

ENGLISH HERITAGE



LONDON REGION

EX DIR	HRC	N	Q	SW	SE	ENF	AV ACK
25 JAN 1999							
LABS	IO	REC	ARB	FWD PLN	CON DES	FEES	

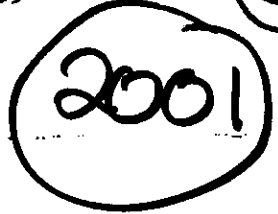
Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea
 Planning Department
 The Town Hall
 Horton Street
 LONDON
 W8 7NX

Your ref: DPS/DCC/DT/TP/
 981217

Our ref: LRS 3120/Opt3

Direct Dial: 0171-973 3775

21 January 1999



For the attention of Derek Taylor

Dear Sir,

97 Camden Hill Road. W.8.

Thank you for referring this matter for our consideration.

Although the demolitions of Water Tower House and the remaining reservoir buildings have been given informal approval, it is not possible at this stage to progress to formal consent. PPG15 paragraph 4.27 makes it quite clear that in the absence of 'acceptable and detailed plans for any redevelopment' consent for demolition should not be given. This is the exact situation with which we are presently faced.

In my opinion the redevelopment has a number of major failings, stemming it seems principally from the developers inability to treat this as an urban scheme. Their loose fitting assemblage of architecture fails almost entirely to address the urban context in which it is set.

If the developer wishes to create a suburban enclave in this location, it must be designed with greater conviction so that its contents do not spill out into the neighbouring streets. It is in my view most unsatisfactory that what is offered to Aubrey Walk is the rear of one block, the flank of two others and the axis view to a grandiose central garden quite out of scale with the immediate townscape.

The block opposite the listed buildings at Nos: 2 - 6 Aubrey Walk appears to derive its form from the obvious disadvantage of having its entire form largely dictated by the requirements of a vehicle turning circle. The scale relationship of the north flank of the 'west terrace' to Aubrey Walk is also most uncomfortable. Its impact will be no less because it is drawn more faintly on drawing No. P102 than the proposed adjacent 'terrace' to the east on the same Aubrey Walk frontage. The drawing of the frontage block to Camden Hill also inaccurately represents its appearance from Aubrey Walk, thus inadvertently misrepresenting its overall height.

In the opinion of English Heritage the street frontages of the entire development need to be re-thought:

23 SAVILE ROW, LONDON, W1X 1AB
 Telephone 0171 973 3000 Facsimile 0171 973 3001

ENGLISH HERITAGE



2002 1600

1. The West Block needs either to be cut back or reduced in height and turned round to face the road.
2. The central plaza should be closed down at its north - street end. It does nothing as it stands for Aubrey Walk.
3. In Aubrey Walk the building line of the flats jumps around all over the place and fails to provide any street enclosure. If it is pretending to be a terrace, where are the doors, roof downpipes and upstand party walls at roof level? St George's and the listed terrace require a more considered neighbour. The applicants should be encouraged to look at the simplicity of the Raymond Erith building at Nos. 15-19 Aubrey Walk which is only a few yards from their site.
4. The proposed replacement building to Water Tower House seems to require adjustment. If it is to make Classical references, they should be better researched and better stitched into the building. The lack of modulation in the piercing in the structure is its weakest feature. The enormous Diocletian windows at 4th floor level also entirely overpower the gables into which they are set. The springing of the arch is also visually undermined by the positioning of windows directly below the thrust. The conservation area statement requires this building to *make a positive contribution*. It currently has no delight and requires improvement to meet even this modest objective.
5. The South Terrace relationship to the two storey listed Thorpe Lodge also seems to me to need reconsidering. Sections AA and BB clearly demonstrate how the new building will dominate its north aspect.

Please let me know if you wish English Heritage to attend any meeting which you may arrange. Thank you for spending the time to walk around the site on Monday 18th.

Yours sincerely

DAVID STABB
Inspector of Historic Buildings
Kensington and South London Team

** TOTAL PAGE.03 **

Appendix 11

Meeting note of 19-2-99




Campden Hill

Note of Meeting held at Water Tower House on 19-2-99

Present

S Davies Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea
G Binmore Broadway Malyan
R Sellwood Sellwood Planning

Points Arising

1. RS commented that SD's comments had turned a good scheme into an even better quality scheme.
2. GB explained the changes to the scheme;
 - (a) SD welcomed the deletion of a unit on the southern terrace, thus drawing the building away from Kensington Heights.
 - (b) SD thought the dual aspect house at the northern end of the western terrace was an improvement. It would be further improved if the unit dropped a floor and turned the corner to join the tennis club. GB showed indicative plan showing flats. SD approved of this as long as the details and design were the same quality as the rest of the square.
 - (c) SD felt the changes to the Aubrey Walk flats were an improvement but he still felt they should be closer to the road. RS asked about the blank lift shafts. SD felt they were poor - if the buildings were pulled forward the lift shafts could be incorporated in the buildings. SD felt it was right that the western elevation of the Aubrey Walk flats did not try to appear as part of the square.
 - (d) SD suggested trees in the pavement as a way of improving enclosure in Aubrey Walk.
 - (e) RS showed the two landscaping approaches for the square prepared by SA. SD preferred 'A' and suggested 1.2m railings around the square.
 - (f) SD preferred the modern design for the Campden Hill flats. He still felt there was more work to be done on the design. SD had no problem if floor to ceiling heights were increased to 3.2m.

SD said he was now on holiday for 3 weeks. He would report the meeting back to DT so that the results could be discussed at the meeting on the 24-2-99. RS emphasised that St James needed clear encouragement from Mike French before adopting the more modern design for the Campden Hill flats.

RS explained that he hoped to submit consolidated changes after the meeting on the 24-2-99. These should be awaiting SD on his return on the 19-3-99.

2005

~~SD~~

Appendix 12

Meeting note of 25-2-99




Camden Hill Reservoir

Notes of Meeting Held with Officers of Kensington & Chelsea Council
On Thursday 25th February 1999 at Water Tower House



2007

Present

M French	Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea
D Taylor	Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea
D McDonald	Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea
T Farrow	St James Homes
M Simms	St James Homes
G Binmore	Broadway Malyan
P Crossley	Broadway Malyan
R Sellwood	Sellwood Planning

Points Arising

Consultation



- 1, TF opened the meeting by explaining the continuing public consultation exercise undertaken by St James. This has included meeting the school headmistress, local councillors and local people. The exhibition had now been updated and was open to visitors from 22-2-99. DT commented that there are now 300 letters of objection. MF responded that the issue is the quality of the representations not the quantity.

Layout Changes

2. RS explained that the meetings with officers and other feedback had led to a number of changes to the scheme. Subject to the outcome of the meeting it was intended to submit a consolidated set of amendments to the Council in mid March.

(a) The Square

3. RS pointed out that one house had been removed from the south terrace allowing the dwellings to be pulled further away from Kensington Heights. DT approved but suggested some planting in the large garden now created. RS mentioned that the rights of light situation was acceptable but would now be better.
4. GB/PC explained how the northern house in the western terrace now would drop in height, turn the corner and link to the Club House. DT/DM approved of this.

DT noted the English Heritage point about enclosure but commented that this could not be achieved because of the TPOs. However, the changes went a long way to produce a scheme which addresses Aubrey Walk.

5. RS explained that the Square was now brought up to Aubrey Walk. DT/DM approved.

(b) Aubrey Walk

6. GB outlined the changes to the Aubrey Walk apartments. DM said they were much improved but he would still like genuine pedestrian access from Aubrey Walk. The scheme would be further improved by incorporating the lift shaft in the building and having a continuous roof line.
7. RS then asked whether the Square and Aubrey walk was acceptable in design terms. DT/MF/DM said yes.

(c) Campden Hill Flats

8. RS explained that the design of the Campden Hill apartments had caused problems. The St James team favoured a more contemporary design but wanted some "comfort" from officers that this was their view as well. GB then took the officers through the new scheme. DM said in his view the design was going "in the right direction" however, he would discuss it further and get back to GB on 2nd or 3rd March. PC explained that the concept was for a high quality 'Oxbridge' building. GB/TF agreed that the critical issues are the detailing and the quality of materials. Once given the go ahead by DM it would take about two weeks to complete the design. It was agreed that GB would liaise with DM.

Tennis Club

9. TF/MS explained how the detailed design had turned the indoor courts from a 'dark box' to a high quality facility. MF was impressed. TF explained that discussions were proceeding with the school about joint use and their own access. MF asked if the school access could be used by Club Members. TF said no.

Landscape

10. DT confirmed that C Colville had advised DT that he now had all he needed on the landscape issue.

2009

40

Rights of Light

11. RS apologised for the lateness of the report. RS handed over a copy with a typing error on the number of units. DT agreed to rely on this until he receives the corrected copy.

Affordable Housing

12. RS explained the St James response and how he hoped this provided a mechanism to defuse the issue in a S106 agreement. In essence it would guarantee on site provision if this was the best option and was feasible. DT said this was not enough and he needed a report on the discussions with HAs, the HAs views and what was feasible. MF said that if St James was claiming that it would make the development of the site unviable he would want to see a development appraisal. TF said St James were not suggesting that as an argument. MF said that affordable housing is a topical issue with Members since another application had recently been refused on the grounds of insufficient affordable housing.
13. MF asked how many Thames Water flats were there in Water Tower House. TF/MS said 12 but these were being dealt with separately. They should not be involved in the affordable housing issue. MF agreed.
14. It was agreed that St James should speak to the Council housing department (Gerald Wilde)

Transportation

15. RS referred to the recent meeting with Gillian Palmer. RS understood all issues were not settled. DT said that he believed a query had been raised about providing parking in the basement for Aubrey Walk residents. GB intervened and said the suggestion had come from Gillian Palmer and not St James. DT said do nothing more about this unless he comes back and suggests it.
16. DT also said that he had asked Gillian Palmer to provide costs for traffic calming.

Other Matters

17. RS asked if the Sports Council had been consulted. DT said no because the application had been submitted prior to the December Direction. MF felt that the Sports Council should be consulted on the amended proposals.
18. DT suggested that if the amended proposals were submitted in mid March, there would be a need for a meeting towards the end of March. RS explained that he would also submit a new application as an appeal vehicle for the new scheme. MF felt this was a reasonable approach.

2010

2600

19. RS asked whether the application would get to Committee in late April. DT felt May was more likely although he did not want too much of a delay if the appeal is confirmed as starting on 20-7-99.
20. TF asked MF what his recommendation would be. MF said we would find out three days before the Committee. However, he confirmed that the report would be based on his professional opinion – not political considerations.

2011



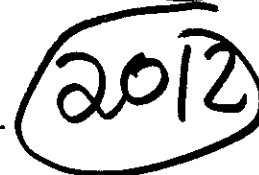
Appendix 13

Meeting note of 24-3-99

Campden Hill Reservoir

Note of Meeting Held At Water Tower House on
Wednesday 24th March 1999





Present

D Taylor	RBK & C
S Davies	RBK & C
D Stabb	English Heritage
P Hull	St James
G Binmore	Broadway Malyan
J George	JGA
R Sellwood	Sellwood Planning

Points Arising

1. RS explained that the purpose of the meeting was to explain the latest set of changes to the scheme as lodged with the Council on 19-3-99. DT commented that whilst he had the revised plans he had not assimilated them. As a consequence he saw the meeting as a discussion – do not expect a refined RBK & C view. DT said he would consult on the revisions and send a letter to RS with a considered view.
2. RS asked DR if he now had everything he needed. DT asked for three more set of the plans. This will be provided by DT. RS said the Rights of Light report would be with DT early next week.
3. GB explained how the scheme had evolved since the residents meetings in the early autumn of 1998. This concentrated on the more contemporary design for the Campden Hill apartments, the changes to the square and the amendments to make the Aubrey Walk apartments look more like a terrace of town houses.
4. SD asked if the Aubrey Walk flats could have the gardens sub divided (railings?). DS asked if the gates related to the front doors. GB explained that they did by reference to the latest elevations. With regard to the Square DS/SD preferred low railings around the green space. DS suggested one large tree at the entrance into the square from Aubrey walk.
5. Some discussions centred on the degree of access into the square. RS explained the cachet of a private square and some local residents had suggested giving keys to Aubrey Walk residents. JG suggested that if the gates were an important feature – but open access was desired – the gates could be padlocked open. DT emphasised that Members did not want an

2013

exclusive or elitist square. PH commented that St James was receptive to ideas.

6. JG asked why E. Heritage was involved in the application. DS said they had been invited to comment by RBK & C. However DS emphasised that the role of E.Heritage is only advisory.

7. DS commented that the scheme had changed a lot, he could not give an instant opinion but St James had addressed many of his earlier comments. He would look at the plans and write with a considered response.

8. DS then referred to boundary treatment to Aubrey Walk and suggested that it could be more diverse.

(a) the Aubrey Walk boundary could be defined with low railings plus brick piers to emphasis the boundary of each plot.

(b) it was correct to retain the low wall in front of the flats and TPO'd tree next to the club house.

(c) Now that the Campden Hill flats were more modern their railings were wrong. DS suggested a high quality low stone wall. This would give a more 'solid' entrance to Aubrey Walk and then it would become more informal with the railings in front of the Aubrey Walk flats.

9. DS asked if further changes to the boundary treatment would be shown on the plans. RS said he wanted DT to get on and consult on the revisions and new application submitted on 19-3-99. RS accepted that there would be further small improvements to the scheme but these could either be swept up in further amendments prior to the Committee or dealt with by condition.

10. RS commented that the third parties are claiming they have a Counsel's Opinion which states that the reservoirs are public open space. Clearly RS had a strong contrary view - would it assist DT if RS wrote to him on this point. However RS also did not wish to teach DT "how to suck eggs". DT said he did not think he needed any more information. In DT's view recreation/open space issues are the crux of this case. DT commented that he is satisfied in his own mind how he will deal with the issue in his report to Committee - as a matter of fact it is not open space, it is a large building which also has an appearance of openness. In DT's view it would be wrong to get "too hooked up" on definitions. The issue is what is the contribution of this site to the Conservation Area and what is the appropriate balance in any redevelopment.

RS therefore agreed not to send views to DT but DT was made aware that it could be provided if needed in the future.

2014



11. RS checked that DR had his latest letter on affordable housing. RS sought to emphasize that the sequential approach fully met with the requirements of the new interim policy. The S106 would ensure that if both the Council and a Housing Association wanted on site affordable housing – it would be provided. Conversely, if off site housing or a contribution was made this would be the Council's decision not St James.

12. DT said he was anxious to see the draft S106. He was having a meeting with his Housing Department next week and would arrange a meeting with RS immediately after Easter. DT emphasised that St James should be talking to Housing Associations. DT felt he needed to know how likely it was that a Housing Association would take on site affordable housing.

13. RS asked DR how he was going to prepare a Statement of Case without a 'steer' from Members. DT said it was difficult at present but would become easier by the start of May when he hopes to write the Committee report. RS expressed the view that St James would not press for an early Statement but hoped that Dr would not suddenly raise entirely new issues. DT said that would not happen.

14. The meeting closed with the following actions agreed.
 - (a) DT would circulate the revised scheme
 - (b) E.Heritage would respond on the revised scheme
 - (c) RS would circulate a draft S106 on affordable housing
 - (d) DT would have a meeting with his housing colleagues and then arrange a meeting with RS after Easter.

Appendix 14

2015

Q1

Letter from English Heritage 8-4-99



ENGLISH HERITAGE

LONDON REGION

PC → DT

2016

ASB

Director of Planning & Transportation
Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea
The Town Hall
Hornton Street
LONDON
W8 7NX

Your refs: 98/02126

Our ref: LRS/3120/0

Contact: David Stabb

Direct Dial: 0171-973-3775

For the attention of Derek Taylor

Date : 8 April 1999

Dear Sir

**FORMER THAMES WATER RESERVOIR & WATER TOWER HOUSE, 97
CAMPDEN HILL ROAD, W8**

DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL: Residential Redevelopment

I refer to your letter of 29th March 1999 notifying English Heritage of the application for Conservation Area Consent detailed above. We have considered the development proposals and have the following observations to make on the scheme:

1. The scheme is a massive improvement to that on which you invited comments on 23.11.1998.
2. The current scheme is however very weak on boundary treatments to both Aubrey Walk and Campden Hill. It is essential that further consideration be given to both the nature of the site enclosure and to the detail.
3. The central garden at its junction with Aubrey Walk should be treated less formally. The village scale of Aubrey Walk is disturbed by the layout as currently proposed. The gates should also be omitted from both entrances. Preferred would be the planting of one or two informally planted specimen trees rather than miniature ornaments (7m canopies indicated).

Yours faithfully

DAVID STABB
London Region

RECEIVED BY PLANNING SERVICES							
EX DIR	HDC	N	S	SW	SE	ENR	AO ACK
- 9 APR 1999							
APPEALS	IO	REC	ARB	FWD PLN	CON DES	FEES	

LR32B

2017



Appendix 15

Letter from Sport England 2-6-99

2018

2 June 1999

Mr Taylor
Planning & Conservation
Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea
The Town Hall
Hornton Street
London
W8 7NX

Your Ref: DPS/DCC/PP/99/00733/DT
Our Ref: ACS.cl

Dear Mr Taylor

**CAMPDEN HILL LAWN TENNIS CLUB, FORMER THAMES WATER
RESERVOIR AND WATER TOWER HOUSE**

Thank you for consulting Sport England on the proposal to re-develop the above site for housing, together with both indoor and outdoor tennis.

Sport England is familiar with the proposals and have on a number of occasions visited the site on the invitation of the resident tennis club. We are of the opinion that net benefit to sport (tennis) outweighs any potential loss of open space. Sport England recognises the huge benefits to the sport by the provision of indoor courts and for this reason we are inclined to support this application.

Will you please inform me of any progress on this application and indeed the outcome.

Yours sincerely

Andy Sacha
SENIOR DEVELOPMENT MANAGER

Direct Line 0181 768 7806
Email andyasa@english.sports.gov.uk

c.c. Mr John Miles, Vice Chairman Campden Hill LTC

2019

DA

Appendix 16

Sellwood Planning letter of 21-4-99

MARCH APP

SP Sellwood
Planning

21st April 1999

Ref: RMS/StJ/CAM/99080

2020

Executive Director of Planning & Conservation
Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea
The Town Hall
Hornton Street
London
W8 7NX

Chartered Town Planners
Chartered Surveyors

Highgate House
Bambers Green
Takeley
Bishop's Stortford
Herts CM22 6PE

Telephone (01279) 871799
Facsimile (01279) 870790
Mobile 07801 321162

Dear Sir

St James Homes Ltd., Campden Hill Reservoirs
Aubrey Walk, (Application No.99/00733)

Further to my recent discussions with officers of your Planning and Housing Departments concerning the provision of on site affordable housing, it has been suggested that it would be logical if the full 25% requirement could be contained in the self-contained apartment building which is proposed to front on to Aubrey Walk. As you will be aware, this building is currently proposed to accommodate twelve large (generally around 120m²) apartments, which only represent 19.4% of the 62 units proposed.

Since flats of 120m² are larger than that generally sought by either the Housing Corporation or Local Housing Associations, consideration has been given to whether a larger number of smaller apartments can be accommodated within the same level of floor space, whilst also retaining the footprint and external elevations in precisely the form shown on the application submitted to you on the 19th March 1999.

The result of this exercise is shown on plan 7650/P113/B. This demonstrates how the currently proposed building envelope can be amended to provide seventeen flats (see attached schedule). This would comprise nine two-bedroom units of between 60.8m² and 77.1m² and eight three bedroom units of between 99.4m² and 108.6m². This would increase the total number of units on site to 67, which is made up of the following elements;

- (a) 19 Town Houses
- (b) 2 Apartments on western terrace of square
- (c) 17 Aubrey Walk Apartments
- (d) 29 Campden Hill Road Apartments

~~48~~
2021

67 Units.

Assuming that a Housing Association is willing to accept these flats with their attendant on-going service charges and your Members consider that on site affordable housing is the most appropriate option, the 17 apartments would represent 25.4% of the total units proposed on site. Naturally, if it is ultimately the decision of your Council that an off site provision or a commuted sum is more appropriate, this can be accommodated in the 'sequential' draft S106 agreement proposed by my client.

Since this appears to be a logical way forward, I enclose six copies of plan 7650/P113/B and would be grateful if this can be treated as an amendment to the existing planning application (99/00733 originally submitted on the 19th March 1999). As previously stated, this only represents an increase in the number of units and all other aspects of this building (footprint, height, elevations, windows) are unchanged.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any queries on the above.

Yours faithfully



R M Sellwood

Encl.

cc. M Simms
T Blaney
G Binmore
P Hull

2022 ~~10~~

SCHEDULE OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING

	FLAT NO.	FLAT TYPE	AREA IN SQ. METRES	AREA IN SQ. FEET
Ground Floor	1	3 Bed	101.4	1091
	2	3 Bed	108.6	1169
	3	2 Bed	77.1	830
	4	2 Bed	63.5	684
	5	2 Bed	70.0	753
First Floor	6	3 Bed	99.4	1070
	7	3 Bed	96.8	1041
	8	2 Bed	60.8	655
	9	2 Bed	72.8	784
	10	2 Bed	69.5	748
	11	3 Bed	108.5	1168
Second Floor	12	3 Bed	99.4	1070
	13	3 Bed	96.8	1041
	14	2 Bed	60.8	655
	15	2 Bed	72.8	784
	16	2 Bed	69.5	748
	17	3 Bed	108.5	1168
TOTALS			1,436m²	15,459 sq.ft.

Based on 7650/P113 Rev. B

Appendix 17

2023
AS

Sellwood Planning letter of 4-6-99

4th June 1999

Ref: RMS/StJ/CAM/99109

2024

Executive Director of Planning & Conservation
Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea
The Town Hall
Hornton Street
London
W8 7NX

FAO : D Taylor

FAX & POST

Dear Sir

**Application by St James Homes Ltd.
Campden Hill Reservoirs**

I understand that at the meeting last week between Tim Farrow and Martin Simms of St James and Michael French it was indicated that the report to Committee may comment adversely on the vehicular gates.

I can confirm that in the light of the above comments my clients are content for the gates to be deleted from the scheme.

I would be grateful if you can advise your Members accordingly.

Yours faithfully

R M Sellwood

cc. M Simms/P Hull
T Blaney
G Binmore

Appendix 18

Committee Report of 8-6-99

A handwritten signature, possibly "AJL", enclosed within a hand-drawn circle.The number "2025" handwritten and enclosed within a hand-drawn circle.



ROYAL BOROUGH OF KENSINGTON & CHELSEA

REPORT BY EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, PLANNING & CONSERVATION

PLANNING SERVICES COMMITTEE APP NO. TP/98/2126/D/12
08/06/1999 AGENDA ITEM NO. 2074

ADDRESS

FORMER
THAMES
WATER
RESERVOIR &
WATER
TOWER
HOUSE, 97
CAMPDEN
HILL ROAD,
KENSINGTON,
W.8

APPLICATION DATED 04/11/1998

RECEIVED
05 JUN 1999

2026

APPLICATION COMPLETE 13/11/1998

APPLICATION REVISED 22/03/1999

APPLICANT/AGENT ADDRESS:

Sellwood Planning
Highgate House,
Bambers Green,
Takeley
Bishop Stortford, Herts.
CM22 6PE

CONSERVATION AREA Kensington CAPS Yes

ARTICLE '4' No WARD Campden

LISTED BUILDING NO

HBMC DIRECTION N/A

CONSULTED 515

OBJECTIONS 384

SUPPORT 62

PETITION 0

Applicant St. James Homes Limited

PROPOSAL:

Redevelopment to provide nineteen houses and forty-eight apartments plus twelve tennis courts (six in lower level and six open courts) plus a practice court, basement car parking, new access points for pedestrians and vehicles and landscaping.

RBK&C Drawing No(s): TP/98/2126 and TP/98/2126/A

P099, P100A, P101A, P102A, P103A, P104A, P105A, P106A, P107A, P108A, P109A,
P110A, P111A, P112A, P113A, 8809 sheet 3, 4, 5, 9029 sheet 3, 4, 9132 sheet 1, 3, 4, 5, 6,

RECOMMENDED DECISION:

Refuse planning permission

2027



REASONS FOR REFUSAL

2028



1. The proposed redevelopment would result in the loss of a significant amount of the existing open space on this site, reducing the value of this site as a visual amenity to be enjoyed by residents of nearby property, and harming the character and appearance of this part of the Kensington Conservation Area. As such, the proposal is contrary to policies of the Unitary Development Plan, in particular STRAT 1, STRAT 35, and Policies CD21, CD48, and CD52.
2. The bulk and layout of the proposed development, in particular the bulk of development and the restricted dimensions of the central open space, would result in a densely developed site that relates poorly to the character scale or form of its surroundings. It is considered that the proposed development would result in harm to the character and appearance of this part of the Conservation Area, contrary to Policies of the Unitary Development Plan, in particular STRAT 5, STRAT 6, and Policies CD25, CD52, CD53, and H11
3. Given that the existing site provides a valuable contribution to the character and appearance and residential amenity of this part of the Conservation Area, and in the absence of an acceptable scheme for the future development of the site, it is concluded that the proposed demolition of the reservoirs is premature, and contrary to Policy CD51 of the Unitary Development Plan
4. The proposed southern terrace of new houses would appear dominant and overbearing in its relationship with Thorpe Lodge, and the development along Aubrey Walk would significantly affect the setting of St. George's Church, harming the setting of these Listed buildings contrary to Policy CD61 of the Unitary Development Plan.
5. The existing site generates a relatively low intensity of vehicular and pedestrian activity through the year, busiest in the summer but relatively quiet in the winter months. The proposed development will generate greater levels of such activity throughout the year, with the largest difference being in the presently quieter winter months. As such, the proposed development will lead to a significant reduction in the levels of amenity presently enjoyed by those who reside near the site, contrary to Policies of the Unitary Development Plan, in particular STRAT 1, and Policy CD52.
6. The use of pedestrian and vehicular gates at the entrances to the site would restrict access to the development, separating the site from the surrounding area, contributing little to the amenity of the area, and being out of character with the predominant form of development locally where residential streets are generally accessible to all and at all times. As such, the proposed gated community is contrary to Policies of the Unitary Development Plan, in particular STRAT 1, STRAT 5, and CD52.
7. The site is considered suitable for the inclusion of affordable housing, which has not been secured by an appropriate planning obligation as part of the proposed development. As such, the proposals are not considered likely to achieve the provision of affordable housing on this site, and would be contrary to Policies of the Unitary Development Plan, in particular H22 and the proposed draft alterations to this Policy, and fail to respect the advice presented in Circular 6/98.

1.0 SITE/PREMISES

2029



- 1.1 This site currently contains two, disused, brick built, covered Victorian reservoirs, with 12 tennis courts and a children's practice court on their roof, with the structures themselves being partly above ground level and partly below. The reservoirs cover approximately three quarters of the site area, and are partly above ground and partly recessed with the top of their ground slab at a height of 34.6m from sea level and their roof at a height of 42.5m. The height of the reservoir buildings is such that their upper deck level (the level of the tennis courts) is higher than surrounding street levels, with embankments along all sides including Aubrey Walk to the North. The embankment restricts many views into the site from street level.
- 1.2 The site also includes a block of 15 residential flats for water authority staff ("Water Tower House"), a smaller block on Aubrey Walk (nos.3,5 and 7) containing three water authority flats, a pump room building (being the former engine house), and ancillary buildings of 625 sq.m, water authority offices of 702 sq.m, and trees and other vegetation particularly around its perimeter. The water tower from which the block obtains its name was an Italianate tower demolished in 1970.
- 1.3 The greater site covers an area of 1.56 hectares, located to the West of Campden Hill Road. The site is bounded by the Aubrey Walk and Aubrey House to the North and West, Campden Hill Road and the flats of Kensington Heights to the East, and Holland Park School to the South.
- 1.4 Approximately 12,640 sq.m of the existing site counts as open space (approximately 81% of the site area) comprising tennis courts above the reservoirs, access roads and ancillary open space. The site is recorded in the Council's Open Space Survey of 1992.
- 1.5 The tennis courts and an adjacent building on the Aubrey Walk frontage are operated by the Camden Hill Lawn Tennis club. This club has been in existence at this location for some 115years, and has a total of 1254 members drawn from the local area and other parts of west London.
- 1.6 The primary vehicular access to the site is currently from Aubrey Walk, at a point opposite Hillsleigh Road. Only water authority vehicles or other authorised vehicles may use this access. At the rear of Water Tower House, again from Aubrey Walk, is a vehicular access point for the cars of residents of Water Tower House, plus water authority vehicles. There is a third vehicular access further west along Aubrey Walk which serves a small car parking area for some 6 vehicles. A fourth vehicular access to the site exists in physical form on its eastern side, directly from Campden Hill Road; however, this is used solely by the residents of Kensington Heights and the water authority and other owners of the application site do not have the right of access/egress to the site via this route.
- 1.7 No building upon the site is Listed, however, there are Listed buildings close by to the North (St. George's Church, and nos.2 to 6 and 15-19 Aubrey Walk), to the West (Aubrey House), and to the South (Thorpe Lodge). The whole of the site is within the Kensington Conservation Area.
- 1.8 The Unitary Development Plan Proposals Map does not identify the site as having any nature conservation importance.
- 1.9 The site is not included in the Unitary Development Plan Schedule of Sites with Major Development Opportunities, and there is no planning brief for this site. However, under the

proposed draft alterations to the Unitary Development Plan the site is proposed to be included within the Schedule as suitable for "Residential including affordable housing, tennis courts, and open space". It should be noted that the Schedule does not prescribe the proportions of any of these uses to one another; suitable proportions are left for negotiation as part of a development proposal.

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2.0 DETAILS OF PROPOSAL

2.1 It is proposed to redevelop the site to provide 19 houses, 48 flats, a tennis club with 13 courts, underground parking for the houses and flats, and ancillary landscaped areas. These details apply to the revised version of the original planning application for the site, ref. TP/98/2126, and the new planning application ref. PP/99/0733. In addition, this report is in respect of the accompanying Conservation Area Consent applications Refs: TP/98/2127 and TP/98/2129.

The Demolition

2.2 It is proposed to demolish all of the existing buildings and structures on the site, with the exception of the West retaining wall to the western reservoir, facing Aubrey House, and part of the northern retaining wall to that reservoir. The remainder of the reservoir structures, pump house and ancillary office and depot buildings, and Water Tower House, would be demolished, and large sections of embankment would also be removed from the northern (Aubrey Walk) boundary and the southern boundary.

General Arrangement and Orientation

2.3 It is proposed that the 19 houses are arranged around a central space containing soft landscaping and trees at its centre. The flats are contained within two blocks, one fronting Aubrey Walk (the "Aubrey Walk block" for the purposes of this report), and the other fronting Campden Hill Road on the site of the present Water Tower House (the "Campden Hill block").

2.4 The built coverage of the site would leave approximately 8,937 sq.m of the developable area of the site (but excluding private residential gardens) as open space, either soft or hard landscaped. As such, the proposal would result in a reduction of approximately 30% of the existing open space on this site.

Housing Mix

2.5 The 19 houses would all be four bedroomed family sized houses, each with its own garden.

2.6 Twenty-nine flats are proposed for the Campden Hill Road block, and seventeen for the Aubrey Walk block. Two more flats are located at the northern end of the West terrace to the proposed square. The 48 flats proposed comprise the following mix:

2 bedroom flats	34
3 bedroom flats	14
	<hr/>
	48

2.7 Of this total, the following range of units comprise the "affordable housing" element:

2 bedroom flats	9
3 bedroom flats	8
	<hr/>
	17

- 2.8 All of the units of affordable housing are located in the Aubrey Walk block.

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Density

- 2.9 The proposed houses and flats would comprise 366 habitable rooms on the site, resulting in a density of approximately 220 habitable rooms per hectare (hrh). However, this figure does not reflect the true nature of the proposed development, where the residential houses and flats only cover one half of the site. For the purposes of density the site is more appropriately taken as two sites, with the tennis court part of the site treated as separated from the housing part of the site. The true residential density is thus much greater, at approximately 327 hrh.

Recreational facilities

- 2.10 It is proposed that 13 tennis courts are provided to replace the existing courts. Six of the new courts, and a practice court, will be open to the elements, and six courts enclosed in a covered structure, effectively within the space of the existing western reservoir. The upper level of the courts would be the same as the existing, and the area occupied by the courts would be roughly half that of the court area presently existing on the reservoir roof.
- 2.11 The six upper level (outdoor) courts are each to be of championship standard, four of them floodlit.

Means of Vehicular and Pedestrian Access

- 2.12 An underground car park at basement level will provide 92 parking spaces, including 12 disabled spaces. This provides 2 spaces for each house, and one for each flat. 9 visitor spaces are proposed.
- 2.13 Access to the underground car park is provided through an on-site access road and ramp, with the point of access/egress being 30m into Aubrey Walk from its junction with Campden Hill Road, in approximately the same location as the existing access/egress to the parking area at the rear of Water Tower House. The existing vehicular access opposite Hillsleigh Road and the access to the small parking area would be removed, and the access/egress to/from Campden Hill Road would not be used as part of the proposed development, but would remain for the use of Kensington Heights.

Form and Scale

- 2.14 The Campden Hill block is proposed to be part six storey, part five storey. The proposed roof form is a flat roof, stepping back on the sides above the third floor. It is proposed that the height of this block is at its greatest closest to Kensington Heights, being six storeys at that section, with some setting back of the top two storeys from the North (Aubrey Walk) elevation so as to present a three storey main elevation Aubrey Walk. The main parapet height to Campden Hill Road would run at 14.2m above the pavement level of Aubrey Walk. The highest part of the roof would be 20.8m above Aubrey Walk pavement level.
- 2.15 The Aubrey Walk block is proposed to be of three storeys with a pitched roof. The roof would have a maximum height of 12.2m from Aubrey Walk pavement level at its apex, with the main parapet running at a height of 10.2m.
- 2.16 The main terraces of the square would be of a basement, ground floor, and three upper floors including an attic storey. They would be four storeys from the new-deck level, the deck level constructed over a basement parking area which would be constructed at the level of the existing reservoir slab. The roof form would be a traditional mansard, with chimneys on the party walls separating the properties. The main parapet of these houses would run at 11.6m

above the finished level of the square, and the apex of the mansard roof would reach a height of 14.2m from the square.

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Datum

- 2.17 The site datum has been fixed at a height of 30m above sea level. The new basement level would be at 34.75m, or 4.75m above datum (just slightly above the existing reservoir base slab). The Aubrey Walk block would reach to 52.19m, or 22.19m from datum. The highest section of the Campden Hill block would reach to 54.65m, 24.65m from datum. The southern terrace would reach a height of 24.92m from datum, those of the other square terraces reaching to 23.81 from datum.

Detailed Design

- 2.18 In terms of architecture, the proposed development comprises three different design approaches, with the Campden Hill block, Aubrey Walk block, and the square of houses all taking different forms.
- 2.19 The applicants were advised that, in design terms, slightly greater freedom could be accorded to the Campden Hill block than in the rest of the development. Clearly, to comply with the relevant Unitary Development Plan Policies and the CAPS, the chosen architecture for this corner block would need to reflect its prominent location on Campden Hill, address the problem of "turning" the corner, and provide a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area when compared with the existing flats. Notwithstanding this, the existence of several nearby buildings of relatively modern architecture enabled slightly more design flexibility here, as long as the design would be of appropriate quality.
- 2.20 The design of the Campden Hill block is distinct from the other parts of the proposed development, being modern in character. The facades feature strong vertical alignment of windows, bays and balconies which are well articulated across the facades with setbacks and forwards from the main building line. Window frames and subdivisions within the glazing emphasise the domestic character of the building. The top storeys on each wing feature almost continuous glazing with balconies in front. Together with flat roofs edged with stone cornices, these aim to terminate the elevations and create a distinct landmark feature. Materials are indicative at this stage consisting primarily of brick facades, timber window frames, stone dressings and stone string courses and cornices.
- 2.21 The Aubrey Walk block has been given the appearance of a short terrace of houses despite the fact that it contains flats. Traditional design elements have been employed in the Aubrey Walk facade to create a rhythm typical of terraced houses. Narrow facades with vertical subdivisions between premises, party walls and chimneys establish the rhythm of the terrace. This is accentuated by slight set backs from the building line and the inclusion of separate street entrances for ground floor flats and clear boundaries to neighbouring front gardens. The facades have the appearance of three storey houses and employ a traditional vocabulary of design details in the elevations. Ground floor windows are emphasised by greater window depth or by bay windows, entrances are emphasised with porticoes and the pitched roofs are set behind a low parapet. The west end of the block is set back from the Aubrey Road frontage to respect the proximity of three mature trees.
- 2.22 The terrace houses, set in three terraces around the central space, also employ traditional design elements although their scale is more imposing than the block on Aubrey Walk. Again, a strong rhythm of individual facades is established with external features expressed to stress the sub-divisions between adjoining houses. Generous floor to ceiling heights and wide plot widths give the houses a grander appearance than the Aubrey Walk block and this effect is assisted by taller entrance porticoes and tall windows in bays reaching from ground

to first floor on the majority of the houses, and tall mansard roofs. The end of terrace houses on the south terrace are extended forwards with two storey reception halls which terminate lateral views out of the south end of the square. The north end of the western terrace turns the corner into Aubrey Walk stepping down through three to two storeys, a mansard roof aids the transition in height from four to two storeys and terminates on flat roofed buildings fronting onto Aubrey Walk. The terraces are laid out around a formal space laid out in two sections. The northern boundary runs close to the edge of Aubrey Walk, with iron railings set onto a low wall.



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- 2.23 The tennis court building incorporates the existing large brick retaining walls to the North and West, introducing a glazed wall on the southern elevation to utilise natural light. Internally, the brick retaining walls would be exposed to provide a reminder of the original use and buildings upon the site.

Landscaping

- 2.24 The main landscaped area is proposed to be at the centre of the site, running South from Aubrey Walk in the form of an rectangular "square", bounded on three sides by residential terraces.

- 2.25 This square would be of over 78m in length and 22.5m in width at its widest, containing up to 12 new trees and shrubs and other planting, and separated from the surface access road by metal railings, in the manner of a small garden square.

- 2.26 Other landscaped areas front Aubrey Walk, face Thorpe Lodge at the southern boundary, front Campden Hill Road in front of the proposed Campden Hill block, and form a strip along the boundary with Kensington Heights. The existing planted embankment to Aubrey House, which runs the full length of the western site boundary outside the western reservoir retaining wall, would remain untouched.

The Thames Water shaft

- 2.27 The site contains the shaft to the new underground water tunnel currently under construction to relieve the risk of local flooding. This new main is being constructed from the junction of the M41 and Holland Park Avenue to Holland Park Road, and the access shaft of 7m diameter is located approximately 23m into the site from Aubrey Walk (having previously been proposed much closer to Aubrey Walk). There has been much controversy over the siting of this shaft and tunnel, and the method and timing of their construction; however, the shaft and tunnel have been constructed under the rights of the water authority as a statutory undertaker, and the shaft and tunnel are only peripheral to the consideration of this planning application. Therefore, only passing reference to them is mentioned in this report.

3.0 RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

- 3.1 There is no relevant planning history to this site.

- 3.2 In terms of more general history, use of the site to provide a water utility commenced in around 1810 as part of the original West Middlesex Water Works. The first reservoir was constructed in 1845 on the land now occupied by Kensington Heights and Water Tower House; this reservoir was demolished in the 1960s, and the Water Tower demolished in 1970 leaving the present truncated building. The existing reservoirs and remaining attendant buildings were built in the late C19th.

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4.0 PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

- 4.1 The principle of the demolition of the existing buildings upon the site must first be considered. The principle of using the site to provide housing, including, affordable housing, and new/replacement recreational facilities, must then be considered. The proposed development must then be assessed as to its general arrangement and form, including open space, and compatibility with the scale, and detail, of surrounding development. Further considerations are impact upon traffic and parking locally, impact upon the setting of nearby Listed buildings, effect upon existing trees, daylight and sunlight and general impact upon amenity. The whole proposal must be assessed to ensure that it leaves the character, or appearance, of the Conservation Area unharmed.
- 4.2 The relevant policies are contained within the "Conservation and Design", "Housing", and "Transportation" chapters of the Unitary Development Plan (Unitary Development Plan). Other guidance, such as the supplementary guidance presented in the Conservation Area Proposals Statement, and government guidance in the form of PPG15 and RPG3, are referred to as appropriate.

Archaeology

- 4.3 The applicants have submitted an Archaeological Assessment of the site, which was prepared with the aid of boreholes drilled on site.
- 4.4 The site does not contain any entries in the Greater London Sites and Monuments Record. The study comments that there are few sites or finds recorded in the surrounding area, and although, the site occupies part of a summit of a low hill, it is not a sufficiently distinct topographic location to have been preferentially occupied in earlier times. Importantly, the study points out that the deep excavation required for the construction of the reservoirs and associated buildings must have truncated the archaeologically important levels. The study concludes that the site does not have archaeological potential and that there is no further need to consider archaeology on the site.

Principle of demolishing the existing Reservoirs and ancillary buildings

- 4.5 Policy CD51 seeks to control demolition in Conservation Areas, being:

“TO RESIST DEMOLITION OR PARTIAL DEMOLITION OF BUILDINGS IN CONSERVATION AREAS UNLESS:

- (a) **THE BUILDING OR PART OF THE BUILDING STRUCTURE MAKES NO POSITIVE CONTRIBUTION TO THE CHARACTER OR APPEARANCE OF THE AREA; OR**
- (b) **THE CONDITION OF THE BUILDING IS PROVED TO BE SUCH THAT REFURBISHMENT IS NOT POSSIBLE; AND**
- (c) **A SATISFACTORY SCHEME FOR REDEVELOPMENT HAS BEEN APPROVED”**

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- 4.6 Taking (a) first, the contribution made by the reservoirs and ancillary buildings to the character or appearance of the Conservation Area must first be gauged. The impact of the removal of these structures must then be assessed, in the light of the above Policy.
- 4.7 The built structures of the reservoirs, and their ancillary buildings including the old pump house, are of some historic interest, although not sufficient to warrant Listing, which has been explored. English Heritage confirmed by letter dated 25th February 1998 that the brick built, vaulted reservoirs were fairly standard for their period, with a number of others surviving, and that they were not "of the special architectural or historic interest required to warrant Listing." A Certificate of Immunity from Listing was issued on 23rd March 1999, valid for five years. The matter of formal Listing aside, the brick reservoir structures are still considered to be of some local interest; however, it is not considered that they make a *positive* contribution to the character or appearance of the Conservation Area in themselves.
- 4.8 However, the site contains more than the bricks of the reservoirs, and more than the bricks of the reservoirs would be removed under this proposal. The large embankments built up around the reservoirs support trees and other planting widely cherished as part of the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. The embankments were introduced originally to help support the enclosing walls of the reservoir, and although, there is no evidence that they were landscaped with the aim of improving the visual amenity of the site that is a role they do perform today.
- 4.9 Although views into the site are limited at ground level, and the tennis court surface is not seen from street level, the site presents an impression of open space when viewed from many angles, and as such, the open space itself is considered to provide an important contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.
- 4.10 The site is a very important element in the outlook from surrounding residential development; its appearance as open space contributes greatly to the levels of amenity currently enjoyed by residents of these surrounding buildings.
- 4.11 Criterion (a) of Policy CD51 does not require that the whole of the site should positively contribute to the Conservation Area, *part* of the site is sufficient for the criterion to lead to an objection. Given that the embankments, and open tennis courts, do provide an important contribution to the character and the appearance of the Conservation Area, it is concluded that there is an objection to these proposals in terms of this criterion.
- 4.12 Turning to (b), the reservoirs and other buildings are in reasonable condition and certainly not beyond refurbishment. However, given that they are now redundant for their built purpose as reservoirs, with such use unlikely to resume, it is considered unreasonable to insist on their refurbishment. It is concluded that criterion (b) does not present a ground for objection in this case.
- 4.13 It is concluded that the demolition of the buildings on this site would be in conflict with criterion (a) of Policy CD51. Conclusions on (c) are drawn later in this report.

Principle of demolishing Water Tower House

- 4.14 Water Tower House is not a particularly pleasing building to the eye, being of plain and uninteresting 1970s architecture, and is not well related to the architecture of any of the neighbouring buildings.

- 4.15 The Conservation Area Proposals Statement describes Water Tower House as “a dreadful building in all townscape respects”, and further describes it as “the area’s least appealing building”. It recommends that the site should be redeveloped with “premises more responsive to the prominence of the site and better related to the character of the area”.
- 4.16 Given the strength of the advice in the CAPS, it is not considered that Policy CD51 provides grounds to refuse consent for the demolition of this building, subject to a satisfactory replacement building being approved.

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Open Space

4.17 Planning Policy Guidance Note 17 “Sport and Recreation” stresses (paragraph 25) that great importance is attached to the retention of recreational and amenity open space in urban areas. It comments that open space, whether or not there is public access to it, is also important for its contribution to the quality of urban life, enhancing the character of Conservation Areas, Listed buildings, and historic landscapes. The Note also advises that “the use of land as open space is no less important than other uses”.

4.18 Policy LR7 of the Unitary Development Plan is:

“TO RESIST THE LOSS OF EXISTING PUBLIC AND PRIVATE OPEN SPACE WHICH MEETS LEISURE AND RECREATION NEEDS”

4.19 This Policy is directed at protecting open space that provides a leisure and recreation function, rather than a purely visual one. The tennis courts are being replaced, albeit only half of them in the “open”, but there is no loss of space that provides for recreational needs and it is not considered that the proposed redevelopment conflicts with the aims of this Policy.

4.20 Policy CD21, however, is more concerned with the visual amenity that open space can provide, rather than use as such. This Policy is:

“TO PROTECT AND ENHANCE, AND TO RESIST THE LOSS OF, EXISTING PUBLIC AND PRIVATE OPEN SPACE WHICH MAKES, OR IS CAPABLE OF MAKING, A CONTRIBUTION TO AN AREA’S CHARACTER OR APPEARANCE AND TO RESIST PROPOSALS WHICH WOULD ADVERSELY AFFECT ITS SETTING”

4.21 Although the tennis courts are constructed upon the roof of a large built structure, when seen from surrounding buildings, they give the strong *visual impression* of being open space. When viewed from the flats of Kensington Heights, or the upper floors of properties in Aubrey Walk, the site does *appear* to be generally “open” for most of its area. The tennis courts provide the site with an appearance of being predominantly open space, with the ancillary buildings and Water Tower House located in just the eastern part of the site.

4.22 From public vantage points it is not possible to obtain anything like the breadth or depth of view that can be had from the aforementioned buildings. Nevertheless, there are a number of public points, primarily in Aubrey Walk, but also to the South, from where views into part of the site can be taken, and from these points too the site appears as largely open space. This impression is strengthened by the trees and shrubs that line parts of the site and which, from

some viewpoints, form the skyline. The site is generally not viewed as a reservoir from outside its boundaries. Although the site is not free from development, and in fact contains some very large built structures, it is the impression of open space that it gives which is considered to make an important contribution to the character, and appearance, of this area.

- 4.23 The role that the site plays, as described above, is precisely the reason why the site was included in the Council's Open Space Survey of 1992, which predominantly contains parks and gardens but also includes playgrounds and tennis courts. The Survey defines "Open Space" as:

"All open land with the exception of individual private gardens and yards, roads and car-parks and vacant land."

- 4.24 Therefore, it is considered that Policy CD21 is applicable to this proposal.
- 4.25 Including the surface of the reservoir structures (i.e, the tennis courts), and the internal access road, approximately 81% of the existing site is, or has the appearance of being, open space. The comparative figure for the proposed development is 67%. However, because the definition of "open space" adopted in the Council's 1992 Survey excludes private gardens, the proposed private gardens for the houses in this application should be excluded from the calculation of the resulting open space in the development. This figure taken into account, the remaining open space on the site would be approximately 8,937 sq.m. or 57%. On this basis, the proposal would result in the loss of approximately 30% of the present open space. As the surface of the site currently makes a positive contribution to the visual character and appearance of the area, it follows that this loss is contrary to the aims of Policy CD21.
- 4.26 The recently published consultation draft Planning Policy Guidance Note 3, if confirmed, places responsibility upon local authorities to place a priority on the development and re-development of urban land, although it also stresses the importance of retaining public open spaces and playing fields as essential amenities within urban areas. The draft Note identifies previously developed land as land where housing development should be maximised, but it excludes land that "was previously developed but where the remains of any structure or activity have blended into the landscape in the process of time...or has subsequently been put to an amenity use and cannot be regarded as requiring development". As described above, the reservoirs and their embankments have blended well into their environment, and provide an important contribution to local amenity, and any proposal for their redevelopment must be considered in this light.

Recreational Provision

- 4.27 Policy LR1 of the Unitary Development Plan seeks to resist the loss of playing fields, pitches, and other sports and recreational provision. Tennis courts are not specifically identified in the Policy or in the supporting text; however, they clearly must be included as an important element of "other sports and recreational provision". The loss of the existing tennis club, or significant reduction in the size or quality of the facilities it offers, would be contrary to this Policy.
- 4.28 However, the proposal does not involve any reduction in either the size, range, or quality of the tennis facilities offered on this site. Moreover, the proposed six indoor championship standard courts, available for use at all times of the year, whatever the weather, must be seen as a significant enhancement of the tennis facilities on this site. The proposal is not contrary to Policy LR1, and the continuation of the tennis club use of the site is generally supported by the relevant recreational policies of the UDP.



- 4.29 In its advice of 1994, the London Planning Advisory Committee (LPAC) advised that the Royal Borough should provide 7,750 additional dwellings (net) by 2006. Strategic guidance from central government confirmed this in the form of revised RPG3 (1996), which stressed that the LPAC figures should be regarded as **minimum** figures. This target is a material consideration in assessing this proposal.
- 4.30 The LPAC/RPG3 target is likely to be a difficult one for the Borough to meet. Clearly, if any serious progress is to be made towards reaching this target, then the Borough cannot simply rely upon sites identified in the Schedule of Major Sites, but must also take full advantage of other development sites as and when they become available.
- 4.31 Although the Unitary Development Plan was prepared before the issue of RPG3, it reflected guidance already in force and confirms this in Policy STRAT 2, which is:

“TO SEEK AN INCREASE IN RESIDENTIAL PROVISION WITHIN THE ROYAL BOROUGH BY RESTRICTING THE LOSS OF LAND AND BUILDINGS WITH EXISTING RESIDENTIAL USE AND ENCOURAGE THE PROVISION OF ADDITIONAL PERMANENT RESIDENTIAL ACCOMMODATION ON SUITABLE SITES AND BUILDINGS WHERE APPROPRIATE”

- 4.32 Policy STRAT 14 is:

TO SEEK TO MAXIMISE THE RESIDENTIAL CAPACITY OF THE BOROUGH IN LINE WITH STRATEGIC GUIDANCE FOR LONDON

- 4.33 It is considered that significant weight must be attached to these strategic policies, and to the guidance that they reflect.
- 4.34 Policy H2 provides further guidance as to the priority that should be given to the residential development of sites, and criteria to assess where such development is, or is not, appropriate, (subject to the other Policies of the Plan). This Policy is:

“TO SEEK THE DEVELOPMENT OF LAND AND BUILDINGS FOR RESIDENTIAL USE UNLESS:

- (a) **A SATISFACTORY RESIDENTIAL ENVIRONMENT CANNOT REASONABLY BE ACHIEVED BY REASON OF EXCESSIVE NOISE, INAPPROPRIATE LOCATION OR GROUND CONTAMINATION; OR**
- (b) **THE LAND IS REQUIRED FOR THE PROVISION OF SOCIAL OR COMMUNITY FACILITIES TO MEET LOCAL NEEDS; OR**
- (c) **THE DEVELOPMENT IS FOR THE REPLACEMENT ON THE SAME SITE OF EXISTING COMMERCIAL FLOORSPACE WHICH HAS NOT GIVEN RISE TO ENVIRONMENTAL OR TRAFFIC PROBLEMS”**

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- 4.35 The primary use of the existing site is the provision of reservoirs and ancillary facilities, together with residential use at Water Tower House. Thames Water have stated that the introduction of the London Ring Main has rendered these reservoirs redundant, and there is no reason is known why this statement by Thames Water should not be accepted as a true reflection of the status of these reservoirs. As far as is known, there is no demand, and is not likely to be any demand, for the provision of reservoirs on this site. There is not considered to be any reason why, in planning terms, the Council should seek to protect the existing use of the site for reservoirs.
- 4.36 As discussed previously, the existing recreational use on the site would, under this application, be replaced with enhanced recreational facilities. In the absence of any justification to insist on the site being retained for reservoir use, it is considered that the relevant Unitary Development Plan Policies and government guidance relating to housing are of such significant weight that housing must be seen a preferred use for the site. In other words, if the site is considered to be suitable for anything other than reservoirs with open space, then housing must be the most appropriate use under these Policies and guidance.
- 4.37 Applying the criteria of Policy H2, it is considered that criterion (a) does not provide cause for concern when considering the principle of housing on this site, given that the site is located firmly in a residential part of the Borough and actually includes housing already. The amount, and form, that housing on the site should take is, however, another matter and this is returned to shortly. Criterion (b) is met, as the role the site plays in providing a community facility (the tennis club) is preserved. Criterion (c) does not present an objection given the redundancy of the existing use of the site.
- 4.38 It is concluded that there can be no objection to the principle of some residential provision on this site, subject to the other Policies of the Plan. However, the questions of how much housing, where it is to be positioned, and what form it should take, remain to be examined in the context of these other Policies.

The mix of housing

4.39 Policy H19 is:

"TO SEEK AN APPROPRIATE MIX OF DWELLINGS WITHIN A SCHEME, HAVING HAD REGARD TO THE FOLLOWING FACTORS:

- (a) **THE PHYSICAL CHARACTER OF THE SITE OR BUILDING AND ITS SETTING;**
- (b) **THE PREVIOUS OR EXISTING USE OF THE SITE OR BUILDING**
- (c) **ACCESS TO PRIVATE GARDENS OR COMMUNAL GARDEN SQUARES FOR FAMILY UNITS;**
- (d) **THE LIKELY EFFECT UPON CAR PARKING IN THE AREA;**
- (e) **THE SURROUNDING COMPOSITION AND DENSITY OF POPULATION;**
- (f) **THE LOCATION OF SCHOOLS, SHOPS AND OPEN SPACES;**

(g) PROVISION OF ACCOMMODATION FOR SPECIAL NEEDS;

(f) BUSY ROADS OR RAILWAY LINES NEARBY."

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4.40 As can be seen from the breakdown of units set out in paragraphs 2.6 and 2.7 above, the houses are all four bedroomed, family sized houses, and the mix of flats within the two blocks is weighted towards two-bedroomed flats, although there are also some flats with one, or three, bedrooms. The affordable housing flats are a mix of two and three bedroomed units.

4.41 Overall, the mix of units is considered to be reasonable for this location, and acceptable under the relevant planning Policies.

Affordable housing

4.42 Policy H22 of the Unitary Development Plan is applicable to this site. The Policy is:

" TO SEEK WHERE APPROPRIATE THE INCLUSION AND RETENTION OF A SIGNIFICANT PROPORTION OF AFFORDABLE RESIDENTIAL UNITS ON RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT SITES OF OVER 0.05 HECTARES IN SIZE"

4.43 This site is technically a "windfall" although it has been proposed for inclusion in the UDP Schedule of Major Sites With Development Opportunities as part of the review and updating of the UDP.

4.44 The proposed draft alterations to Policy H22 would result in the following wording:

"TO NEGOTIATE THE PROVISION AND RETENTION OF A SIGNIFICANT PROPORTION OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING ON SITES SUITABLE FOR RESIDENTIAL USE WITH A CAPACITY OF 15 DWELLINGS OR MORE"

4.45 These draft alterations are still at an early stage of evolution and have yet to be consulted on with the public. Consequently, they have relatively little weight as a material consideration and it is the content of Circular 6/98 which is of more significance. Circular 6/98 emphasises the need for the on-site provision of affordable housing as part of new housing developments and proposes a site threshold of 15 dwellings as a trigger for negotiation

4.46 Assessment of the applicant's affordable housing proposals can be divided into four main areas; location on site, the amount proposed, the suitability of the housing, and finally the deliverability (arrangements for implementation) of the proposed housing.

4.47 The provision of seventeen units in the Aubrey Walk block is suitable, in that this block is a free standing block with its own direct access from Aubrey Walk. They are reasonably sized flats that satisfy housing standards. Limited dedicated amenity space is provided at the front adjacent to Aubrey Walk, accessed from the main entrance to the block which is also off Aubrey Walk. The Council's Housing Officers have confirmed that this accommodation is suitable for their purposes, and would provide for a known local need. If the affordable housing provider wanted to amend this mix then flexibility exists to achieve that, providing the external appearance of the building would not be harmed.

- (2041)
- 4.48 The UDP Housing Chapter (para. 5.10) seeks to maintain one third of the Borough's housing stock as affordable. This is a reasonable aim, but is not expressed as a rigid quota, and must be tested against the circumstances of individual sites. In this instance, the proposed affordable housing is provided in a separate block in Aubrey Walk and allows easy access from the street. To increase the proportion of affordable housing beyond that which could be provided within the Aubrey Walk block as presently designed, would result in either (a) a larger Aubrey Walk block, which would be unlikely to be acceptable on townscape grounds, or (b) placing some affordable units within the Campden Hill Road block with possible management problems to be overcome in consequence.
- 4.49 Furthermore, there is an important point to be made about how to calculate the proportion of affordable housing on the site. The site currently contains 18 dwellings (15 in Water Tower House and 3 in Aubrey Walk). Consequently, the proportion of affordable housing of the net addition (49) to the dwelling stock on the site is approximately 35 % which is in line with the Council's objective. On balance, the proposed amount of affordable housing is considered acceptable in relation to the overall design of the development.
- 4.50 There remains a significant cause for concern relating to the affordable housing provision associated with this proposal. The applicants have agreed to observe the sequential approach recommended both by this authority and in government guidance; however, they propose that a sequential series of tests should be incorporated within a planning obligation under S.106. Under this, if a provider for the affordable housing (such as a registered housing association) was not forthcoming, then the Council could "trigger" the second stage of providing affordable units on a suitable alternative site in the Borough, and, if that proved unsuccessful, trigger the third and final stage which would be the acceptance of payment in-lieu to secure provision on a site as yet unidentified.
- 4.51 This contrasts with the normal, well practised approach where a sequential assessment takes place *before* the issue of any planning permission. This Council has always taken planning decisions relating to the provision of affordable housing in the knowledge of whether such accommodation would be provided on site, or elsewhere. Some flexibility exists in such negotiations; it might be that a mix of provision methods could be appropriate, for example some units provided on-site and others provided off-site. Whatever the selected method of provision, the matter of where affordable housing is to be located, and when, is a material consideration in taking a decision to grant planning permission.
- 4.52 It is not considered acceptable to effectively defer the question of where affordable housing might be provided until after planning permission is granted. With sites all too rarely available for affordable housing in this densely built up Borough, the need to secure such provision in advance of granting permission is considered paramount. To do otherwise is unlikely to meet the Council's housing objectives.
- 4.53 It is concluded that the applicant's proposal to embody sequential test within a S.106 agreement would fail to satisfy the aims of Policy H22, Circular 6/98, and the Council's emerging affordable housing policies.
- 4.54 At the time of writing, discussions are still in progress in relation to affordable housing, and any further developments will be reported verbally to the Committee.

Density

- 4.55 The Unitary Development Plan points out that if the housing capacity figure for the Royal Borough, identified in Regional Guidance and sought through STRAT 14 of the Unitary Development Plan, is to be met, then it will be necessary to place not only a high priority on allocating all available land for residential use, but also to make the best use of that land. It does stress, however, that a balance has to be struck between making the best use of residential land, ensuring new housing is of a good standard, and protecting the character and environment of surrounding areas. The Unitary Development Plan defines "very high density" as being more than 350 hrh, and in Policies H10, and H11 it seeks to resist housing designed to higher densities except where it (inter alia) enables the provision of affordable housing or where it is necessary for townscape reasons.
- 4.56 Regional Planning Guidance, in the form of RPG3, advises that in order to pursue the overall aim of sustainable development through concentrating development in urban areas, local plan policies should permit flexibility when dealing with the issue of density.
- 4.57 The recently issued Consultation Draft of the new Planning Policy Guidance Note 3 places further emphasis upon achieving higher densities on development sites. The Consultation Draft actually recommends that authorities should set minimum densities for new housing development, and that low densities at a rate of 20-25 dwellings per hectare should be "avoided".
- 4.58 The proposed development would provide 62 dwellings on this 1.56ha site, or about 40 dwellings per hectare. On the housing part of the application site, this produces about double that figure per hectare.
- 4.59 Excluding the tennis club from the housing site area for the purpose of the density calculation, a density of approximately 337 hrh would result from these proposals, which is at the highest end of that normally acceptable under Unitary Development Plan Policies. It is noted that there are other residential blocks in the area with much higher densities, such as Kensington Heights and Airlie Gardens. However, these are not the predominant form within the area, much of it being much lower density, in particular along Aubrey Walk.
- 4.60 However, "density" is not intended to be assessed solely in terms of comparative figures. It is a tool, a measure that can help in assessing the overall form of development on a site. If the density on the site is indeed on the high side, then it can be expected that other problems in terms of layout, and bulk, might also manifest themselves.

General Arrangement/Form/scale

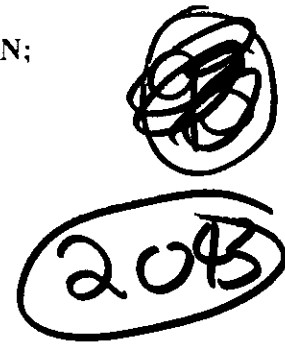
- 4.61 The UDP refers to the scale and height of new development in Policy CD25, which is:

"TO SEEK THAT ALL DEVELOPMENT IN ANY PART OF THE BOROUGH IS TO A HIGH STANDARD OF DESIGN AND IS SENSITIVE TO AND COMPATIBLE WITH THE SCALE, HEIGHT, BULK AND CHARACTER OF THE SURROUNDINGS"

- 4.62 Policy CD53 is applicable to all development within Conservation Areas, being:

"TO ENSURE THAT ALL DEVELOPMENT IN CONSERVATION AREAS IS TO A HIGH STANDARD OF DESIGN AND IS COMPATIBLE WITH:

- (a) CHARACTER, SCALE AND PATTERN;
- (b) BULK AND HEIGHT;
- (c) PROPORTION AND RHYTHM;
- (d) ROOFSCAPE;
- (e) MATERIALS;
- (f) LANDSCAPING AND BOUNDARY TREATMENT;



OF SURROUNDING DEVELOPMENT.

General

4.63 The overall layout of the site, essentially comprising two blocks and a square of houses with a landscaped central space, is considered to be an appropriate basic plan for development of this site. A block in the Water Tower House corner is considered, in principle, to be an acceptable replacement for the existing building, subject to its detail. A short run of low rise terraced houses, or a block adopting some of the form of such a terrace, is considered to be appropriate for the land bordering Aubrey Walk as this form is compatible with the existing layout and scale of Aubrey walk. Housing, around a landscaped centre, is considered to be appropriate in principle for the site, subject to its exact arrangement and detail.

Campden Hill Road block

4.64 Kensington Heights rises to a height of 58.6m. The apparent height of Kensington Heights is accentuated by its position at the highest part of Campden Hill, with the land falling away to the South and North. The existing Water Tower House is much lower than Kensington Heights, and there is a further step down to no. 25 Campden Hill Gardens to the North of that, forming the other corner of Aubrey Walk with Campden Hill Road. In this way this way, the current building heights step down to the North of Kensington Heights.

4.65 In plan form, the building would be set further forward than the present building particularly along its southern boundary with Kensington Heights. Set backs from the main building line, and further set backs at upper levels, will produce a well articulated facade with a more sympathetic relationship to the street. The building plan form would be staggered back as it turns into Aubrey Walk to retain the pedimented roof of 25 Campden Hill Gardens as prominent in views North along Campden Hill Road.

4.66 With the proposed Campden Hill Road block reducing from six storeys to three as it reaches the corner to Aubrey Walk, the architects have addressed this corner location by proposing a form that is compatible with both the bulk of Kensington Heights to the South, and by stepping the skyline of the building they have sought to respect the lower height of the property to the North and the more intimate scale of Aubrey walk.

4.67 Important views of the application site, and the primary points from where the impression of scale of building can be read from the public domain, are to be had. The proposed building to replace Water Tower House will feature strongly in these views and will be most visible when approached from the south along Campden Hill Road occupying as it does a prominent position close to the top of the hill. There is currently an abrupt change in heights between Kensington Heights and Water Tower House with a drop from seven to four continuous storeys producing a skyline which relates badly in terms of scale and roofline to neighbouring

modern properties along Campden Hill Road (although it is less discordant along Aubrey walk). The proposed replacement block attempts a transition in heights between Kensington Heights and 25 Campden Hill Gardens, competing in height with Kensington Heights to the north whilst stepping down to the more traditional scale of it's neighbour on 25 Campden Hill Gardens.

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- 4.68 It is considered that any replacement building for Water Tower House should provide an attractive focal point in views along Campden Hill Road, and make a positive contribution to the character of the Conservation Area. This is the reason that the CAPS supports the demolition of the existing building.
- 4.69 In views from the North up Campden Hill Road the new building will be more visible than the existing, which is largely hidden by 25 Campden Hill Gardens. The new building would feature much larger in views along Campden Hill Road, Aubrey Walk, and Campden Hill Gardens, and will also feature in views from nearby properties. Looking North out of Campden Hill Gardens into Aubrey Walk, the view will be terminated more emphatically than now, with a building more appropriately articulated than that existing. However, this view from Campden Hill Gardens notwithstanding, it is considered that from other aspects the proposed building will not achieve the positive contribution to the area that is sought. Reference is made later in this report to the impact upon the setting of St. George's church.
- 4.70 The problem is not so much in its detailed treatment, or in its footprint, but lies in the starting point in attempting a "step down" to the North from Kensington Heights. Firstly, this "step down" is limited in its extent by only dropping to a compatible height with no.25 Campden Hill Gardens very close to the northern end of the building. Secondly, and crucially, it is considered that the starting point itself is misconceived; Kensington Heights is a very large building, larger than most buildings locally and possibly the most dominant building in Campden Hill Road. It is a building that itself is out of scale and proportion to surrounding development, an effect accentuated by its position on top of the hill. It is considered that this does not provide a sound basis for shaping further nearby development such as the replacement for Water Tower House; the solution must be to move away from its scale altogether, towards the scale of no.25 Campden Hill Road, rather than attempt to emulate its height and scale even in part.
- 4.71 It is concluded that the bulk and scale of this development is not compatible with no.25 Campden Hill Gardens, and is generally out of character with most of its surroundings despite being more compatible with Kensington Court and Melbourne Court. Moreover, the bulk of the building is such that it would not provide the sought after enhancement to the streetscape of Campden Hill Road. As such, the proposed building would not accord with the Conservation Area Proposals Statement, and would not satisfy the requirements of Unitary Development Plan Policy CD25 or CD53.
- 4.72 As a result of negotiations with Officers, the design of the Campden Hill Road block has been altered considerably by the applicants. Concern was raised that the block as originally proposed appeared to be too massive, and the applicants amended the design approach with the aim of reducing the apparent bulk of the building whilst improving its design quality. It is considered that the revised design succeeds in significantly improving the design quality of the building, but despite this it does not provide the solution to the fundamental matter of its bulk.

Aubrey Walk block

- 4.73 The Aubrey Walk block has been designed with the aim of improving the urban form of Aubrey Walk by strengthening the sense of enclosure. Although the street is generally well enclosed along its western half, there are large gaps in the built form in the eastern section, either side of block no.3-7. Whilst there are mature trees in these gaps, which are of townscape

value, the spaces around them offer large glimpses of sky and views of the tennis club boundary which undermine the sense of enclosure and do not make a positive contribution to the character of the street. The CAPS (p.50) identifies these spaces as never having been properly considered in design terms, and notes that landscape improvements with the aim of enhancing the sense of enclosure throughout Aubrey Walk would be welcomed. The new buildings would provide a definite and well articulated edge for this part of the street, whilst incorporating sufficient threshold space to incorporate some landscaping. In their design detail, they are relatively low key and domestic and this is considered to be appropriate for any new buildings in Aubrey Walk.

- 4.74 On the other hand, this block would be constructed at the expense of the bank of shrubs and trees that exists in this position, and which provides an important contribution to the character and appearance of Aubrey Walk. Although it might add to the built form of Aubrey Walk, it would fundamentally alter the character and appearance of this part of Aubrey Walk too. It is concluded that the Aubrey Walk block would probably satisfy the specific criteria of Policy CD53; it would not, however, satisfy the more general requirement of Policy CD52 as it would enhance the character of Aubrey Walk in an urban design sense and yet harm its character by removing an important contribution to its present character and visual amenity.

The "Square"

- 4.75 The garden square form, in theory, should maintain a well defined sense of enclosed public urban space whilst simultaneously providing views into an attractively landscaped private garden square. This is the effect that the applicants have sought to achieve in their scheme, and since the application was first submitted amendments have been made to the "square" at the centre of the proposals in order for it to better address Aubrey Walk.
- 4.76 However, the proposed "square" is considered to suffer from a particular drawback that severely limits the role that such a landscaped centre could play in a redevelopment scheme of this site; it is too constricted in its size, and too dominated by the buildings arranged closely around it, to ever achieve the well defined, well proportioned enclosure that is desirable. It is not only that it compares badly to the proportions of traditional London Squares; that would not be expected here as there would not anyway be enough space for that. It is that the relationship between the "square" and its buildings is such that the square would not achieve the merit as an urban space that it needs to achieve to provide a positive contribution to the character and appearance of both Aubrey Walk and the development itself.
- 4.77 It is considered that the relatively high residential density of the development proposed for this site manifests itself in the constricted form of the "square".
- 4.78 It is concluded that the "square" does not attain the high standard of design that is envisaged in Policy CD53.

Setting of nearby Listed buildings

- 4.79 The impact of the new buildings and landscape on the setting of the surrounding Listed buildings has been considered.
- 4.80 The existing reservoir retaining wall and embankment to Aubrey House would be left untouched in these proposals apart from minor adjustments to its planting, and there is not considered to be any material change to the existing relationship whereby the House exists adjacent to a planted embankment with a retaining wall and tennis courts behind.

4.81 It is considered that the Water Tower House Block and Aubrey Walk block will alter the setting of the listed buildings at this end of Aubrey Walk, in particular St. George's Church, and the southern group of houses will similarly alter the setting of Thorpe Lodge to the South. Policy CD61 is:

"TO RESIST DEVELOPMENT WHICH WOULD ADVERSELY AFFECT THE SETTING OF A LISTED BUILDING"



4.82 Thorpe Lodge and St. George's church are presently set against planted embankments opposite them, and in each case these embankments would be replaced by buildings and much reduced planting. In the case of St. George's Church, this building would have its townscape prominence diminished and would be seen in a much altered setting in the streetscape as a result of the proposed changes at this end of Aubrey Walk. In the case of Thorpe Lodge, the terrace of houses proposed to its North would tower above it by approximately 10m, which would dominate this building from some perspectives. It is concluded that, in the case of Thorpe Lodge and St. George's church, the proposals are contrary to Policy CD61.

Design - External Detail

4.83 Policy CD25, as set out above, requires a high standard of design detail in new buildings. CD53 (e) also relates to materials in Conservation Areas.

4.84 The design detail of this development has been amended several stages as a result of negotiations between the applicants and Officers.

4.85 In design terms, it is considered that an amount of flexibility exists at the Water Tower House corner of the site, and internally within the site, but less so along Aubrey Walk. A fine grain of development is proposed within Aubrey Walk and the terraces around the square. It is considered that the narrow frontage rhythm proposed is compatible with the existing character of Aubrey Walk, which contains several short terraces of narrow frontage buildings and individual narrow buildings. The materials indicated are high quality. Facades and rooflines conform to a traditional domestic pattern appropriate to the intimate domestic character of Aubrey Walk.

4.86 On Campden Hill Road, the pattern of development is quite different from that along Aubrey Walk. Development is coarser grained with several large blocks of flats of modern design neutral in terms of their contribution to the character of the Conservation area. The prominence of the site requires that a new building makes a positive contribution to the character of the conservation area. Given the eclectic mix of surrounding architectural styles, it is considered that there is more flexibility in terms of the style of architecture. The proposed block is considered to be modern and well detailed, with well articulated facades, which will contribute visual interest and variety to the streetscape. The materials indicated are traditional and sympathetic to those used in Aubrey Walk. Brick facades are indicated with stone dressings to bays, stone string courses and cornices and timber framed windows.

4.87 As is normal practice for schemes of this size, Conditions would be recommended for any approved scheme requiring details and/or samples of the majority of the materials to be used for the facing treatment of the proposed buildings, to ensure that a good quality finish is provided and maintained. This is clearly important at all parts of the site but is considered to be

of particular importance for the Campden Hill Road block, where the success of a more modern design would hinge to a large extent upon the quality of the selected facing materials.

A "gated community"

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- 4.88 The proposed development includes gates at the vehicular and pedestrian entrances.
- 4.89 A characteristic feature of the Royal Borough is the existence of busy commercial areas very close to relatively much quieter residential areas. With only the occasional exception, these residential areas include permeable thoroughfares accessible to vehicle or foot borne members of the public. The attractiveness of garden squares, and the quiet of the residential areas generally, thus provide an important amenity that can be enjoyed by all, at all times. Access to these areas is instrumental in this potential for enjoyment; deny access and the amenity value of an area changes, and is reduced and harmed, considerably. Accessibility to the public in general allows an area to be properly appreciated and enables the full value of a pleasant environment as a public amenity to be realised. It is considered that this aspect should be seen as inseparable from the physical character and appearance of the area. Permeability is one of the characteristics that allows the Kensington Conservation Area to be enjoyed. Members will recall that this question was one of the main issues debated at the recent Public Inquiry relating to Earl's Terrace, after which that appeal was dismissed.
- 4.90 If it is accepted that the development of this site should make a contribution to the amenity or the area, both physically and in its use, then the proposals for a segregated community with restricted access come into immediate conflict with Policy STRAT 1. If priority is to be given to the protection and enhancement of the residential character and amenity of the Royal Borough, this will not be achieved by a "gated" development, separated from its surrounding environment. Moreover, to approve a "gated community" in this case would undoubtedly mean that similar proposals elsewhere in the future would become harder to resist.

Traffic Generation

- 4.91 As described in the Unitary Development Plan (paragraph 4.2 onwards in the "Transportation" Chapter) the Council follows an approach of general traffic restraint, because of the many adverse effects that motorised traffic can have upon the residential character of the Borough. Clearly, in relatively quiet roads such as Aubrey Walk, Aubrey Road and Campden Hill Square, it is particularly important that any development does not result in a significant increase in local road traffic levels.
- 4.92 Policy TR39 is:

"TO RESIST DEVELOPMENT WHICH WOULD RESULT IN ANY SIGNIFICANT INCREASE IN CONGESTION, OR ANY SIGNIFICANT DECREASE IN SAFETY, ON THE ROADS OR ON PUBLIC TRANSPORT"

- 4.93 A Traffic Impact Assessment (TIA) has been prepared by consultants on behalf of the applicants, and this assessment has been carefully examined by Council Officers in respect

of its methodology, the input data, the results of the traffic estimates, and the conclusions drawn. Aspects of the assessment have been re-worked, and re-examined, at the instruction of Officers. The figures contained in the TIA have now largely been agreed between the Officers and the applicant's consultants.

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- 4.94 The TIA has considered the existing traffic movements along Aubrey Walk and Aubrey Road as well as the operation of its junction with Campden Hill Road and the Notting Hill Gate / Campden Hill road junction. These existing movements are based on the tennis club operating as at present, and flows associated with the 15 residential units in Water Tower House. The TIA also examines the traffic situation which would arise if the disused offices and vehicle depot were brought back into use, and lastly assesses the impact of the new residential uses.
- 4.95 At present the flows along Aubrey Walk are rather variable, ranging from 100 to 200 vehicles per hour in the morning peak, which tends to be the busiest time. This variation in flow can be explained by the varying conditions on Campden Hill Road which may cause vehicles to divert to Aubrey Walk/Road when queues are present.
- 4.96 It is estimated that in the morning and evening peaks some 9 vehicle movements in total are currently associated with the 15 flats and the tennis courts. Should the depot and offices be operating at their full capacity then an additional 19 trips might be expected in the peak hours.
- 4.97 The proposed new housing will probably generate some 21 movements in the morning peak and 26 in the evening. Leaving aside the potential uses of the site as a depot / offices for Thames Water, the net gain in trips would therefore be 21 in the morning peak, and 26 in the evening peak, both arrivals and departures. It has been assumed that departing trips will split evenly between Aubrey Walk /Aubrey Road and Campden Hill Road. Trips arriving at the site will arrive predominantly via Campden Hill Road, because of the configuration of the road network.
- 4.98 The above calculation is based on the assumption that the tennis traffic remains the same after the development. However, it is clear that currently, on some days especially in the winter months, the tennis traffic will be very low as there are no indoor playing facilities. Surveys undertaken in May of this year showed that in good weather, some 20 car movements occurred in the busiest hour (Saturday 12 noon - 1p.m.) If the courts were to be fully occupied, with say 40 people waiting to play and 40 enjoying the outdoor terrace, then this could conceivably increase to 35 car movements. The new development would therefore be likely to generate at least 10 car trips in the busiest hour and possibly as many as 18, if the indoor courts and the ancillary facilities were to be used at a similar level of intensity.
- 4.99 It is concluded that the additional numbers of vehicular trips associated with the proposed development would not be significant, and would not justify a reason for refusal of planning permission. However, the analysis must go beyond the matter of traffic capacity and examine how the existing character and residential amenity of surrounding streets, in particular Aubrey Walk, may be affected.
- 4.100 Notwithstanding the conclusion that the numbers of additional vehicles generated by the residential and recreational uses would not be sufficient to sustain an objection in terms of road capacity and vehicular movement, the fact remains that the *pattern* of activity would be likely to alter as a result of the proposals.

4.101 At present, the level of activity generated by the redundant reservoirs and the ancillary Thames Water buildings is low. The tennis club does not generate much vehicular or pedestrian activity around the year, with activity at its lowest in the winter or on inclement days in the summer. It is considered that the enhanced recreational facilities in the proposal, in particular the six indoor tennis courts, would result in an altered pattern of use, where even in the periods presently quietest there would be intensified activity associated with the site.

4.102 The existing, relatively "low-key" use of the site has existed for many years, nearby residents aware of the club, and existing in close proximity to it, from the moment they moved in. Although there have been complaints relating to parking problems, the existing club appears to exist quite harmoniously with its immediate surroundings, and it is considered that one of the most important ingredients in this balance is the fact that, very often, the club generates little or no vehicular activity at all. This would no longer be the case, as the peaks and troughs in activity would be largely "evened out" by the enhanced indoor facilities. It is concluded that the alteration of the existing balance would be to the detriment of local residential amenity.

Parking Provision and Means of Access

- 4.103 The Unitary Development Plan recommends, in the "Planning Standards" Chapter, that purpose built flats of up to 5 habitable rooms should be provided with a minimum of one space per dwelling unit, with a minimum of 1.5 spaces per unit of 5 or more habitable rooms. The basement parking provision of 92 spaces allows for 2 spaces for each of the houses in the form of double garages with internal access to the house, and one space per flat.
- 4.104 This parking provision complies with the relevant Unitary Development Plan standards.
- 4.105 The Unitary Development Plan allows for a lower provision of spaces for affordable housing, with 0.66 spaces per unit being specified but even lower provisions down to 50% (0.5 spaces per unit) may sometimes be considered acceptable. It is considered that the number of spaces allocated to the affordable housing is acceptable as proposed at 1 for 1, however a lower provision of 50% would be accepted if it helped facilitate the affordable housing part of the scheme.
- 4.106 It is proposed to close the existing accesses to the site, and replace them with a single access on to Aubrey Walk approximately 18m to the West of Campden Hill Gardens. It is considered that the new access in this position would facilitate improved geometric and visibility standards, and the proposed access is considered to be satisfactory in these terms.
- 4.107 Access to the site is not possible directly from Campden Hill Road. Although such access might be preferable in many ways, including in terms of the amenity of Aubrey Walk, it is not part of the proposal and preference for another means of access is not a reason to refuse the proposed access point which, in itself, is considered to be satisfactory.
- 4.108 Internal refuse facilities are provided within the underground car park, accessed from the ramp from Aubrey Walk. These elements appear satisfactory, although they have not been worked through in detail and would anyway be reserved by Condition for submission of further details for analysis and approval.

Disabled Access

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4.109 Policy H28 of the Unitary Development Plan is:

“TO SEEK WHERE PRACTICAL THAT GROUND FLOOR DWELLINGS, OR THOSE REACHED BY A LIFT, IN HOUSING DEVELOPMENTS ARE BUILT TO MOBILITY STANDARD AND TO ENCOURAGE CONSTRUCTION TO WHEELCHAIR STANDARD”

- 4.110 The arrangement of the proposed development has been revised since submission following discussions with the Council's Access Officer..
- 4.111 The Unitary Development Plan recommends that 10% of spaces in a car park should be designed for disabled parking. The underground car park has direct access for wheelchair users. 12 bays are set aside for disabled drivers. This provision is welcomed by the Council's Access Officer.
- 4.112 It is normal to expect that 10% of an affordable housing element of a housing scheme should be wheelchair/mobility/"lifetime" housing. This would need to be incorporated within Conditions or a planning obligation if planning permission was to be granted. The location and detail of dropped kerbs and tactile paving would also be reserved by Condition for later approval.
- 4.113 Part M of the Building Regulations is currently in the "Transitional Provision" stage. All new dwellings will be expected to have a degree of "visitability" after the inception date. If a development has Full Plans approval under the Building Regulations before 1st June 1999 then compliance with the new Part M will not be expected. However, if a development does not have approval, or only has Initial Notices, then they would be expected to comply with the Part M provisions on or after 25th October 1999.
- 4.114 Overall, it is considered that the opportunity has been taken to design in a satisfactory level of access and mobility features.

Noise, Environmental and sustainable issues

4.115 Policy CD34 is:

“TO RESIST PROPOSALS WHERE THE NOISE GENERATED WOULD CAUSE SIGNIFICANT DISTURBANCE TO SURROUNDING PROPERTIES”

- 4.116 The existing tennis club has twelve outdoor courts, and the proposed club only six plus a practice court. Spectator stands are not provided, and numbers could anyway be controlled by Condition in the event of planning permission being granted. It is not considered that the proposed tennis courts would be likely to result in any greater noise disturbance than that which could result from intensive use of the present twelve courts, probably less.
- 4.117 The occupants of the proposed houses and flats on the site would clearly generate more activity and noise than the present site with its relatively small office and storage