**Appendix A – Responses to the decision**

## 1. Introduction

1.1. Lewisham's Director of Planning notified the group proposing the neighbourhood area at Bell Green that they intended to refuse the boundary for the proposed neighbourhood area and designated a smaller neighbourhood area which was deemed to be more appropriate.

1.2. Due to the proposed refusal of the proposed neighbourhood area and the designation of a smaller neighbourhood area, 10 of the 22 forum members could no longer be considered as active members, therefore not meeting the threshold of membership needed to be designated as a neighbourhood forum in respect to the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 and the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. The application for the Bell Green Neighbourhood Forum was therefore refused.

1.3. In response to being informed of this information some of the groups' membership have submitted further representations to the Council's Mayor, Chief Executive and Director of Planning outlining their opposition to this decision.

1.4. Additionally the Council has received one further letter of support for both the Neighbourhood Area and Forum from a Bellingham councillor. This letter of support was received after the consultation had closed and was not considered within the original consultation statement that was submitted to the Director of Planning.

## 2. Overview of representations made

2.1. Once the group had been informed of the likely decision, some members of the group submitted further representations outlining their opposition to the decision that the Council had taken.

2.2. At the time of writing this appendix (24/08/2022) a further 8 representations have been received. These representations have mostly followed the same pro forma format, however some of the representations have been edited by the sender.

2.3. The main theme of the representations submitted discussed their opposition to the decision calling it an *"unexpected rejection"* and that the group had been advised by *"expert opinion at Locality that this decision far exceeds Lewisham's legal power, is unlawful and therefore cannot stand*"

2.4. Additionally the representations also asked the recipient *"whether you support Lewisham's action, undermining local democracy by overturning a legally conducted formal public consultation".* The representations also stated that the sender was *"looking forward to getting involved in planning for my neighbourhood's future development".*

2.5. Of the 8 representations received, 4 had edited the pro forma format to include further concerns regarding the decision. The concerns raised in these representations include:

- The exclusion of Brent Knoll School due to the designation of a smaller neighbourhood area
- Residents being excluded due the designation of a smaller neighbourhood area
- The need to address the high pollution due to traffic
- That the forum would provide a greater voice for residents
- An accusation that Labour Councillors are concerned with personal aggrandisement due to property development in a neighbouring borough and the hope that a similar nefarious activities are not happening in Lewisham

2.6. A Bellingham Councillor also submitted a letter of support for the Neighbourhood Area and Forum stating her disappointment in the council's decision due to councillor objections and some public comments. The letter of support also noted that they were aware of some issues particularly for Bellingham, but was confident that these issues could be addressed as and when they arise.