

Comment on a planning application

Application Details

Application: 22/3004/FUL

Address: Kneller Hall Royal Military School Of Music Kneller Road Twickenham TW2 7DU

Proposal: The demolition of existing modern buildings on the site and the conversion of and extensions to Kneller Hall and other ancillary buildings associated with the former royal military music school to a day school (Use Class F1), together with the construction of associated new purpose-built buildings including teaching space, indoor sports facilities, sporting pavilion and forest school building. Alterations to the existing playing fields, to include an all weather pitch with fencing, flood lighting to existing tennis courts, sustainability measures and re-turfing. Provision of a new access from Whitton Dene, and other ancillary works including parking areas, hard and soft landscaping, lighting, access alterations and energy centre. Internal and external alterations to Kneller Hall and the curtilage listed buildings to facilitate the day school use, including demolition and rebuilding of single storey extension to the west wing of Kneller Hall, extension to the Band Practice Hall and re-opening of Whitton Dene site entrance.

Comments Made By

Name: Mr. Neil Wilton

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Comments

Type of comment: Object to the proposal

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I concur with the suggestion with the following as a possible means of achieving this:

- Create the ecology corridor as a separate public access zone on the northern side of the site, with a fence-or hedge-line to the remaining school site as a means of meeting safeguarding imperatives and controlling access to/from the school.
- Use this opportunity to link this area into the wooded area to the east of the site
- Provide free and unfettered public access at the western and eastern ends of this area to provide a green walking route between Whitton Dene and Spray Lane, either through the listed entrance off Whitton Dene or from a new entrance at the end of the listed wall at Amberside Close
- Operate this space as a shared space for outdoor lessons and community use with associated school, community and council engagement and management
- Re-locate the floodlit tennis courts and Astro-turf hockey pitch to the southern end of the site to provide an uninterrupted extent of natural surface to the north and minimise noise and light intrusion into the natural corridor.

Loss of Trees

I am also concerned at the loss of a number of mature trees. In one year, a mature tree will absorb about 25kg of carbon dioxide from the atmosphere and release oxygen in exchange. Saplings only absorb about 6kg per year and it would take 10 years to reach a mature enough level to absorb the higher amount of CO₂ and a commensurate release of oxygen.

Vehicle use/movement/parking

1) I am very surprised that a 2013 survey for the mode splits has been utilised as a baseline for the trip generation and subsequent assessment of the development. This data is far too old to be relevant to a 2022 decant of existing pupils from a current school site and cannot be relied upon to give accurate information on the situation that prevails at the school now. I would expect that a 2022 survey be presented to show the actual up to date trip generation and mode splits as per the current school. This is wholly appropriate as the school is currently operational and represents good practice. The data set from 2013 is flawed as there are no pupils from that survey left at the school. This may lead to an underestimate of either the car / drop off trips, staff and pupil driving trips or the trips allocated to public transport and may not show the full and true impact of the development proposals and mitigation for the school.

2) The opening of the access onto Whitton Dene for traffic should be treated as a wholly new access as it has been closed for such a long time. Within the SPD for the site this access was only to be utilised as a pedestrian and cycle access. The

proposal has not been fully assessed on current patterns of use across the access as currently this route is used by a significant number of parents who walk their children to other schools in Whitton. The access has also been poorly designed with no pedestrian visibility splays which could lead to pedestrian accidents.

3) There is no regard for the local residents within the proposals in respect of parking within Zone R. The TA actually seems to encourage overspill parking in local roads. Neither the TA nor the travel plan's identify significant or workable measures to prevent additional staff or older pupils driving to the area and parking in local roads. It seems to give the 'green light' for the use of private vehicles to get pupils to school. This is not aligned with the SPD which includes reference to the fact that the development should "not place additional pressure on on-street parking within the vicinity of the site..." By allowing overspill parking (driving to the area) on local roads the trip impacts presented in the TA would have been significantly underestimated - it has not been included in the trip generation figures presented. Any mitigation strategy is going to be underestimated as these trips would not have been modelled.