

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 would like to object to this huge development of a valuable piece of Community land. My reasons are below:

This development will triple the building size assisted by putting a deck over the tube. It is a secluded site with extremely limited access it will therefore take a longer time to destruct and construct than a straightforward application. Would building a deck over the tube line strategically prevent future development of the that or another tube line?

I understand it could take 4 years with 24,000 lorry trips. I would ask you to physically examine the only route available for these lorries and question whether the logistics of this huge development is in fact possible. How will the residents of these narrow streets survive such an imposition for what appears to be simply a money-making development of inappropriate dwellings.

As usual, with developers in this area they believe they should build for the ultra-rich. The situation with the development at the top of Victoria Road ie only around 50% sold, demonstrates the problem, that the ultra-rich are no longer buying. Further demonstrated by the Heythrop developers changing to rental! The leases are far too high for the older members of our Community, who moved here many years ago when it had a relatively lower financial basis. I believe that a poll was taken involving local residents, none of which would be able to pay the rents. Instead overseas buyers AGAIN, will buy them up as investments!

What the Council, the media, developers and estate agents do not understand is the attractiveness of this part of the Borough is because it is a Community, not a super-rich ghetto which developers are trying so hard to make it! We have 2 strong Resident's Associations who are desperate to maintain this area for residents who wish to be part of a thriving community, living and

working here. We support our local shops and realise the importance of maintaining the environment so it retains its character and attractiveness. By allowing developments for those who see it purely as an investment, who have no interest in supporting the local community, the very reason they bought starts to degrade.

It is excellent that that access to the grounds will be available. However, a Community Hall does not make up for the loss of a kindergarten, College or Dyslexic Training Centre. Currently there are over 100 student rooms, the affordable accommodation planned is a derisory 5 homes. It is an amazing affront to the fact that they are buying this land at a Community rate, NO luxury homes should be built there. This rate allows them not to abide by the rules for affordable housing which is why it is so desperately low.

As RBKC's new CEO, Dr Quirk, has stated publicly, the council "must stop behaving like a property developer". This epithet can also be applied to the planners' willingness to approve endless super-luxury Buy-to-Leave-Empty developments which are damaging local life and the local economy. Post-Grenfell, residents are expecting RBKC, its councillors and its planners to put the local community first.

I understand that although they state that those living in these homes must be over 55, anyone can pay for them. Also, the "Care" facility, necessary for it to conform to the "Community Rate" is only 2.5 hours care a week, which is negligible when it is included in the high service charges. It is frightening that these flats could become the centre for 'medical tourism' for high value sick and old foreigners who will be able to take up these leases for short periods.

I cannot see either in the short term ie construction or, in the long term that this development is in any way of benefit to social and community provision within the Borough.

Date of Comment:
Comment type:

01/10/2018 17:27:23
Objection