

PLANNING APPLICATION PUBLIC COMMENT

Application number: PP/17/01637
Site Address: Site A (Portobello Green Arcade), Site C (Acklam Car Park) and Site D (Acklam Village), LONDON, W10 5TZ
Proposal: Mixed use development under and next to the Westway flyover to provide new arts, culture, enterprise, retail and affordable housing development, including:
Site A - refurbishment (including demolition) at for shops use Classes A1 and A3, and/or Class B1 business use; demolition of building accommodating market storage and outdoor advertising board,
Site C - erection of 4 storey building for Class A1 shops use and 13 x Class C3 dwelling houses, including change of use of private car park;
Site D - for Class A1 shops and/or Class B1 business use, and/or Class D1 non-residential institutions use; Class A4 drinking establishments and/or Class D1 non-residential institutions use, market facilities and associated new access from Acklam Road; public realm works, including demolition of existing planters and hoarding; retained use of public realm for market stalls and tables and chairs; new cycle parking; and other associated works (Major Development)

Comment received: From: Swinbrook Residents Association.
The Association objects to the proposed plans for the following reasons:

1. There have been no notices on lamp posts about this consultation so local involvement has not been as extensive as it should have been.
2. CO2 Well being of borough residents. Residents in the proposed housing will be less than 100 metres from the A40 Flyover and as a result the likelihood of their developing dementia will be increased by 11% putting extra costs onto the NHS and RBKC social care budget and causing distress to the individuals and their families. Babies born to parents in the housing and growing up there will have smaller lungs, smaller brains and will be more expensive to educate.
3. CO2 Well being of borough residents, and Strong Sense of community space. The proposed development represents a large reduction in community use of the site which originally went right up to the brick wall and hoardings. The site had an adventure playground, a youth club and a steel pan yard which enabled young people to achieve global excellence. Many young offenders were helped on leaving prison by Ebony Steel Band to gain employment and lead constructive lives. Ebony played at the opening of the football World Cup and at many other international events. Communities need land if their young people are going to flourish.
4. CO2 Well being of borough residents. The retailing will

add to crime in the area. In the autumn of 2016 22 knives and realistic imitation gun were found in the park 200 yards from this site. More knives including machetes' have been found by children recently. It is known that extremes of wealth result in envy, a feeling of "the impossibility of ever succeeding" and violence coming out of the alienation felt by many young people living locally. A young man was stabbed five times outside the front door of the author of this objection in February 2017. The door is just 200 yards away from the proposed retail development. What is needed is a return to community usage for the Acklam Road site with a focus on children and young people. The original movement that led to the obtaining of the land under the Westway for the Community came out of the play movement - this heritage should be recognised in the development. Women on our estate still have children. The children need an adventure playground and youth facilities as they grow older. Obesity among children is a growing problem. That was not the case when we had an adventure playground. Ebony and the Adventure Playground were able to reach young people the RBKC Youth Service and now its contractor EPICS do not reach. Youth violence and childhood obesity are growing problems in the area, let's go back to what worked.

5. Westway Trust does not need extra income, it has made a surplus every year for a very long time, last year its surplus was £500,000.

6. CO7 Environment and Air Quality. By extending the buildings out from under the Westway it will be possible to plant the roof with a wide band of high vegetation and take out a lot of the pollution from the Westway blows into local housing, causing increases in the number still births, and miscarriages.

7. CO2 Well being of borough residents. The storage for market stalls is in an inappropriate space. It is at the furthest point from Portobello Road and implies that market equipment will be carried through the outdoor dining area and past residential housing between 6.00 pm and 10.00 pm. It would be much more sensible to store the stalls at the southern side of 281 Portobello Road where the uneconomic arcade is. The shops on the North Side of the Arcade could be redesigned to have doors and windows facing onto Thorpe Close making this area more attractive during the week and the shops more viable. This will significantly reduce the level of borrowing by Westway Trust and the risk to its trustees and council nominees.

8. An alternative for market storage is to build a cellar and install a lift and put the market equipment underground.

9. The Spanish civil war mosaic at 281 Portobello Road will be lost or marginalised, so acknowledgement of the Spanish community in North Kensington will be reduced.

10. Looking South along Portobello Road from the Cambridge Gardens, Portobello Road, Acklam Market junction there is an excellent street scape despite the Westway fly over and tube line. The architects who designed most of the building under the Westway had their offices on the east side above the two café's. They did a remarkable job in matching and contrasting the two sides of the road. It gives many people great joy. What is being proposed

in a glass block with no ascetic value on the Western side of Portobello Road under the Westway.

11. What is happening about public toilets and will RBKC pay for toilets to place those it closed. Many elderly people are on bladder leash, meaning they can only go out walking in areas that they know there are toilets

12. Bay 60 has not been integrated into the plans. It is largely unused space which Westway Trust as a charity has a legal duty to maximise the benefit from.

13. By not maximising the land usage Westway Trust could be in breach of Trust. RBKC could find that it has to provide compensation from its own funds because it nominates trustees to Westway trust.

14. The amount of unlet retail property in Kensington, Notting Hill and North Kensington brings into question whether the shops will be let at rents which would pay of the loan. If left unlet the general dilapidation of the area will continue. After five years it is proposed that after five years the loan will be at variable interest, please guess interest rates in 5 years time, and if you cannot acknowledge the risk. Westway Trust is North Kensington's collective inheritance. Community usage of the sites is far less risky and more beneficial for local residents.

15. The scheme involves a large amount of borrowing which is being underwritten by RBKC through its nomination of trustees to the Westway trust board. It is unthinkable that in the event of a Breach of Trust RBKC would not fund the costs of the trustees who it has nominated to Westway Trust Board. Such costs or penalties would be joint and several on the trustees so the likelihood that RBKC, (being the richest party), would meet the whole claim is significant.

16. The drawings used in the consultation were deceptive. They showed a projection for the Westway flyover which if extended beyond of the frame of the drawing would run through the Acklam Road flats. This appears to be to disguise the fact that a large entrance to Acklam Road is being proposed. This type of consultation is dishonest and an affront to democracy. The proposal opens up Acklam Road which is currently a residential area with only a small path going into the area of the proposed development. This narrow entrance from our estate to the crowded tourist areas of Acklam Market and Portobello Road should be retained so the housing estate remains quiet. Walk along Acklam Road towards Portobello Road and you will see what a gaping change is being proposed to the street scape looking west. The opening up of the site onto Acklam Road will increase footfall in this area significantly. Many of the ground floor flats are occupied by people with chronic illness's. They are housed there by RBKC because the block has good ground floor disability access. RBKC owns these flats. For the past 40 years it has been unable to afford to double glaze them. Double glazing is also strenuously opposed by RBKC's contractor the TMO. With the opening up of Acklam Road many people who use the Ladbroke Grove tube station to access the market and increase the footfall on the Thorpe Close market will use Westbourne Park tube station. This will increase

the footfall along Acklam Road which is residential area.

17. CO2. Fostering vitality to contribute to the well-being of borough residents. Millions of pounds could be raised for this site from the Heritage Lottery, The Wellcome Foundation and the Community Fund. Proposals have been put into Westway Trust during the consultation for a helter skelter visible from the Westway, a children's "wow scientific" centre and a carnival exhibition with showcasing for all the cultural traditions of North Kensington.

Requests were made by RAP23 to also show case global excellence in environmental standards and greening. This would bring more footfall to the area by creating midweek tourist attractions and entertainment for the children of shoppers.

Westway Trust does not need more staff or to pay its staff more, so the retail development is both unnecessary and inappropriate. The community has growing social problems and the housing density is increasing. What is needed is more building devoted to community use. The Westway Trust was set up to provide land for the community, the Trusts makes a surplus with the current land usage, so this site should return to community use and Big Lottery, Heritage Lottery and Charitable Trust funding utilised.

18. It is being proposed that 16 trees between the Acklam Road market and Norfolk Mews, will be cut down. Is this legal? Air quality will be made worse by this action. There is no provision for green walls or green roofs in any of the development, is this deliberate so Westway Trust can introduce them latter and say it has responded to consultation, i.e. put in something nasty and then add a bit of ivy and say "we responded to consultation". Ivy is good but we need it by the ton.

19. CO2. Fostering vitality to contribute to the well-being of borough residents. If this application goes ahead it will add to the worryingly strong feelings of unrest and alienation which have developed in North Kensington in the last two years. The police said they would object to the removal of the canopy on Thorpe Close as public order grounds, this proposal has now been dropped. RBKC should think very seriously about the divisions which are currently being forged by its actions in North Kensington. It is not just that from the perspective of many residents its behaviour is both anti-social and institutionally racist, it could lead to significant public disorder at a time when cuts in funding mental health funding coupled with £600 million of cuts to the Met police have left the Police struggling to cope with crime in North Kensington.

20. The areas has already produced terrorists and rioters. Public disorder whilst often appearing to come from one trigger event, generally reflects tensions and injustices that have built up over a period of time. Retail for rich shoppers coming from other parts of London on land which the protest movement obtained as compensation to the community for the A40 Westway is highly provocative. It is unlikely to cause disturbance by itself, but it adds significantly to the mix.

21. RBKC has already alienated good citizens who now see no point in supporting positive community activity when RBKC and

Westway Trust community assets are transferred to retail or the rich. The good will that existed after the last riot and helped calm young people has evaporated.

22. The local Police Consultative Committee has already discussed the risk of attacks on local police officers and Westway Trust staff. London is becoming a nasty place once again, it is not sensible to add to the alienation. In 2007 policing was working, after £600 million of cuts it is struggling and violent crime is rising fast. £400 million of further cuts are in the pipe line. All planning applications should take account of the coming need for a return to the defensive architecture of the 1970's, and the need to provide crime diversion activities for people up to the age of 30.

23. The primary aim of the application appears to be to attract more people into the area, but Portobello Road and Acklam Market are already dangerously packed on Saturdays. The extra square footage of pavement (which we object to) is not sufficient to accommodate the volume of shopper's who would be needed to repay loans in the region of £7 million over ten years. It is also unlikely that high spending shoppers would be attracted to such a crowded area on Saturdays and it is too far from Bond Street to attract them mid week. RBKC nominated trustees are recommending that Westway Trust, a charity borrows commercial funds for a risky commercial development. There could be legal action for breach of trust by local organisations if the venture fails. Trustees might be asked to personally fund the loss. In such circumstances would RBKC under write the joint and several liability that would be faced by its nominated trustees who might otherwise face bankruptcy.

Sent by:

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Comment type:

Objection