

Planning application 24/2880/FUL

05 December 2024 10:06

Subject	Planning application 24/2880/FUL
From	Chard, James (Cllr)
To	Jack Davies
Sent	04 December 2024 18:42

Official

Dear Jack,

Please accept the following as a comment in support of planning application 24/2880/FUL for a mural on the southern elevation of Regal House in Twickenham, raising awareness of issues in relation to ecosystem degradation.

Firstly, I would note there appears to be a reasonable case that planning consent is not required as the work consists of painting without affixations on a non-listed building, and the artwork does not promote any commercial product or brand and thus does not constitute an advertisement. I understand the applicant has made its application on a precautionary basis, but hope the issue of whether it is strictly necessary will be considered as public art is to be welcomed and should not be subject to undue hurdles.

In the event officers conclude planning consent is required there are several reasons why I would consider the mural will make a significant, positive contribution to the local area:

1. The existing Regal House is an unattractive 1960s building which is significantly taller than nearby properties and dominates the skyline from some angles. The southern elevation is a particularly unattractive, bare concrete wall of considerable size. The proposed mural will significantly soften the impact of the stark wall, providing colour and visual interest.
2. The mural proposed is of considerable artistic merit, designed by a street artist, Versod, with an excellent reputation and supported by an organisation, Street Art for Mankind, with a record of delivering similar projects internationally.
3. The artwork highlights important issues on a global scale relating to risks to the ecosystem, and will provide significant benefit in raising awareness, including among local schoolchildren and the many people who visit Twickenham for rugby and other events. It will be a wholly positive, attractive landmark in the centre of the town.
4. Whilst raising broader global themes, the artwork appropriately references fauna and flora found in the Twickenham area - including animals recognised in Richmond's Biodiversity Action Plan (https://www.richmond.gov.uk/our_nature) as being under threat such as water voles and badgers. The reference to a willow tree is particularly apt given the relative proximity to magnificent examples in Radnor Gardens and elsewhere. This reflected feedback from ward councillors at the formative stage of the project, and I am grateful full consideration has been given to comments made earlier in the year.

For the above reasons, I strongly support approval of the application.

Best wishes,
James

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