

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: We are a family with 5 children (6 to 16 years of age) and have been living in the borrow for the last 20 years. We live on Kensington Court Place, and oversee St Albans Grove. We have enjoyed living in this area of London with a great atmosphere related to the mixed habitants, including students from Heythrop college, the nursery nearby and some of our children have been going to the nearby Thomas's school and have enjoyed their sport activities at Heythrop college and have used the garden right next to the school. We also enjoy the mixed between family and retired people as well as the peacefulness of the area.

I object strongly to this project which would severely impact the area both during the construction period and after, because:

The project is SO MASSIVE, that it entails a 5 years construction plan, which implies a traffic nightmare around which we are not prepared to live. We are very concerned about our children crossing the streets in the area with the added traffic that it would imply. We understand this could represent 30 or even up to 60 lorries per day. During this 5 year period the quality of life would be severely amended. If it were to go through it might actually be a reason to leave this area for us.

The streets considered for traffic (Victoria road, St Albans Grove.) are narrow, and cars even in the current context are often scratched by passing vehicles. Lorries during the construction period will increase this risk significantly. 60 vehicles or lorries per day would not be suitable in these streets which can't accommodate double traffic. This will likely imply that a lot of the usual traffic would be rerouted to other streets which won't be monitored by traffic ward, creating risks for children.

The turn at Victoria road and St Albans mansion is sharp and not suitable for numerous lorries. The presence of Thomas's Kensington school on this corner implies lots of traffic at normal drop off and pick up time, but also at all time during the day. This would be dangerous for children.

Per the <http://heythropkensington.co.uk/> web site,

operating hours would likely be along the "Guidance for permitted hours are typically 8am-6pm Monday to Friday. Works outside of these hours will require advance permissions from RBKC." This would interact with the Thomas's Kensintgon traffic and would create chaos a drop off and pick up times which are scattered during the days (drop offs, pick up, church services, assemblies, parents evenings.)

The area should be used and remain used for educational purpose

This project corresponds to transforming a area dedicated to a college and facilities being used by the Thomas's school in to a ghetto for the super wealthy elderly.

Against the Policy CK1, this project does not seek to preserve the low value Social and Community uses; it is a high value luxury housing, with super luxury 1 and 2 beds flats, very expensive service charges and a minimal level of extra care. Better said from the developer itself on its web site:" the scheme is the retirement property equivalent to the Claridge's .. For the generation of ultra-high net worth." We feel that the presentation being made is wrong and tailored to getting approval for the project while not corresponding to the true intent: SPECULATION!

The additional traffic generated if it were such a large "extra care" home would be problematic long term, and would change the peaceful nature of the community

No new parking seems to be planned which would create a real issue for all current habitants when adding 142 care units. Some of the habitants would have cars (more so than the current students use). Visitors (medical or personal) would add to the traffic (cars, cabs) and parking requirements. This would reduce drastically quality of life in the area.

As has been seen in other buildings including "One Hyde Park in Knightsbrige" or the development near Bulgari hotel in Knightsbridge, or even "One Victoria Road". At these price range, these accommodations are not aimed to help the community but to help foreign "buy to leave empty" buyers or medical tourists who would rent these properties. This is not what borough representatives are elected to implement!

This project is not providing any affordable housing neither proper medical care for its residents, but is a merely disguised scheme to make money in a site where should prevail a sense of community with a life around as such. Furthermore, the project is on such a scale (3 times more floor space of the present building plus a deck above the TFL trainline station) that it would ruin the environment and should be much smaller if ever considered. If it were not for pure speculation, it could be transformed into a similar to current sized care-home. The project should be completely rethought and would get support is no additional or only marginal additional space floor was considered. In short: TOO BIG, TOO LONG, TOO GEARED TO THE WEALTHY, TOO MUCH NEGATIVE IMPACT short term and long term. Don't encourage speculation! Make is smaller, shorter, preserving and enhancing the local community!

Date of Comment:

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Comment type:

Objection