

The developers' plan is to sell some of the flats – presumably the largest, like the penthouses, at prices ranging from £6m to £7.5m – and rent the rest on expensive yearly leases.

A one bedroom flat will cost from £101,000 to £121,000 pa; a two bedroom flat from £160,000 to a mind-boggling £193,000 pa, according to Brendon Moss, of Westbourne Capital.

At these rents, the Heythrop extra care units will be out of reach of almost all older people living in the Borough. But they will of course be attractive to foreign buyers and so are likely to add to the medical tourism, which central London is so well known for. How many lights will be on at night in the buildings on this site, we wonder? These super-luxury flats will not *'predominantly serve the residents of the Borough'*, as required by RBKC's planning policy.

5. Then there are the listed buildings fronting on to Kensington Square, which the developer intends to convert back to 3 houses. Currently they are part of the College or a kindergarten, providing distinct community and social uses. Knight Frank in the application values these at a total of £35.5 million, once they are converted. But RBKC Planning Policy is quite clear about 'enabling development'. It must *'significantly improve the existing use on the site, provide another social and community use on the site; or to significantly improve or provide new social and community uses elsewhere within the borough and where it can be demonstrated that there is a greater benefit to the borough resulting from this enabling development.'*

3 luxury town houses will fulfil none of these conditions, as the 142 luxury extra care units will pay for themselves. The converted houses will of course bring the developer a mouth-watering windfall profit.

6. This proposal offers very few benefits to the local community, who of course will have to bear excessive disruption to their everyday lives. The project proposes:
a community hall – when local residents have always been able to hire rooms from the college; public access to the landscaped gardens, via two gated entrances;
5 affordable flats, which the developers will build, though they say they are not obliged to.

Let's take a moment to consider this. What is being proposed is effectively a residential complex of 142 luxury apartments. None of these is valued at less than £2m and some three times that. Add 3 luxury houses worth £35.5m, and we have a development which on completion will be worth £541 million. Yet the developers claim that their provision of 'extra care' and their 'financial viability assessment' mean that they are not required to build any affordable housing – but are nonetheless willing to provide 5 affordable flats!

That is all the community will gain. We will lose a residential college, a sports court, a kindergarten and a Dyslexia Training Centre, with all the diversity that these bring.

The application also tells us what the developers will gain from the completed project: a staggering £95 million profit, according to Knight Frank's figures. This profit will have come from developing an area designated 'of low value uses', which RBKC's Policy CK1 is specifically designed to protect. It's a mad world, my masters.

In our view such a scheme cannot be described as retaining a realistic *'social and community use'*, let alone ensuring *'a good mix of uses'*, as required by the Heythrop SPD.

After the tragedy of Grenfell, can the Council really justify allowing 5½ precious and picturesque acres of Kensington to become the exclusive preserve of some wealthy pensioners, with occasional visiting rights to the less well-off in the Borough?