

## **PLANNING APPLICATION PUBLIC COMMENT**

Application number: PP/18/05313  
Site Address: Heythrop College, 23-24 Kensington Square, LONDON, W8 5HH  
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)

**Comment received:** I write to OBJECT to the grant of planning permission sought. I live in close proximity to the proposed development.

I am generally supportive of the proposal. My objection relates specifically to the lack of pedestrian permeability that Council policy would normally seek to achieve.

There is an unrestricted pedestrian entry and exit at the South End corner of the site. However, by contrast to earlier proposals, pedestrians entering at that point now have no way of leaving except by a path that passes through a building on Kensington Square. Even this path is to be open only at hours to be decided by the applicant (or imposed by way of a Planning condition), but which are unlikely to be 24 hours a day. It is in effect a privately controlled, severely restricted point of access and egress. Permeability as a concept consists in more than merely a physical opportunity to go to and fro; it also involves a welcoming aspect and a lack of restriction that encourages use. This proposal now has in effect no site permeability at all.

This is important not only for the development currently proposed but also, as noted by the Architecture Appraisal Panel, for future development, as the opportunity eventually arises for redevelopment of the hotel on the other side of the tracks, which the deck proposed by this applicant will facilitate. The Panel envisaged a network of paths that linked South End, Kensington Square and Wright's Lane, so restoring the rent in the urban fabric caused in the nineteenth century by the construction of the Circle line. To rule out this opportunity now would be short-sighted in the extreme and very poor Planning.

An earlier version of the proposal had an open-air path around the convent building that allowed access and egress to and from Kensington Square. There is no reason why that could not be

required by the Committee and it should be open without restriction 24 hours a day.

Consequently I would ask you to note that I would wish to see the Committee REJECT the application unless amended by the inclusion of an open-air pedestrian path connecting directly to Kensington Square that is available for public pedestrian use 24 hours a day and is designed so as to present a welcoming and open aspect to those approaching it. This does not preclude, of course, retaining the proposed access through the building, though I regard that as worthless in terms of permeability.

Date of Comment: 14/09/2018

Comment type: Objection