evidence provided by Mr Williams demonstrates that there is a beneficial impact on the character of Shirley Park due to the presence of residential development addressing the park, providing surveillance and a sense of enclosure.

2.5 I believe that it has been demonstrated that the incursion into the park does result in qualitative benefits to the park and improvements to the public realm which are reasons that go well beyond the financial viability of the scheme.