

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 4 from Whitton ward councillors, Cllr Humphreys, Cllr O'Carroll & Cllr Sehra

Pupil and Staff Travel Plans

We are extremely concerned that these travel plans have been based on a survey carried out back in 2013. With data being 9 years out of date it has been very difficult to assess accurately how pupils and staff will travel to the school, and work out realistically what impact this will have on the local community. The maps on page 24/25 of the Transport Assessment report show the current cohort, however it is difficult to work out how many live where, and it would have been helpful to have a table of pupils broken down by local authority/ward. Presumably the predictions of who will use which trains and buses are based on the home addresses of the current cohort, but an up-to-date travel survey needs doing as this will evidence how staff and pupils are actually planning to travel to the site. The results of this new survey needs to be used to update the travel plan and this work should be a planning condition.

However, on the presumption that the 2013 figures are an indication of the current situation we feel that the active travel targets are perhaps unambitious. We appreciate that as a private school they are going to have a much wider catchment than a state school, however it is still important that car usage is reduced. Currently it is suggested that car journeys for pupils is reduced by 5% and that cycling, and walking is increased by just 3%. We would like to see these percentages raised. The report also suggest that they are expecting a 2% increase in pupils using the school buses and we wondered if the school would be able to do more to encourage students out of the cars and onto these buses. As there is an additional charge for these buses if the costs were reduced/dropped that might be helpful.

Community Use Agreement

Given the potential pressures on local infrastructure the arrival of the school will bring to this area, and the fact that most local children will be unable to attend the school, it is extremely important that this is mitigated by a very generous community use agreement.

On the surface of it the proposed CUA is extensive but when looking at the detail several factors mean the offer is not as effective as it could be. The various reports clearly shows that Richmond is in desperate need of additional sports facilities,

and we'd like to see a CUA that helps fill some of these gaps in provision. We'd also like any agreement to be fixed conditions rather than subject to "no conflict with school use & subject to grass condition" with the school making "reasonable endeavours to achieve community use targets" as this raises concerns that community use will be reduced at a later date.

Forest School

The current CUA means that only 35 sessions per year are being offered to schools and 14 sessions per year for community groups. When the SPD was drawn up one of the things we hoped to see was an increase in publicly accessible green space for a ward that has the least amount of green space in the borough. Unfortunately, this was not to be, but we were hopeful that the ecological corridor and forest school would make up for the community not getting a park. Given the number of schools and groups in the area who could benefit from this we feel that the number of sessions being offered doesn't go far enough and would like to see this increased. It would also be good to see times where members of the general public can visit the area.

Bandstand Performance Area

It is lovely that residents will once again be able to attend performances, however, there doesn't appear to be an option to hire this performance space. It would be lovely for local theatre/music/dance groups to be able to book the bandstand on an ad hoc basis in the same way as they can with the school hall/theatre.