

## Comment on a planning application

### Application Details

**Application:** 22/1029/FUL

**Address:** Kingston Bridge House Church Grove Hampton Wick KT1 4AG

**Proposal:** Facade and elevational improvements, infill extension at ground floor level and change of use of the building to provide 70 new homes with associated landscaping, access, parking/refuse provision and external alterations.

### Comments Made By

**Name:** Hampton Wick Association Mr. Nick Baylis

**Address:** 55 Park Road Hampton Wick Kingston Upon Thames KT1 4AS

### Comments

**Type of comment:** Object to the proposal

**Comment:** These comments make comparison with the previous application 21/1399/FUL. We are pleased that that was withdrawn.

The positive: the proposed building is about the same size and height as the existing one, albeit that is already too large for the site. The semi-mock Georgian styling has gone and the windows are now more appropriate.

BUT it seems from the CIL form that the social housing has now been omitted, although the Design and Access Statement says that 'discussions with Richmond Housing Partnership (a local RP) took place regarding delivering a significant contribution of affordable housing.' This should be explained and scrutinized.

The elevational treatment is a hotchpotch of styles - principally it is that of Victorian Thameside architecture - is disappointing and out of place. This is an opportunity to have a good example of contemporary architecture in a prominent site by a principal entrance to the borough. Instead, we have a copy-and-paste exercise, except that the 'architectural designers' (why not use architects?) have missed out treating the existing stair tower, with its 70's style curtain walling and rendered rooftop plantroom. While it is set back slightly from the main façade, it remains and would clash with the Victorian style that the brick slips are aping. This confusion carries on to the Hampton Court Road elevation (and the rear one) where the designers have borrowed from a copybook of 1980's office design and inserted dark curtain walling within light-coloured rusticated piers. Why? It is reminiscent of someone missing front teeth with contrasting gaps when they smile. Weird and ugly. Unfortunately, the Design and Access Statement, whilst full of benign platitudes, does not explain the design thinking (if any) for this and other aspects of the design and we are left guessing.

We note the proposals to use brick slips. Whilst these can work well, they need to be carefully detailed (e.g., around corners). They can also look crude and 'fake'. If accepted then it is essential that LBR require details and mock-up samples to be submitted and approved.

Despite the omission of the social housing the new internal segregation between the Church Grove element and the central (taller) portion remains. This means that the existing alternative means of escape to two staircases, here, has been closed off creating a dead-end corridor and a single route of travel. We would prefer the existing passive way of ensuring life safety to that of relying on an engineering solution (such as sprinklers) to mitigate this risk. We question whether the 'stay put' strategy adopted (similar to Grenfell Tower, and which relies on the idea that buildings are designed to stop the spread of fire for at least 60 minutes) is the right approach.

This part of Hampton Wick already has severe parking issues, particularly outside of the restricted hours, and the provision of parking appears inadequate for the needs of the development.