

Comment on a planning application

Application Details

Application: 24/1985/FUL

Address: Roehampton Gate Cafe Richmond Park Richmond SW15 5JR

Proposal: Demolition of existing buildings, revision to site entrances and layout, construction of a new cafe, public toilets and cycle hire building, associated hard and soft landscaping, and a new pedestrian access gate on the park boundary

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: Make a general observation

Comment: The site lies just outside the ancient Parish boundary of Mortlake with East Sheen, from which our Society took its name at its foundation in 1969. Our boundary follows the Beverley Brook from Priest's Bridge to a point south east of the White Lodge from which it extends westwards to Sawyers Hill. That said, this proposal interests us as the site is visible from our boundary and is well-known to our 466 members. Our comments are as follows:

1. Demolition of existing buildings

These are temporary buildings replacing the golf clubhouse which was destroyed by fire in 2004. A new golf clubhouse has since been built further south with access off the A3 but the temporary buildings have continued to provide the café and WCs which had been part of the clubhouse. They are not in good condition and it is time they were replaced. We have no objection to this provided the replacement facilities are ancillary to the Park and not a destination as the latter would be in conflict with MOL policy.

2. Revision to site entrances and layout

At present the entrance to the carpark crosses the Tamsin Trail and is shared among cars, cyclists and pedestrians. This is problematic and we therefore fully support the relocation of the carpark entrance further north closer to Roehampton Gate where it can be separated from cyclists and pedestrians (albeit still crossing the Tamsin Trail).

We are slightly puzzled by the locations of some of the pedestrian crossings over the road shown on the third site plan in Appendix 1 of the Transport Statement and could not find any explanation for these locations in the text. We also feel the need for the Transport Statement to address the problem of pedestrian/cyclist conflicts at these crossings just as there are on the road outside Pembroke Lodge. There need to be cycle calming measures at these crossings and also at the roundabout at Roehampton Gate particularly given the speed some cars and cyclists approach and enter.

We note the reduction in car parking spaces from 245 (including an overflow of 40 plus 4 spaces for the disabled) to 225 (including an overflow of 46 plus 14 for the disabled). This seems logical given the maximum number of parking spaces occupied at Sunday peak time is about 180. We also note the increase in cycle parking spaces from 20 to 44 but wonder if there shouldn't be more than this. We accept these changes but could not find any mention of EV charging points – are they included?

3. Construction of a new cafe, public toilets and cycle hire building

We note that the existing café has a footprint of 182m² and the new a café a footprint of 341m². We wonder if this is bordering on the café becoming a destination rather than ancillary to the Park, but we note that the golf clubhouse which stood here before had a footprint of 390m². The public toilets and cycle hire building likewise have larger footprints than the existing facilities. Presumably there is the need to provide such increase as the population of London continues to increase. As for the design of the buildings, we are pleased to see they are low-lying single storey and we like their rustic

character.

4. Associated hard and soft landscaping

We are sorry to see the removal of six trees in order to accommodate the larger building footprints but we have no objection to the new planting proposed.

5. New pedestrian access gate on the park boundary

We are in principle in agreement with the new pedestrian gate from the Alton Estate in Roehampton but are concerned that the visitors to the Park could use the Alton Estate as their carpark. The Transport Statement has not addressed this issue and needs to do so before planning permission can be granted.

Conclusion

We are generally in favour of this proposal but would like to see the Transport Statement address in more the locations of the pedestrian crossings and cycle calming measures on the road alongside this development and also the parking issues.