

Planning application 2023/5391/P

Stay Club, build a new, 7th floor housing an additional 11 units

Kentish Town Neighbourhood Forum (KTNF) objects to the application by the developer Hallmark to add an additional floor and further student accommodation units to the Stay Club on Holmes Road on the following grounds:

The application contravenes the following policies in the Kentish Town Neighbourhood Plan:

1. The management of the Stay Club has repeatedly shown unwillingness to meet concerns and complaints of neighbours and residents which KTNF expects in order to support an application (policy D3).
2. The applicant has not submitted Community consultation as suggested in the Kentish Town Neighbourhood Plan (policy CC1, CC2) or directly contacted KTNF.
3. A core objective of the Kentish Town Neighbourhood Plan is to increase availability of affordable housing and local employment via mixed use sites (policies D2, D3, SP2, SSP1, SSP2, SSP3, SSP4, SSP6, SSP7). The Neighbourhood Plan does not support development of student accommodation. Any further densification of student accommodation would further undermine the Plan.

In addition, KTNF raises the following concerns about the fitness of Hallmark and the Stay Club to operate a facility in Kentish Town:

- This is the third attempt by Stay Club to add an extra floor. In 2018, the application to add 42 rooms was refused and defeated at appeal. In 2020, Stay Club returned with an application to add 24 rooms, which again was refused and defeated. KTNF are very concerned that this series of attempts proves that the developer is unwilling to engage with the neighbours. It suggests that the management of Stay Club has one single focus and that is to maximise profits.
- With the existing 439 beds, the building on 65 Holmes Road houses a disproportionately large number of people in a single place.
- A second planning application 2024/0094/P is currently with the council. It proposes the creation of another 8 rooms by converting office space.
- Licensed as student accommodation, the owners have stretched their terms of use. In conventional halls of residence students typically live for a whole academic year and their behaviour is a more balanced mix of studying and partying. StayClub appears to specialise in short-stay groups which are much more disruptive to the community. On that basis, we cannot support an expansion which undermines KTNF policies aimed at encouraging a diverse neighbourhood and a mixed economy.
- Contrary to the supporting documents of the application that stress ordinary student living, and the standard student needs and habits, “students” who stay but do not live in the Stay Club (as the name says) arrive on a weekly basis in big groups (60 to 100/120 people), holiday and party for a short time in big

groups (including at night) to then leave, and make room for new groups. These holidaymakers do not contribute to local life but create undue nuisance and pressure on the local community that the management consistently has failed to mitigate. Despite numerous complaints from neighbours over the years, the Stay Club management appears unable to put procedures in place that eliminate late night noise.

- Compare this with Unite (the managers of Mary Brancker House student accommodation), which works with specific educational institutions, and causes very few issues to the neighbours. The Stay Club, on the other hand, appears to have no arrangements with a specific educational institution.
- Examples of environmental anti-social nuisance inflicted on the residents of Holmes Rd include bus loads of international guests being unloaded at 3am, smoking and congregating around the building during evening and night times, congestion on the narrow pavements of Holmes Rd with trolley cases, all in uniform and branded clothing going on daily outings (and thus very visibly not students of the Unite accommodation), and then returning for a last time in the early morning hours in party mode - loud roaring and screaming, jumping on parked cars to take selfies, etc.
- Residents have noticed ads on booking.com, and local ads that do not specify that the Stay Club accommodation is limited to students. Since student units can legally be built smaller than standard studio accommodation, by renting to adults, this practice adds an additional breach of housing provision, and was a noticeable practice during the COVID lockdown.
- The building in question is the Kentish Town campus of SCL International College which specialises in short-term language courses, that are taught on the premises.
- The SCL website lists Kentish Town campus as the “only language ...provider in London that offers a year-round, all-inclusive campus” (<https://staycampuslondon.com/stay-club-london/kentish-town-campus/>) The film on the SCL-website shows no teaching facilities, but public entertainment spaces in the Stay Club.
- SCL offers courses as short as one week. This is in direct conflict with 6.3.2 of the Design Statement which reads: “The units will only be occupied by students in full or part-time higher education and this will form a clause in the section 106 legal agreement.” We question that a one-week English course - or even a month-long one - can reasonably be described as ‘part-time higher education’.
- No application for change to educational use (Class F1) has been submitted.
- KTNF suggests that the licence conditions of the Stay Club are closely monitored, and that chaperoning services by the Stay Club along the residential streets must be in operation 24/7.
- These, too, need close monitoring to stop the severe disruption of the local KT community by one rogue landlord.

SCL describes itself as a language school:

The only year-round international college in London with on-site accommodation.

Unlike other language schools, at SCL International College you'll find your classrooms in the same building as your accommodation, as well as everything else you need to make your new London life as easy as possible such as a restaurant, social spaces, activity areas, quiet zones, laundry facilities and even a disco.

KICK IT IN KENTISH TOWN

SCL International College Kentish Town provides premium student accommodation with outstanding brand new facilities opened in 2019, including a cinema, disco, gym, coffee shop and spacious social areas.

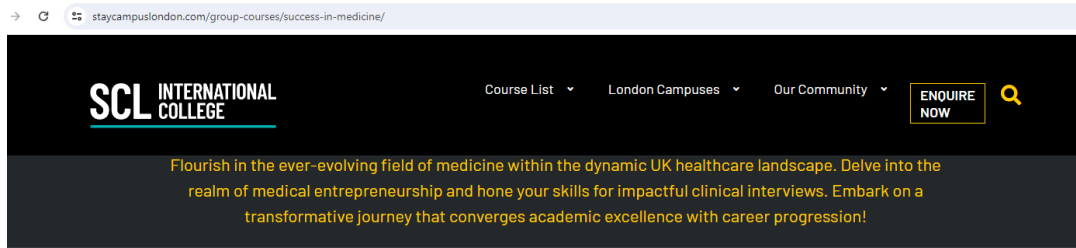
Right around the corner from our [Camden campus](#), Kentish Town is just far enough off the beaten track to fly below the radar, meaning you'll have all the coolest, up-and-coming bars and coffee shops all to yourself. And there's plenty on your doorstep - from leafy Hampstead Heath park to bustling Camden market. Located a short walk of less than five minutes from Kentish Town tube station on the Northern Line and Kentish Town West on the

SCL gives an example teaching schedule with sightseeing programming being very prominent:

TWO-WEEK SAMPLE SCHEDULE

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
BREAKFAST						
GENERAL ENGLISH	GENERAL ENGLISH	GENERAL ENGLISH	GENERAL ENGLISH	GENERAL ENGLISH		
LUNCH					DAY TRIP TO CAMBRIDGE (OR SIMILAR)	FREE TIME TO ENJOY LONDON
NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM	CAMDEN TOWN MARKETS	'ROYAL' WALKING TOUR	NOTTING HILL	MUSEUM OF LONDON		
DINNER						
FREE TIME	DISCO	FREE WALKING TOUR	MOVIE NIGHT	FREE TIME	FREE TIME	FREE TIME

Even courses that are headlined as something other than language are short, example here is called 'Success in Medicine':



SUCCESS IN MEDICINE

Success in Medicine is a two-week orientation programme meticulously designed for international students preparing for their academic journey in the UK.

This condensed course equips you with essential skills and knowledge to thrive in UK medical universities. Topics covered include confident presentation skills specific to medical contexts, mastery of UCAS applications tailored for medical studies, research and referencing proficiency in the medical field, essential clinical skills, and strategies for autonomous learning in a medical setting.

Additionally, we provide insights into the UK's medical higher education landscape, critical thinking in a medical context, navigating medical campus life, accessing wellbeing support in a medical environment, honing medical academic writing, and embracing cultural diversity within the medical field. By the course's end, you'll possess the confidence and competence needed to excel academically and personally in the diverse and enriching environment of British medical universities.

The Stay Club Camden is one of the company's other campuses in London. When you do a Google search on Stay Club, The Stay Club Camden appears under the category of a 3-star hotel. Some of the Google reviews make it very clear what sort of language school/hotel this is:

