

Application No:	Consultees Name:	Received:	Comment:	Response:
2024/1032/P	John Burgess	10/04/2024 17:57:28	OBJ	<p data-bbox="878 132 2040 277">My wife and I have been residents at 11 St Marks Square since 1999 and we have brought up our 3 children here, the youngest is now 18. We love Primrose Hill and everything it has to offer and also love the view we have from the back of our house, in particular the canal and the school, with the joyous sounds of the children playing outside at break time. We are also firm supporters of conservation in the area and particularly enjoy all the small independent shops and restaurants in the village and the fact that there are no retail chains.</p> <p data-bbox="878 316 2040 461">In relation to the planning proposal to which we are responding, we (meaning myself and the residents of 9 & 10 St Marks Square as well) have been over to the school and had a meeting there with David Denoes, and the contractor who would be responsible for the work. We also met the headmaster of the school, Liam Frost, who came out to join us while we were there. We discussed all aspects of the plan and came away with the following conclusions:</p> <p data-bbox="878 499 1128 521">HEALTH AND SAFETY</p> <p data-bbox="878 560 2040 705">None of us were able to identify any material health and safety issues related to the metal fencing, the wooden trellis and the ivy on the wall between our houses and the school. If the school or council believes otherwise, we respectfully request that they provide evidence to justify and explain this concern. We share the same interest in ensuring the safety of the children and would appreciate a clear understanding of any potential risks.</p> <p data-bbox="878 743 1025 766">AESTHETICS</p> <p data-bbox="878 804 2040 917">We all believe (and the headmaster concurred with this view in a personal capacity) that the current wooden trellis is more visually appealing than the metal fencing. Replacing it at a significant expense to taxpayers would be a step backwards in this regard. We question the justification for this change, particularly if it is not based on health and safety grounds.</p> <p data-bbox="878 956 1151 978">CONSERVATION MERIT</p> <p data-bbox="878 1016 2040 1161">While the buildings and walls date back to 1860 and have conservation merit, the metal fencing was likely erected in the 1970s or later and lacks any such merit. We believe that preserving the historical character of the area should be a priority, but this does not including replacing the ugly metal fencing. In passing we question why there is fencing at all, because it seems to us that the walls are already high enough to protect the children.</p> <p data-bbox="878 1200 1249 1222">BOUNDARY WALL ASSUMPTION</p> <p data-bbox="878 1260 2040 1374">We believe that the wall is a boundary wall erected originally by the plan development in the 1860s allowing for horses to pass through the arches which have now been filled in (there was a breweery on the site of the school at that time). Improvements were probably done by the London Clinic and the property developers of Vernon House before we bought our three properties from them in 1999.</p> <p data-bbox="878 1412 2040 1498">We believe that the whole school playground area used to be for horses. Please see a map of the area in 1861 which I believe my neighbour Paul Harvey has circulated to you. Our homes were built before the school. Our homes are all part of what is now called Vernon House. If you see the original Title Plan for Vernon</p>

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House (also provided by Paul Harvey) you can see that the boundary included the wall.

We believe that the school boundaries were only determined in 2005 (see the School's Title Plan and Registry also provided by Paul Harvey).

Unless demonstrated otherwise, we believe that the rights of the school to tamper with the wall are limited. We would appreciate clarification on the ownership and rights regarding the wall.

PROPOSAL VALIDITY

We see no valid reason for the proposal that would benefit the school, the children, or us as residents. We consider that the entire proposal should be reconsidered, and feel that it also represents a waste of valuable taxpayers' money.

IVY OVERHANG

The ivy overhanging the wall at the end of the garden of 11 St Mark's Square (our property) grows from roots in our garden and is therefore our responsibility. To the extent that this represents any health and safety risk to the children, or if for any other reason the school feels that the overhang is undesirable, we are prepared to pay for an expert to carefully trim the ivy on the school side, minimizing the overhang while preserving its presence on the house side, since both we and the neighbours appreciate it climbing up the wall.

As I said at the beginning we share health and safety concerns in general and even more so as regards the children, and we are in favour of conservation when it applies to structures that have been there for a long time and form part of the character of the area which should be retained. In the case of this planning proposal however, we cannot see the merit of the proposals on any grounds whatsoever and would therefore respectfully request that they are withdrawn and that the money saved be spent on issues that are more pressing and merit the expenditure of taxpayers' funds.

John Burgess
