

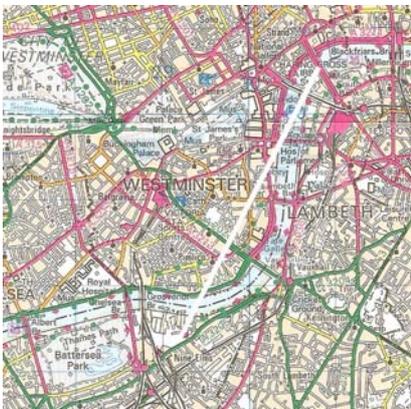
# Battersea Bulletin



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## REO'S SCHEME THREATENS WORLD-FAMOUS VIEW OF HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT

REO's proposed tower next to Battersea Power Station site will have a devastating impact on the Houses of Parliament, if it is given planning permission. The photomontage above, taken from the South Bank, shows that REO's proposed new tower (aka "The Dyson") designed by Rafael Vinoly will be seen directly behind the Houses of Parliament.



The proposed tower is 300m high. (REO press release 20<sup>th</sup> June 2008.) This is 2.5 times taller than Millbank Tower, seen at the left of the montage, which is about 120m tall (30 storeys).

The tower will appear between Victoria Tower and Big Ben. The sight line is shown in white on the Ordnance Survey map above.

We have shown the new tower as it will appear from Hungerford Bridge. It is clear that the impact of the new tower on the Houses of Parliament and the Westminster World Heritage Site will be disastrous.

The Dyson tower is open in the centre to allow air to ventilate from the "eco dome" below. REO says that the tower can't be reduced in height or the ventilation system won't work. But even if the tower was reduced by half it would still be visible behind Parliament.

REO justifies the tower by saying it is needed to finance the repairs to Battersea Power Station itself. They seem to be implying that the protection of the World Heritage Site and the repair of Battersea Power Station are incompatible objectives. We need to see their figures.

REO claims that 81% of the people who came to their exhibition of proposals over the summer liked the design. But the Houses of Parliament are not shown on their model, so visitors were not able to assess the full impact of the scheme. What percentage of visitors would support the scheme if they knew that it would spoil a famous view of the Houses of Parliament?

## It will never happen



"The Dyson"

© REO/Treasury

REO say they intend to submit Rafael Vinoly's tower (above) to Wandsworth Council for planning permission in 2009. But the chances of REO's scheme being approved must be close to zero.

The UK government has been criticised by UNESCO recently for failing to protect World Heritage Sites in the UK from unsympathetic development. The Tower of London and the Westminster World Heritage Sites - both threatened by new tall buildings - were singled out by UNESCO for special mention.

Following UNESCO's criticisms, planning procedures are being improved to give World Heritage Sites in the UK greater protection. There will be tighter regulations for proposals having an impact on World Heritage Sites, which will be decided by public inquiry.

So if REO submit Vinoly's tower for planning permission, it is certain that there will be a lengthy public inquiry. (REO know this will happen.) The inquiry will probably not be decided until 2010 at the earliest and it is almost certain that REO will lose.

The question is: why would REO spend millions of pounds on fees and public relations on a project which has no chance of being built and generating a return?

Wouldn't the money be better spent on carrying out repairs to the Grade II\* listed building itself? For, whatever REO might say, there is little evidence of any serious repairs having been carried out in the two years since REO took over.

REO needs to come up with a politically and economically viable proposal to repair and refurbish the Power Station in the near future, that won't be held up for years in a public inquiry.

## REO and the Credit Crash

In REO's Annual Report & Accounts for 2007 (page 4) Chairman Ray Horney says: *"During the year we completed a £110m debt facility with Bank of Scotland to finance acquisitions of land in the vicinity of Battersea Power Station."*

REO has since confirmed that the debt facility is with Halifax Bank of Scotland (HBOS), a serious casualty of the recent Credit Crash. HBOS is in the process of being taken over by Lloyds TSB, although former bank chiefs Sir Peter Burt and Sir George Mathewson are attempting to keep HBOS independent, with government backing.

Having HBOS as its principal financial backer raises further questions about the economic viability of REO's scheme. Is the debt facility still available in the current economic climate? If it is, how long will the debt facility stay in place, particularly when HBOS realises that the planning application has no chance of success and they won't get a return? Surely it won't be long before HBOS wants its money back.

Ray Horney completes his Chairman's statement by saying: *"Given the uncertain outlook for the US and western economies and the significant rerating of property company shares, it would be unrealistic to hope or expect that REO should have remained immune"*. How very true.

## Appeal

We need your support to keep the campaign to preserve Battersea Power Station up and running. Send cash or cheques to: Battersea Power Station Community Group, 16 DRCA Workshops, Charlotte Despard Avenue, London SW11 5HD.

Battersea Power Station Community Group.  
Campaigning since 1983 to save the listed building.

BATTERSEA POWER STATION  
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