

## Comment on a planning application

### Application Details

**Application:** 22/0902/FUL

**Address:** The Stag Brewery Lower Richmond Road Mortlake London SW14 7ET

**Proposal:** Erection of a three-storey building to provide a new secondary school with sixth form; sports pitch with floodlighting, external MUGA and play space; and associated external works including landscaping, car and cycle parking, new access routes and other associated works

### Comments Made By

**Name:** Mortlake with East Sheen Society Mr. Tim Catchpole

**Address:** 56 Gilpin Avenue East Sheen London SW14 8QY

### Comments

**Type of comment:** Object to the proposal

**Comment:** The Mortlake with East Sheen Society continues to raise concern about the appropriateness of this site for a secondary school for the following reasons:

- The site is too cramped, it does not meet the DfE's space standards for this part of London and the school will add to the cumulative density of the overall site which is akin to a central London location.
- Accessibility is poor in that students travelling by bus from Barnes in the morning peak will be caught in gridlock, those travelling from Kew have a somewhat limited bus service and those travelling from East Sheen will use their bikes or their feet and will encounter a serious capacity problem at the Sheen Lane level crossing where problems already exist with the arrival at 8.30am of the Thomson House School children – see photos in Appendix C (not on-line). We are not convinced that this capacity problem has been sorted.
- The replacement of grass playing fields with an all-weather surface, fenced in and floodlit, and the re-provision of this OOLTI into a fragmented layout of open spaces does not meet the Local Plan's criteria of quality, quantum and openness. And our fear is that the courtyard spaces will become private, not public.

At the same time we are becoming increasingly concerned that this school is no longer needed for the following reasons:

- In the aftermath of the baby boom of 2008-12 there has been a significant drop in numbers in local primary schools and this will soon become apparent in secondary schools as well.
- The predictions made by AfC when arguing the case for the new secondary school several years ago can now be checked against actual numbers, and shown to be inaccurate.
- The proposed school is likely to draw students away from the two existing nearby secondary schools (RPA and Christ's) and the inclusion of a new 6th form could have a negative impact on the viability of the 6th forms at the other two schools, indeed all three 6th forms could be unviable.

We are also concerned about the difficulties that Thomson House School currently faces because of being in two buildings on either side of the busy Sheen Lane level crossing, with one building having no outside space whatsoever. Thomson House School should never have been located here. The Planning Brief for the Brewery development in 2011 included a primary school alongside the grass playing fields. That is the perfect location for such a school, not where currently located on either side of the second most high-risk level crossing in South East England.

### Conclusion

We object to this application on the lines given above, namely the cramped conditions, the poor accessibility and the poor re-provision of the OOLTI. In addition, we urge the Council to commission an independent study to prove the need, or otherwise, for this secondary school.