

Comment on a planning application

Application Details

Application: 23/3208/FUL

Address: St Catherines School Cross Deep Twickenham TW1 4QJ

Proposal: The proposed development is a new Music and Art Building, to improve the facilities at St Catherine's School. The existing single storey music building and 20th century extension to the Lodge are to be demolished, to make space for the new two storey building. The external areas will be improved, with new paving, planting and trees.

Comments Made By

Name: Strawberry Hill Residents Association Mr. Andrew Miller

Address: 69 Upper Grotto Road Twickenham TW1 4NG

Comments

Type of comment: Make a general observation

Comment: We have reviewed the above application and whilst we have no objection in principle to the proposed demolition and new building, we do have some serious concerns regarding the construction phase which we consider should be addressed if the application is to be approved.

In particular we have concerns regarding the size and weight of the lorries that are proposed to be using Grotto Road and accessing onto Radnor Road. The Construction Management Plan (page 27 tables 6.1 and 6.2) shows that the majority of the proposed 430 lorry movements will be by lorries in excess of 7.5 tons. This will put a heavy strain on Grotto Road, a narrow road in poor condition, much of which is lined by privately owned garden walls and garages, several of which are also in poor condition. The potential for vibration damage and collision during manoeuvring by long vehicles is high. Therefore approval should only be granted if the School commit to make good any damage and/or provide adequate compensation to owners of the properties along Grotto Road for any damage caused by construction traffic. An approach along the lines of a party wall agreement would seem appropriate.

We note that two options are proposed for the exit route of lorries from Grotto Road, either left or right along Radnor Road, but it is unclear whether it is intended that just one of those two routes is to be mandated or whether both are proposed to be available for use. In either case we are concerned about the ability of large lorries to access safely and efficiently via Radnor Road and Popes Grove, both of which tend to be heavily parked up and are effectively reduced to one-lane traffic. In light of this and the above concerns we consider there would be merit in considering the practicality of lorries departing the site exiting directly from Grotto Road onto Cross Deep. Given that there are to be banksmen on site throughout the demolition and construction it ought to be possible for this to be carried out safely and with minimal disruption to the normal access from Cross Deep to the one-way Grotto Road.

We also have concerns about the possible impact of piling on Pope's Grotto, a Grade II* listed building, which is close to the site. Whilst the existence of the Grotto is acknowledged in the various supporting reports none of them address the specific risk to the Grotto of vibration and earth movements caused by piling. In our view this issue needs to be specifically addressed by relevant experts at this application stage not merely left to monitoring during the construction phase as proposed. It will be too late once unacceptable levels of vibration are found to result and damage to the Grotto has already occurred.

If, as planned, lorries are to exit the site via Radnor Road we have a similar concern regarding Stanhope's Cave, a Grade II listed building in Radnor Road over which many of the lorries will pass. We do not know the condition or resilience of the Cave but are concerned that there could well be risks to it from the concentrated volume of heavy lorries passing over it. We believe that this needs to be addressed in a similar way to that for Pope's Grotto set out above.