



mountsfieldpark@gmail.com

Councillor Alan Smith
Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Growth and Regeneration
London Borough of Lewisham
Lewisham Town Hall
Catford Road
SE6 4RU

4 June 2016

Dear Councillor Smith,

We are writing to you as the cabinet member with the lead responsibility for planning in Lewisham, to lend our support for the application to build a cafe in Mountsfield Park, submitted by Mr Kostantinos Korrovesis (reference DC/16/095961).

The Friends of Mountsfield Park is a local community group whose sole purpose is to seek the improvement of Mountsfield Park for those who live in the local area and who enjoy the wide green spaces and amenities offered at the park.

The lack of a cafe in Mountsfield Park is an ongoing source of regret and complaint amongst the local community. At various times over the last decade, our hopes have been raised that a cafe would be built, not least through extensive Council-run consultations, which we have been pleased to engage with. We were bitterly disappointed when the most recent attempt to create a cafe - as part of the development that included the creation of a new (and much loved!) community garden, and the redevelopment of the children's play area - came to naught.

Through careful engagement with Council officials, and conversations with Councillor Onikosi (who, as you know, has oversight of Lewisham's parks within her cabinet brief), we were able to secure a commitment that £50,000 - the remains of the money initially allocated to create a new cafe as part of the development work mentioned above - would be set aside to encourage an outside bidder to develop a cafe within the park. Last summer, again with our involvement, the Council launched an expressions of interest exercise which has led, through its various stages, to the planning application now before the Council.

Delivering a cafe for Mountsfield Park is essential. It is the number one issue amongst the Friends of Mountsfield Park (of which there are nearly 1,300), and has long been seen as the lynchpin in the development of the park, tying together the other investments already made by the Council. The application by Mr Korrovesis has responded directly to the wishes expressed by the Friends of Mountsfield Park as part of the expressions of interest process, and we firmly believe it will deliver a cafe that will significantly improve the experience of park users.

Moving ahead with the new proposal will finally mean the end of 'temporary' container units in Mountsfield Park. These units have housed a number of attempts to establish a cafe in the park, each of which suffered from the same lack of space to prepare food and drink, to seat customers, and to provide a welcoming and family-friendly environment. The consequence has been erratic



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opening hours and limited choice. Mr Korrovesis is proposing a new design that will cater for the wide range of park users, from daily dog walkers to weekend picnickers. It offers indoor seating, a clear view of the play area and fields, and will ensure that toilets are available for park users whenever the cafe is open.

For these reasons, we are writing to you to place on record our strong support for this planning application. We encourage you, and all others involved in the planning process in the Council, to look favourably on this application and to do all you can to approve it expeditiously so that Mr Korrovesis can move on with his plans to build a cafe in Mountsfield Park - and we can look forward to enjoying the benefits it will undoubtedly bring.

Yours Sincerely,

The Friends of Mountsfield Park Executive

Rory McNally (Chair), Max Calo, Carrie Blackman, Ros Philp, Gareth Conyard, Rilke John, Maria Conyard

Copied to Councillor Onikosi