

RBK&C TRANSPORT COMMENTS

PP No: 18/05313	Address: Heythrop College, 23-24 Kensington Square, LONDON, W8 5HH	Date of obs: 06/11/2018																	
<p>Proposal: Reinstatement of three townhouses (Class C3), (part of 23 and 24 Kensington Square); refurbishment of college building (part of 23 Kensington Square) and use as an extra care facility (Class C2). Demolition of all other buildings on site. Erection of deck over adjacent London Underground line and construction of 5 buildings (ranging between 1 and 8 storeys in height) for use as an extra care facility including units, communal facilities and services areas, community hall and on-site affordable housing and associated access parking, servicing and landscaping. (MAJOR DEVELOPMENT)</p>																			
More info needed	No Objection	No objection STC	Concern Raised	Objection															
		x																	
Initial Observations		Transport Officer:		DM Officer:															
Full Observations	x	William Howe		Joseph Whitworth															
Further Observations (no.)																			
<p>Comments: The application is for a development, which consists of both the refurbishment of existing buildings and the demolition and subsequent construction of new buildings.</p> <p>The refurbishment element includes the reinstatement of three townhouses on Kensington Square (currently known as part of 23 and 24 Kensington Square), the refurbishment of the existing college building (currently known as part of 23 Kensington Square) to be used as part of a proposed extra care residential facility.</p> <p>All other buildings on the site would be demolished; with the erection of a landscaped deck over the adjacent London Underground line and the construction of five buildings primarily for use as 142 self-contained extra care residential units (C2) including communal facilities and service areas, but also providing six affordable homes (C3) and a community hall. A breakdown of proposed floor areas is shown in the table below;</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; margin-top: 10px;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="text-align: center;">Type</th> <th style="text-align: center;">GEA (sqm)</th> <th style="text-align: center;">Number</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Extra Care Units (C2)</td> <td style="text-align: center;">26,898</td> <td style="text-align: center;">142</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Affordable Homes (C3)</td> <td style="text-align: center;">676</td> <td style="text-align: center;">6</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Market Homes (C3)</td> <td style="text-align: center;">2,041</td> <td style="text-align: center;">3</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Community Hall (D1)</td> <td style="text-align: center;">157</td> <td style="text-align: center;">1</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>					Type	GEA (sqm)	Number	Extra Care Units (C2)	26,898	142	Affordable Homes (C3)	676	6	Market Homes (C3)	2,041	3	Community Hall (D1)	157	1
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<p><u>Site and Connectivity</u></p> <p>Being relatively large, there is a variation in measured connectivity across the site. At the northern end, where the existing college buildings are located, it is very well served by public transport, indicated by a PTAL of 5, with High Street</p>																			

Kensington Underground station and numerous bus services available within a short walking distance. Conversely the southern portion of the site, due to the fairly circuitous walking routes along surrounding streets, is classified as having moderate access to public transport, with a PTAL score of 3.

Permeability across the site is dealt with in more detail below, but one of the results of the revised site layout and operation, would be to reduce walking distances from the south of the site, through Kensington Square and beyond to the public transport services on Kensington High Street. This would increase the PTAL from a 3 to a 4.

In respect of policy CT1(a), the site is considered to be one that is suitable for an increase in trip generation. The extent of any such increase and the mode by which the additional trips would be likely to be made, however, requires further consideration and is dealt with below.

A key constraint on the site, is that the sole vehicle access is by means of a narrow cobbled mews, South End, which itself is accessed via a network of relatively constrained residential streets. For a development to be acceptable in this location, it would need to demonstrate that this constraint has been fully considered in the formulation of the scheme.

High Street Kensington Station Accessibility

The site is located approximately 280m walking distance from High Street Kensington Station (HSKS), the next closest station being Gloucester Road, which is approximately a 1km walking distance away. Neither of these stations offer step-free access to customers. The closest step-free station is Earl's Court, which is approximately a 1.1km walking distance away from the site.

The application is clear that the primary element of this development falls in to the C2 land use class, offering extra care residential accommodation. The stated eligibility criteria for residents, include that they must be at least 55 years old and require care, with the applicant stating that a maximum of 10% of residents would be within the 55 to 65 years bracket and 90% would be over 65 years old. All residents, however, would require care.

One of the common results of advancing age is a reduction in mobility. As a general rule, the more elderly a person gets the more likely it is that they will have impaired mobility. It is equally the case, that those persons requiring a level of care, such that they would choose to live in a care facility, rather than a standard private dwelling are also more likely to have mobility issues compared to an average person of the same age.

It is therefore a fair assumption to make, that an extra care facility with an age related eligibility criteria, such as is proposed, would be likely to have a significantly greater proportion of occupants with reduced mobility than would be found at a standard C3 residential development.

The closest stations to the site, primarily HSKS, offer a poor environment and limited access for persons with reduced mobility and are likely to be entirely

unusable for persons with severely limited mobility, including wheelchair users. It is questionable, therefore, to what extent the presence of HSKS should have been relied upon when assessing the connectivity (i.e. PTAL) of this site and its suitability for a development of this type and scale. If a significant proportion of future occupants are unable or unwilling, to use HSKS, then alternative modes of travel will increase. The limited number of car parking spaces and permit-free nature of the site, will limit private car use and RBKC Transport officers have always considered that taxis and private hire vehicles would likely be a very well used mode of travel by residents and visitors. If use of HSKS is lower than the 22% of trips forecast by the applicant, then the applicant's forecast of a taxi mode share of 14% and therefore the number of vehicle movements to be generated by them, could be a significant underestimation.

In recognition of the current limitations of HSKS, the applicant has submitted a short study on the provision of step-free access (SFA). This sets out three options, A, B and C, with a brief summary of the pros and cons of each. Transport for London (TfL) have reviewed the study and commented that none provide the type of comprehensive scheme desired, i.e. a scheme that addresses deficiencies in both access and capacity. TfL have therefore commissioned a feasibility study to look at delivering a more comprehensive scheme, for which the initial results are expected in late November 2018.

The applicant's current position is that any contribution towards the provision of step-free access at High Street Kensington Underground Station (HSK), would be up to £4,000,000.

Whilst this is not an inconsiderable sum of money, it would not be, based on the feedback received from TfL, sufficient to deliver step-free access to HSKS, meaning that although it would be partly funded, the delivery of SFA would be reliant on alternative sources of funding becoming available. The terms of the S106 will need to ensure that the Council is not unduly fettered or time restricted, in their ability to spend this funding as the project duration of a SFA scheme can be considerable.

If the application is assessed on the current conditions at HSKS, i.e. no lifts or escalators and congested staircases, the applicant's forecast mode share for the proportion of trips to be undertaken by Underground, at 22%, is considered to be an over-estimate, failing to properly take in to account the true likelihood of the care home residents using the station. For the reasons set out above, taxi and private hire vehicles would be likely to replace the over-estimated Underground trips and even if only 50% of Underground trips were reallocated, which is certainly not considered to be an excessive forecast considering the likely characteristics of the future extra care residents and the significant shortcomings of HSKS for those with impaired mobility. Then this would raise the Taxi mode share from 14% to 25%, thereby increasing forecast daily Taxi movements from 67 to 120 and forecast overall daily vehicle movements, including the applicant's forecast on servicing trips, from 188 to 241. Given that the applicant considers that were the existing site to be fully occupied in its current guise, there would only be a total of 140 vehicle movements to or from the site per day, the significance of the increase is clear. The Heythrop College SPD advises that the site is not suitable for development that would result in a

significant increase in vehicle movements and there is a risk that, should SFA not be forthcoming, these proposals would run contrary to that. The applicant's forecast on daily servicing movements, totalling 60, is discussed in more detail below and should that number be revised upwards, so would the significance of the projected increase in vehicle activity.

For officers to be able to accept the applicant's forecasts on both overall mode share and vehicle movements, there needs to be a reasonable level of certainty on the delivery of Step Free Access at High Street Kensington Station within the medium term. In advance of TfL completing their study, the exact figure is not known but the greater the financial contribution secured from the applicant, ideally in excess of £4,000,000, the greater the likelihood of SFA being delivered.

Servicing and Deliveries

A development of this type and scale, with a number of distinct operations within the site, would generate a significant amount of deliveries and general servicing activity throughout the day.

To accommodate this activity, a servicing yard is to be provided close to the site's South End vehicle access. This would be marked out with two 8m x 3.5m loading bays and associated turning areas.

The applicant forecasts, in the submitted document entitled *Arup Delivery and Servicing Survey Data*, that throughout a typical day the existing site if operating at full capacity would be likely to generate 16 instances of servicing, generating 32 vehicle movements and with the proposed scheme there would be 30 instances of servicing, generating 60 vehicle movements. These figures have been calculated by the applicant using data from existing developments conducting similar activities. Limited further details have been provided on what and where these comparator sites are and it is queried why, for a residential-led development such as this, only one of the ten survey sites selected by the applicant is residential in nature. Nevertheless, based on that one site, the applicant forecasts the total 151 homes would generate 19 of the 30 daily deliveries, which equates to one delivery for every thirteen homes. The Council does not hold substantive servicing data from residential developments, with which to contest this forecast, but it is considered to be somewhat low. For comparison, were a development of only thirteen homes proposed in a similar location, in excess of two daily deliveries would be anticipated.

The possibility of daily servicing and delivery related vehicle movements increasing beyond the applicant's current forecast of 60, adds to officers' existing concerns on the likely overall increase in vehicle movements and the impact that these could have on the character of surrounding streets and the amenity and use of surrounding buildings (policies CL1 & CL5). The ability of residents to use HSKS again relates to this issue, as the higher the proportion of residents who are able to use public transport to undertake shopping and leisure trips, will be likely to reduce the proportion that are reliant on shopping and other services being delivered to them.

Whilst it is accepted that, through an appropriate management regime, all regular and scheduled suppliers to the site, could be directed to the use the on-site servicing yard, it is likely that a proportion of ad-hoc, courier type deliveries would use the Kensington Square frontage. The fact that some of the buildings within the site will retain a Kensington Square postal address, makes this almost inevitable. There will already be a certain level of on-street servicing activity in Kensington Square, generated by the existing uses on the site, but it would not be acceptable for there to be a material increase in this. A condition should be used to secure that a final Servicing and Delivery Management Plan is submitted for approval prior to occupation of the new buildings. This will need to include swept paths for all vehicles that would be expected to use the servicing yard, as although the applicant suggests that this would include vehicles up to 10m in length, it is the case that the two marked loading bays are only 8m in length and the submitted swept path drawings are for 8m long vehicles.

Public Realm and Permeability

The site is currently closed to the public and offers no permeability. The opportunity to open up the site to the public, both in terms of providing amenity space and also new pedestrian routes through it, is a potentially significant benefit of the redevelopment of this site and accords with policies CT1(g) and CR1(c).

Although not anticipated in the Heythrop College SPD, the applicant's proposal to construct a deck over the adjacent railway lines, creates the future potential to introduce a new east-west route across the site, over the railway line and on to Scarsdale Place. The creation of such a route would be of very significant benefit for this part of the borough.

The scheme proposes to introduce a new pedestrian route linking the south-west corner of Kensington Square to South End, which is welcomed. The fact, however that this is proposed to be restricted to daytime use only is not acceptable. Policy CT1(g) seeks to provide pedestrian links through new developments and policy CR1 seeks to provide an inclusive and legible network of streets, with new development providing links and removing barriers for pedestrians. It also resists the creation of 'gated communities'. As it stands the proposed restrictions on this route are considered to conflict with all of the above, it is not acceptable for this route through the site to be fettered with restrictions on its hours of use. This matter could be satisfactorily dealt with by means of the S106, with the applicant required to maintain this route open to the public 24 hours per day, on a minimum of 364 days per year. This would ensure that the route satisfied the relevant policy requirements, but allowed the applicant to prevent a right of way being established.

The scheme does not propose a pedestrian connection over the London Underground lines. Given the expense and complication, involved in constructing the deck, it is likely that the provision of a staircase down to Scarsdale Place, which is a private road that runs along the western side of the railway lines and acts as a service road for the Copthorne Tara hotel, would

have been straightforward in engineering terms and insignificant in terms of overall costs.

Whilst officers understand that its provision involves land outside the applicant's ownership and requires agreement from third parties, which is where the complication arises, it is frustrating that despite requests to do so, the applicant has provided no evidence of any attempt to secure the necessary consents from the third party. Should this route not ultimately come forward, it would be a massive missed opportunity for permeability through this part of the borough and would be contrary to policy CR1(a)(c).

Through a legal agreement, the applicant should be obliged to facilitate such a route should its delivery prove possible in the future. This safeguarded route should be clearly communicated to prospective residents and highlighted in the conveyancing process so as to avoid opposition to it at a later date.

Car Parking

In accordance with policy CT1(c), all dwellings on the site including the three C3 townhouses proposed, would be classed as new additional residential development and therefore, must be designated as being permit-free. This would remove the right of future occupiers to obtain on-street resident parking permits and should be secured by means of an appropriate legal agreement.

The applicant is proposing to provide a total of twenty-seven car parking spaces, within a basement car park. Of these, twenty would be designated as disabled car parking spaces. In respect of policy CT1 and the Transport and Streets SPD, these spaces can be considered to represent essential need. Of the seven further spaces, four would be for use by the nuns of Milleret House, who have an existing right to park on the site and the remaining three for the reinstated town houses on Kensington Square. Overall this provision is considered to be acceptable and in accordance with policy CT1(b)(d)(e).

The applicant's commitment to provide a minimum of 40% spaces with an active electric vehicle charging supply and the remaining with a passive supply, is noted and meets the Council's standards as set out in the RBKC Transport and Streets SPD. A commitment to meet the Council's standard and full details on the specification of these should be included in a Car Park Management Plan, which should be secured by condition.

Mobility Scooter and Bicycle Parking

The applicant is proposing to provide a mix of bicycle parking (113 spaces) and mobility scooter parking (29 spaces) for residents of the extra care units. In addition to this a further ten bicycle parking is to be provided for staff and visitors.

The submitted plans show various locations for bicycle across the site, with the majority provided within two large stores on the first and second levels of basement respectively. The position of these stores, together with the fact that the vast majority of spaces would be in the form of double stacked racks, is

indicative of the applicant's approach that residents would be expected to access their bicycles using the concierge service. This is a disappointing approach, which is likely to discourage rather than encourage cycling as a mode of travel for residents.

Further to this, the position of mobility scooter parking is queried. The purpose of mobility scooters is to facilitate independent movement to persons unable to walk extended distances. Therefore, the appropriateness of placing mobility scooter parking in relatively remote locations in the basement, some of which are a significant distance from the nearest lift core, is strongly questioned. It should have been located in convenient locations that would facilitate their use. Given the intended use of the site, as an extra care facility for elderly people, appropriate provision of mobility scooter parking should have been a fundamental element of the design, not an afterthought.

As it stands, neither the proposed bicycle parking nor mobility scooter parking is entirely acceptable. A condition should be used to secure revised details are submitted for approval, prior to implementation, which will allow the applicant and officers to consider what form of provision is most appropriate for this site.

Demolition and Construction Management

The proposed demolition and construction works are significant in scale and scope. The addition of a deck above the adjacent London Underground tracks, which is beyond the scope of the development anticipated in the SPD, adds a further level of complexity.

In order to demonstrate that the proposals are in accordance with policy CL7(k) the application is supported by both a Demolition Traffic Management Plan (DTMP) and a Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP), both of which have been prepared using the RBKC CTMP pro-forma.

The site is relatively large and as would have been expected, the applicant confirms that demolition and construction activity would be contained within the site. That being the case, the key considerations relate to the route vehicles would use to and from the site, how many vehicle movements there would be and how these movements would be managed.

The proposed route is considered to be, on balance, the preferable option, but further detail is required to ensure that the types and volumes of vehicles proposed, could be accommodated on it without there being unacceptable harm to the safe and efficient operation of the highway. The proposed use of an off-site vehicle holding area on Victoria Road is noted and whilst the Council typically resists the use of such arrangements, as they displace the impact of construction beyond the site itself, it is considered in this instance that due to the very significant constraints on access and egress for the site, the provision of such a facility is unavoidable. It may be that the Final CTMP amends the layout and possibly even the location of the holding area, but it needs to be acknowledged that such a facility is required.

Subject to a package of mitigation measures it is considered that an acceptable demolition and construction methodology could be agreed. These measures are likely to include the funding of additional Council resources to monitor on-street activities and coordinate interventions as and when required.

A condition should be used to secure the submission of a final DTMP and a final CTMP for approval prior to the commencement of the relevant phase of works. Through the S106, the applicant must be obliged to fund an initial assessment of these documents, at £2,800 each and then further fund the Council's costs for monitoring and on-going review. This figure would need to be agreed with the relevant teams, namely Highways Enforcement and Planning Enforcement.

Vehicle Access and Amendments to South End

South End is a cobbled cul-de-sac and although a footway is in place for a section of the street, it is fundamentally a Mews street. The extent of highway adoption is denoted by the surfacing materials, rather than the double yellow lines and therefore the turning head located opposite number 17 South End, is part of the adopted highway. This turning head provides a valuable facility and must either be retained, or replaced with a suitable alternative, to ensure that the efficient operation of the highway is not compromised.

The applicant is proposing to build over the existing turning head and instead provide a replacement turning facility within the entrance to the proposed service yard. On the basis that the extent of adoption will extend past this point, as shown on the Proposed Ground Floor plan (PA-100 Rev 0), this is acceptable and will ensure that the adopted section of South End can continue to operate effectively in its own right, without reliance on any third party land.

The footway that currently exists on part of the south side of South End up to number nine, is to be extended in to the site. Whilst the provision of a footway is not a typical feature of a Mews, it is considered that given the existing partial footway provision and the demographics of the future residents of the site, its continuation is the most appropriate approach.

In order to deliver the required highway works the applicant will need to enter in to a Highways Agreement (S278/S38) with the Council.

Off-site Highway Works

The highway surrounding the site is in good order, with no apparent gaps in provision or deficiencies in quality. No request is therefore made for any S106 funding to carry out any off-site highway works.

It is, however, the case that the Council will seek to secure sufficient funding, in the form of a bond to reinstate the lengths of roads along the access and egress route, to be used to reinstate any damage caused during the demolition and construction phases. This would apply to all affected roads, but is primarily required in relation to South End, with its historic cobbled surface unlikely to be able to cope with the anticipated volume of movements by demolition and construction vehicles. Funding would be required to cover the costs of any

ongoing repairs required during the programme as well as the full relay that is likely to be required upon completion. It is also considered appropriate that sufficient funding is secured as part of this to cover the cost of repairing and refurbishing the stench pipe, which is a prominent feature of the local streetscape. These figures would need to be calculated by the Council's Engineers and would be included in the S106.

Relevant policies: CT1, CR1, CR2, CR3, CR4, CR5, CR7, CL7, CE3 and the Transport and Streets SPD

Recommendation: Subject to the applicant providing adequate funding in relation to the delivery of Step Free Access at High Street Kensington Station in the medium term and subject to the following mitigation no objection is raised;

Obligations

- All dwellings, including the three town houses, to be permit-free;
- Pedestrian route through the site, linking Kensington Square to South End, to be open for public use 24 hours per day on a minimum of 364 days per year;
- Potential future pedestrian route through the site to Scarsdale Place over the newly constructed deck to be safeguarded. Any such route that is delivered to be publicly accessible at all times;
- Requirement to enter in to a Highways Agreement to deliver associated works to the highway, including the adoption of the additional section of South End. The cost of all such works to be borne by the developer;
- Commitment to fund the detailed design and implementation of step free access at High Street Kensington Station. The final figure for this is to be informed by an on-going study by TfL;
- Funding to cover the Council's costs in monitoring on-street activity associated with the development works – £tbc;
- CTMP assessment fee £2,800 payable upon submission of each version of this document;
- DTMP assessment fee £2,800 payable upon submission of each version of this document;
- Funding to cover the additional cost of maintaining the streets forming the access and egress route during the course of the works and the cost of a final reinstatement following the completion of the development. Cost tbc but likely to be c£100,000. This would be in the form of a refundable bond, with any unspent monies returned to the applicant once the reinstatement works are complete.

Conditions

- Final Demolition Traffic Management Plan (DTMP) to be submitted for approval prior to the commencement of demolition works on site;

- Final Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP) to be submitted for approval prior to commencement of construction works on site;
- Final Servicing and Delivery Management Plan to be submitted for approval prior to occupation;
- Final Car Park Management Plan to be submitted for approval prior to occupation;
- Final details of bicycle parking and mobility scooter parking to be submitted for approval prior to implementation.

Should adequate funding for Step Free Access not be forthcoming, then an objection would be raised in respect of the likely increase in vehicle movements to be generated by the proposals and the impact that these would have on the character of surrounding streets and the amenity of the site's neighbours, contrary to policies CL1 and CL5.

Signed: