

Royal Arsenal Residents' Feedback

A response to Berkeley Homes' plan to build
Wellington Park ASHP Energy Centre

Date: 26th May, 2025



The Case For Change

Background and Community Perspective

Context

Understanding the Challenge: Growth, Density, and the Loss of Green Space

- The Royal Arsenal community has recently become aware of a proposal by **Berkeley Homes** to construct an **Air Source Heat Pump (ASHP) energy centre** on a section of Wellington Park
- This plan would result in the **loss of at least 15%** of the park's **green space** and pose **significant risks** to the **wellbeing, sustainability, and quality of life** in our community
- It would directly and **disproportionately affect** residents of **Foundry House** and **Buildings 22, 36, 36a, and 37**
- With **~1,000 new residents expected in the final phase**, preserving accessible green space is not optional — it is essential to future-proof **long-term livability** of our community. As density increases, every square metre of green space becomes more critical to sustaining quality of life for current and future residents

This document presents a **detailed summary of resident feedback** collected during the public exhibitions hosted by Berkeley Homes and Lowick Group on May 17th and 19th, 2025. It consolidates **insights drawn from both verbal and written comments** shared at the events, as well as sentiments expressed on our local community social media page

Our Community Values

Our Foundations: Green Living, Heritage, and Connected Community

- Royal Arsenal is a diverse, vibrant and deeply engaged community that strongly supports local and national goals for **sustainability, wellbeing, and environmental protection**
- We fully support our **Royal Borough of Greenwich** in its effort to implement **Carbon Neutral Plan** and **reach Net Zero goals**
- Our ~4,000 residents' community include professionals, families, key workers, and sustainability experts — many of whom work from home and rely daily on access to **safe, green, and peaceful outdoor spaces**
- The community was already deeply impacted by the **loss of Maribor Park** due to the Ropes Yard construction. That space had offered crucial breathing room, especially for children, pet owners, and those needing accessible routes
- Since its demolition, **Wellington Park** has become one of the key remaining fully accessible green spaces for everyday use. It is not just a park — it's **the beating heart of our community** and one of the last meaningful refuges for wellbeing

The Berkeley Homes Proposal

Energy Compound with Air Source Heat Pumps Proposed Within Public Parkland

As presented at the May 2025 public exhibitions, this plan would involve:

- Construction scheduled to begin in Spring 2027, with completion estimated by Winter 2028
- Approximately 18-24 months of noise, dust, and restricted access to the park
- Significant disruption to enjoyment of the green space, particularly during peak periods of park use
- A new infrastructure compound occupying at least 15% of the park, with rooftop planting presented as a “biodiversity net gain”
- Adjacent placement to the Grade II listed Foundry building
- Disruption to traffic and pedestrian access on Arsenal Way and surrounding roads due to construction machinery access needs
- Negative impact on the wellbeing and property values of leaseholders in buildings directly adjacent to the park



Key Concerns

The issues our community believes must be addressed for meaningful progress

Data Set*

These figures represent the core data set evidencing proposal is unpopular

- 1 ~250 in-person conversations with residents
- 2 903 Change.org petition signatures
- 3 1,142 social media interactions (comments and reactions)

Executive Summary

Berkeley Homes’ proposal to locate an ASHP energy centre within Wellington Park is **unpopular** in both concept and location. It prioritises development over local needs and would have detrimental impacts on resident health, wellbeing, amenity, and property values, alongside the loss of vital public green space.

Summary of Concerns

Loss of Amenity	Removes 15% of a key open space critical to local livability and wellbeing
Negative Heritage Impact	Inconsistent with local heritage and conservation objectives; obstructs views of Grade II listed Foundry House
Negative Wellbeing Impact	Significant disruption due to noise, emissions, and traffic congestion
Inaccurate Impact Representation	Proposal underplays the real-world effects on community health, access, and park use
Lack of Transparent Engagement	Inadequate consultation and communication with affected residents
No Local Benefit	Directly impacted buildings are excluded from the energy supply
Negative Impact on Property Value	Negative impact on leaseholders of Building 22 and Foundry House, as well as those in Buildings 36, 36a, and 37
Procedural Inconsistencies	Ropeyards application 24/0848/R assumes Wellington Park as an approved site for ASHP energy centre construction

*Data collection closed 11:00 GMT, Monday 26th May 2025

Concern 1 | Lack of transparency and meaningful two-way dialogue

What is the issue

Communication with Community

- Many directly affected residents – Foundry House and Buildings 22, 36, 36a, 37 – were not notified of the proposal and found out only via word of mouth, not through official channels
- The official Berkeley Homes planning update webpage has not been updated since 2023 and contains no mention of the energy centre plans*
- SSE published a “Wellington Park deal-done press-release” in 2023**
- Residents were presented with a fixed plan – undermining the idea of co-design or genuine consultation
- Providing 4 working days (7 calendar) to submit feedback is inadequate

Why it is important

Transparency & Trust

- The Dwellant portal was not used to communicate the plans or exhibition dates (which was scheduled with minimal lead time)
- Lowick Group, a 3rd-party agency, selectively distributed invitations – excluding many key leaseholders
- Residents forced to take effort to organise a campaign to build site-wide awareness - a responsibility of Lowick
- Providing 4 working (7calendar) days for feedback is insufficient, given the timeline falls on long weekend
- This undermines transparency and erodes trust in the developer’s public engagement processes

How it could be resolved

Meaningful Estate-wide Engagement

- Dwellant is the most cost-effective and efficient solution to engage residents
- Providing detailed information, like digital brochures, in advance and post-exhibition to help residents form informed opinions
- Zoom (or alternatives) is an effective platform to communicate with and hear the residents - cheaper than hiring a venue and commuting the team on site
- Surveys should not be limiting, self-serving or directional (e.g. only offering one location choice and presented as “decision-made”), but truly reflect a collaborative approach and openness to alternatives and opinions***

*<https://royalarsenalriversidelondon.co.uk/planning-updates/>

**<https://www.sseenergysolutions.co.uk/news-and-insights/SSE-decarbonise-5000-homes-in-woolwich>

***<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/9NCZXV>

Concern 2 | A solution that misleads, disrupts, and unfit for the future is not a sustainable solution

What is the issue

Environmental & Sustainability Risk

- Loss of vital, accessible green space (at least 15% of the current parkland)
- Long-term disruption to community life
- Misleading sustainability and “Biodiversity Net Gain” claims
- Solution incompatible with future growth of the development

Why it is important

Greenwashing Isn’t Sustainable or Fair

- Proposed park space is used daily by residents — families, children, pet owners, and people with disabilities — providing essential street-level access
- The site is in the middle of the park, requiring hoarding and daytime use of heavy machinery — impacting park visitors during peak hours of park use
- Buildings 22, 36, 36a, 37, and the Foundry House will be directly impacted by noise and construction pollution
- The claim of rooftop planting as a “biodiversity net gain” is misleading. Experts widely regard this as greenwashing — inaccessible green roofs are not a like-for-like solution

How it could be resolved

Effective & Future-Proof Alternative

- Alternative Site Selection: Identify and develop the energy centre on less sensitive land, such as building rooftops, peripheral industrial zones, or existing non-green spaces to preserve the core park area
- Minimize Impact on Accessibility: Choose locations that do not disrupt essential street-level access points used daily by families, children, pet owners, and people with disabilities
- Community Co-Design: Involve residents and sustainability experts in redesigning the project to ensure environmental and social benefits align with community needs and expectations

Concern 3 | Visual, cultural, and public impacts on a treasured heritage site

What is the issue

Royal Arsenal Heritage Risk

- Proposed modern energy centre building blocks Foundry House views
- The proposed design clashes with historic character
- Negative impact on visitor and school access
- Unclear whether Historic England have been advised or consulted
- Overall, weakened heritage setting

Why it is important

Preserving & Enhancing Our Heritage

- The proposed energy center's modern industrial design clashes with the historic character of the Grade II listed Foundry House, diminishing its architectural integrity and threatening to obstruct important views
- Foundry House is a key cultural landmark frequently visited by tourists and local school groups, who benefit from its surrounding green space for educational activities and recreation
- The loss or alteration of open parkland next to Foundry House undermines the heritage setting, reducing the visual and historic value experienced by visitors and residents alike

How it could be resolved

Effective & Future-Proof Alternative

- Enhance the parkland with native trees, shrubs, and wildflowers to boost biodiversity and support local wildlife
- Add thoughtfully designed seating and quiet areas to encourage community use while preserving accessibility for all
- Maintain clear sightlines to the Grade II listed Foundry House, reinforcing its historic and visual importance
- Protect and expand open green space to support resident wellbeing and strengthen community connection

Concern 4 | Serious Health & Safety concerns during and post-construction

What is the issue

Public Health & Roof Access Risks

- The construction site is planned to be in the heart of a heavily used parkland and will generate both noise and air pollution, affecting nearby residents and park visitors over an extended period
- Building 22 has known ventilation issues, and will be hit hardest by construction
- There is a risk of unauthorized roof access by both children and adults
- Roof littering poses a risk to the environment and may negatively impact visual amenity

Why it is important

Public Wellbeing & Safety

- Several children in B22 facing park have special needs and are noise-sensitive
- Building 22 has ongoing ventilation issues, leading many residents to keep windows open year-round. Construction will worsen this existing problem
- The raised parkland above the car park is used by fitness/sports clubs. Balls and equipment often land in the proposed construction area, currently accessible. The new building's roof may become a collection point, prompting residents (including children) to retrieve items—posing safety risks
- Litter may accumulate on the green roof and vents, and it's unclear how this will be managed

How it could be resolved

Alternative Site

- Only through finding an alternative construction site

Concern 5 | Disproportionately negative impact on residents and leaseholders of Building 22 and Foundry House, as well as those in Buildings 36, 36a, and 37

What is the issue

Expectations & Property Value

- Loss of promised park views
- No direct benefit to leaseholders of buildings adjacent to the site
- Reduced property value (especially at lower ground and ground level of Building 22 and Foundry House)

Why it is important

Erosion of Value

- Many residents purchased their homes with the expectation of unobstructed parkland views, seen as a key value-add and integral to the appeal of the properties
- Buildings adjacent to the site will not benefit from the new energy centre, which is designed to supply new builds in a different location
- The construction is likely to decrease property values due to diminished views
- The new development may affect natural light for lower ground properties facing the park—particularly for residents in B22 and Foundry House

How it could be resolved

Alternative Site

- Only through finding an alternative construction site

Additional Concern | Potential procedural irregularities - application 24/0848/R

What is the issue

Potential Procedural Issue

The Ropeyards planning application appears to assume Wellington Park location as approved, even though the planning application for this project has not been submitted

Some Evidence from Planning Documents:

- Energy Statement (Plots D & K): [6.15] “It is planned to house the ASHPs in Wellington Park...”, [6.16]: Refers to the Hodkinson Heat Network Decarbonisation Report
- “Design & Access” Statement (Plots D & K): Sustainability and wellbeing commitments conflict with the use of parkland

Why it is important

Pre-Decided Location

- Wellington Park appears to have been embedded as the future site of the ASHP energy centre within the Ropeyards application (24/0848/R), without appropriate notification or consultation with affected residents
- No direct consultation with residents near Wellington Park despite inclusion in reports
- ASHP location appears pre-decided, contradicting claims that public consultation is ongoing
- Residents fear the new application may be used to legitimise an earlier, undisclosed decision

How it could be resolved

Clarification Needed

- What is the formal planning status of Wellington Park under 24/0848/R?
- Has the site already been implicitly approved through earlier submissions?
- Why were affected residents not consulted if Wellington Park has been referenced since 2023?

“We don’t want this!”

“I don’t know any native species that are ok with vibration and heat - the biodiversity benefits are not there”

“I always try to be fair, however, this idea + location sound wrong to me. How about using the space across the road from the new builds in Woolwich? There’s plenty of space there”

“I don’t understand how removing green space with grass, wild flowers and shrubs, and replacing it with an industrial installation is making this a better place for nature than it was before”

“What will be the ongoing maintenance charges of the heat infrastructure for another area sitting in WARMC? How will R&R handle the change?”

“No! Stick it on the roof of the new build. Stop being so greedy, think of the area and the kids in the park!”

“Improving biodiversity by removing a large piece of green, the only one in the area? Shame on you!”

“Absolutely no benefit to the surrounding historical buildings except for more noise and disturbance”

“The space is heavily used and valued by residents”

“The ASHP will completely ruin the look and feel of the heritage portion of the Royal Arsenal. It will be, to quote the then Prince Charles, a “monstrous carbuncle on the face of a much-loved and elegant friend”

“The lower portion of Wellington Park has been in need of TLC for years. “Rewilding” it will improve biodiversity, which construction of the ASHP will not do!”

“Focused on adding more housing to an already densely populated area rather than fix leaks and heating problems in B22”

“Delivers no value to B22 or adjacent properties. May block access claiming construction/road works for pipes. Impact value of all properties in East side of B22 and wider area with lost space”

“Thought it would fix B22 heating issues but it’s not for current building problems”

“Losing 15% of the park to maximize B.H. project is not a good trade”

“BH you have destroyed green space in Maribor. W.H.O. Guidelines being ignored on access to green space.”

“Could be built on Maribor Park if it hadn’t been chosen to be filled with new properties. Does not befit heritage quarter residents, but we have to suffer burden”

Feedback Evidence

Resident Quotes from Public Exhibitions

Some of the quotes, captured at the public exhibitions, held by Lowick Group and Berkeley Homes on May 17th and 19th, 2025





Next Steps

Shaping a vision that benefits both Berkeley Homes and the Royal Arsenal community

Proposed Next Steps

Berkeley Homes' Opportunity to Build Sustainable Solutions for Royal Arsenal Development

Berkeley Homes has a unique opportunity to enhance its draft proposal before official submission — this will help strengthen community trust, and future-proof the development while building Berkeley Homes' reputation for sustainable leadership:

- 1 **Reassess the current proposal** and identify a more suitable alternative site for the new Energy Centre that does not compromise essential public green space
- 2 **Future-proof Wellington Park** by preserving and enhancing the proposed construction site, adding landscaping, trees, and seating to support the wellbeing of current and future residents — especially as the final phase of the Royal Arsenal development is completed, increasing density

Step 1 | Taking a step back - an alternative site is possible

Location Options*

Identify an alternative location for the energy centre — one that does not require removal of precious, accessible parkland. Options may include:

- Building perimeter zones
- Building rooftops
- Adjacent to industrial sites, not community hubs

Berkeley Homes has already explored multiple site options (see image below). However, this information was not shared with residents during the public exhibitions, leaving us unaware of what feasibility studies or research—if any—were conducted. The linked report suggests that viable alternatives do exist.

Location Options

6.3 Table 2, below, summarises the pros and cons of the assessed heat pump location options.

Table 2: Air Source Heat Pump Location Options		
	Pros	Cons
Building 10 Roof	> Adjacent to Energy Centre thus reducing capital costs & minimising pumping costs.	> Immediate alterations to B10 structure required (B10 currently under construction) > Crane required for plant installation/replacement; > Near homes - acoustic & vibration mitigation required; > Planning risk on height; > Tight on roofspace
Armourer's Court Roof	> Adjacent to Energy Centre thus reducing capital costs & minimising pumping costs; > Can be incorporated into structural design.	> Probable insufficient roofspace; > Planning risks on height; > Crane required for plant installation/replacement; > Near homes - acoustic & vibration mitigation required.
Wellington Park	> Timing flexibility - not tied to building design/construction; > Large space (non-carpark) available makes acoustic & vibration mitigation easier; > No crane required, minimising installation, replacement and maintenance issues.	> Greater distance to Energy Centre - probable higher costs; > Adjacent flats; > Cold plumbing from ground level; > Planning consent required.

Focus on Positive Impact

- Preserving vital community parkland - future-proof green space for current and new residents, and 20 million Royal Arsenal yearly visitors**
- Protecting residents' health and wellbeing - avoid disruption inside the park and near dense housing
- Safeguarding historic Foundry House access and views
- Supporting biodiversity through real planting - aligned with true sustainability values
- Enhancing trust and community relations



“The location of Wellington Park is shown in Figure 1. Figure 2, below, shows the specific part (‘Available Space’) of the park that is available. The remainder of the Park has a carpark underneath.

*The space is **available and undeveloped** as it previously contained a site office. It is considered that development in this area is likely to be achievable **without any significant impacts**”*

Hodkinson Consultancy

*All images and quote are taken from Berkeley Homes “Decarbonisation & Expansion Report”, produced by Hodkinson Consultancy. Source: [Link](#)

Step 2| Future-proofing Wellington Park - our residents' vision

Parkland Enhancement Needed

- We encourage Berkeley Homes to seize the opportunity to enrich Wellington Park's green space by adding more trees, vibrant flower beds, and ideally, a welcoming seating area
- Some of the residents' feedback included suggestions to incorporate sports equipment (such as tennis table)
- Some residents suggested planting a fruit orchard, a rose garden, and even a hedge maze

High-Impact Benefit for Berkeley Homes

Strengthened community trust and relationships, and a reinforced reputation as a leading, sustainability-focused developer

>

Today



>

Tomorrow



Our Red Lines

The Three Non-Negotiables

We want to be absolutely clear — there are some options our community cannot and will not accept:

- 1 We will not accept any infrastructure construction within Wellington Park, even if it includes extra planting or cosmetic enhancements.
- 2 We will not accept “offset” proposals where a different park is promised in the future to make up for the loss of Wellington Park space. Future parks are speculative. Our current parks must be protected now.
- 3 We will not accept dismissal of residents’ feedback. If Berkeley Homes pushes forward without substantial changes to the current proposal, it will damage trust and community relations irreparably.



Conclusion and Path Forward

Summarising our position and shared commitment to collaborative progress

Conclusion

Our Commitment to Collaboration

Our tone is firm because the stakes are high — but our intent is collaborative. We are not opposing sustainability or progress — we are defending our wellbeing and asking for a better, smarter solution.

We are engaged with:

- Our MP Matthew Pennycook
- Local Ward Councillors
- Sustainability professionals and legal advisors

If needed, we are prepared to put forward an objection, if the planning proposal is submitted in its current form — but our first **hope is to work with Berkeley Homes** to find a **truly sustainable solution** and **future-proof our community**.



Thank you for
considering our
feedback!



Royal Arsenal
Residents

Appendix

Stop Berkeley Homes' ASHP Development in Wellington Park – Protect Our Green Space



903
Verified signatures ▼

Sign this petition

First name

Last name

Email

Reference 1

Change.org Petition

- A petition on Change.org launched following the public exhibition drew an overwhelming response from residents, reflecting widespread community opposition
- For live updates, follow this link:
<https://www.change.org/p/stop-berkeley-homes-ashp-development-in-wellington-park-protect-our-green-space>

Royal Arsenal Green Space Campaign

[Top](#)[Policies](#)

From May 2025 Berkeley Homes has invited the Royal Arsenal community to a [consultation](#) regarding "...proposals for the decarbonisation of the energy network for future homes at Royal Arsenal Riverside."

Reference 2

RA Awareness Campaign

- A website was created to provide residents with a central source of information about the project
- It includes key details and relevant resources to help the community easily access important data related to the development
- Site link: <https://stop-ashp.org>



Reference 3

Evidence of community park space use

- This video provides direct proof of how this specific parkland is used daily by Royal Arsenal Community
- It is a space that is loved and used by residents and visitors of all ages and abilities for fitness, relaxation, community celebrations and dog-walking
- Video Link:
https://www.instagram.com/reel/DJ_hLBAIhTH/?igsh=c2tzajQ2djlvcTN2



Concern about proposed loss of park space at Royal Arsenal in Woolwich

📅 23/05/2025 💬 7 Comments 👤 J.Smith

Concerns have been raised by resident in Woolwich regarding proposals by Berkeley Homes to remove space within a park for a substantial heat pump.

Reference 4

Local Press

- Our residents engaged with local press as part of community awareness campaign: [link](#)