

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: Whitton Ward Councillors Mrs. Jo Humphreys

Address: 8 Talma Gardens Twickenham TW2 7RD

Comments

Type of comment: Make a general observation

Comment: Submission Part 1 from Whitton ward councillors, Cllr Humphreys, Cllr O'Carroll & Cllr Sehra
Firstly, we would like to emphasise that in principle all 3 of us are in support of Kneller School coming to this site. However, it is important that planning officers recognise that the area is already heavily congested with a 3-form entry primary school, a 5-form entry secondary school, a 6th form college, a Marriott Hotel, a Virgin Gym and a major sports stadium with meeting/conference/event/performance facilities. The school will add to this already busy location 1000 pupils plus 160-170 staff, and it is vital that the application and any S106 conditions adequately deal with the extra pressures the school will put on the local infrastructure. Additionally, there should be a very generous community use agreement that will serve as mitigation for these additional pressures.

With this in mind there are some aspects of the application that we wish to comment on and make suggested changes/additions.

Parking

We note that there will be 40 onsite parking spaces for 160-170 staff. Data submitted suggests 37% of staff drive to work (albeit this is from a 2013 survey) and even if the projected reduction to 24% is achieved this will be more than 40 vehicles. It is unclear where this over-flow will go, what parking will be available for visitors to the site, and it is also recognised that some 6th formers may want to drive to school. Although the school has advised that they will be strongly encouraging 6th formers and staff without allocated spaces not to drive, the availability of unrestricted parking in the surrounding streets may well mean that they still come by car. Page 20 of the Transport Assessment report concludes that based on current parking stresses any additional parking the school would bring would not be detrimental to residents, which possibly indicates that the school do expect drivers associated with the school to utilise some on-street parking. It may well be that the current parking stresses has capacity for this, however we would ask that conditions are attached to this application that would mean that should local residents subsequently decide that there is a problem with parking and request a CPZ, the school would not be entitled to apply for parking permits. Finally, it would be reassuring if the planners could push for the school to rent spaces from the RFU in order to totally reduce the need for any on-street parking.

Ecology

Just two areas of concerns. Firstly, the use of a proportion of the MOL for an artificial surface surrounded by fencing (hockey pitch). We believe that a generous community use agreement should be offered to mitigate this. Secondly the loss of some viable trees to make way for the new buildings. We understand with any development there might need to be some removal of trees and we would ask officers to ensure that new planting more than adequately mitigates any losses.

Parade Ground

We note that this will be used for car & coach pick-up/drop-offs and as a car park for special events. We are keen for the current view of the hall to be as unchanged as possible and therefore would prefer the hard standing not to have road markings on it and would want to see it's use as an events over-flow car park limited. Finally, we believe that to reduce the chance of traffic backing up on Kneller Road and to limit the amount of engine idling, there should be a staff member on the parade ground during school drop-off & pick-up to help keep the vehicles moving.