

Comment on a planning application

Application Details

Application: 21/0847/FUL

Address: The One O Clock Club Marble Hill Park Richmond Road Twickenham TW1 2NL

Proposal: Demolition of the existing buildings and erection of a new building for use as a children's play space, nursery and community hub (Class E(f), Class F2), installation of landscaping and associated works

Comments Made By

Name: Ms Jane Boddington

Address: 36 Beaufort Road Twickenham TW1 2PQ

Comments

Type of comment: Object to the proposal

Comment:

PART ONE

Background to Objection

Beaufort Road contains a line of houses and a small block of flats. The flats lie about 11 metres from the proposed new building. My flat is number 36. As residents I and I believe all residents in the road have not been included by the Applicant in any initial consultation at all. The first notification I had of the proposal was by the Council's Neighbourhood Consultation letter dated 16th March 2021. The Applicant acts in the name of the One O'Clock Club which is a club run by Marble Hill Playcentres (MHP) whose logo states its aim as 'Outdoor Adventurous Play'.

The Reason for the Application

The Design Report makes it clear on page 24 that Marble Hill Playcentre's reason for the application is that 'the facility cannot continue without an increase in critical mass to become viable'.

The Site's Context

The site must be seen within the context of an important Conservation Area and an extremely popular and much used green area, Marble Hill Park which is Metropolitan Open Land. English Heritage have spent millions of pounds on refurbishment. Their stated aim is to attract a greater number of visitors from their 1.3m members and others to Marble Hill House and the Park itself.

Acting on that aim they applied for planning permission reference 18/2977/FUL. Permission was granted to them subject to strict conditions. They include strict opening conditions 'to safeguard residential amenity of nearby occupants.' Marble Hill House can only open to the public in the months of April to October from 10 am to 5 pm. The Stable Block Café can only open to the public between April - October 9 am to 6 pm and November- March from 9am to 4 pm. Neither facility has all year-round opening hours.

English Heritage have now upgraded sports pitches near the application site within Marble Hill Park to attract local sports teams to play matches there. The effect on player/visitor numbers to either the Park or the House cannot be accurately assessed at present because of the COVID interlude but the clear aim is for a significant increase.

The present Application provides no projected figures as to likely usage by children and adults or the proposed days or hours of opening of the MHP site. Nevertheless, any increase will further add to the already unpredictable noise levels emanating from the Park. I also submit that there must be strict safeguards on opening times as imposed above to safeguard residential amenity of nearby occupants including myself.

The existing green site of nearly an acre used by the One O'clock Club is devoted to exciting the imagination and

development of under five-year-old children. Yet the building proposed removes a substantial part of the natural green site where imaginative play and exploration at present takes place. Indeed, it is pervasively counter-intuitive to the fundamental educational aim of the existing site.