

Application No:	Consultees Name:	Consultees Addr:	Received:	Comment:	Response:
2016/3476/P	Paul Sharp	32 Oakshott Court Polygon Road NW1 1ST	12/07/2016 12:01:34	OBJ	OBJECTIONS AND OBSERVATIONS:

As a leaseholder at Oakshott Court I believe that the Phoenix Road plans for this development needs significant further work as the existing designs are inadequate aesthetically and practically. They make very poor effort to retain even the smallest components of the historic frontage they will replace, and they fail to assess or address the potential for large amounts of sound and light pollution directed at the surrounding flats.

Main points:

1. I do not believe that the current brick wall proposed for Phoenix Rd is sufficiently attractive - it significantly downgrades the aesthetics of the street.
2. I believe that much greater connection to the historic buildings that are to be removed should be made in this new frontage - and can easily be - by retaining and incorporating key architectural stonework from No 34, No. 36 or both.
3. The new frontage must not appear as a kind of gap in the row of buildings along the street, but the current plan does not address this adequately thus it should incorporate more significant architectural elements than just a brick wall and entranceway.
4. The frontage needs to more adequately obscure any floodlighting and properly shield residents nearby from noise. Ideally this should be done using trees and hedges, but also sufficiently high walls along Phoenix road, and by sinking the games area further below ground level and back from the perimeter as much as possible.

Retaining historical architecture and improving the proposed brick wall frontage:

The two buildings on Phoenix road - nos 34 and 36 are included on Camden's "local list". As a local resident I can attest to the significant visual benefit these buildings provide to Phoenix Road. Though their architectural qualities may not be unique or exceptional, they are attractive and convey a very appealing period character to this part of the street both at ground level and with their varied rooflines above the treetops. I believe that this character should not be lost and is important to Somers Town, linking the built environment with the area's rich history. It is a tragedy to completely replace such history with relatively unexceptional modern architecture

The large doorway of No. 34 is a feature of the street and its history, where students file in each morning and teachers hurry them in. Though smaller, the doorway of No. 36 is also characterful. To lose both these aspects of the street frontage would be very sad, especially as the current replacement brick wall is both oppressive and architecturally uninspired.

I believe that some of this character should be retained through the careful re-use of the architectural features of the old buildings in the new frontage - the key features being the mentioned Georgian and Victorian entrances of the buildings.

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The tall stone/brick doorway surrounds of No. 34 could be incorporated in the new wall on Phoenix road as a grand 2nd entranceway within the new brick frontage. The Planning Statement mentions considering this but rejecting it due to its size. But that is to misunderstand its potential role in the new scheme.

The use of this historic stonework would make a more welcoming and interesting frontage on Phoenix road and provide a strong link with the period buildings that made way for the development.

Although a larger entrance would also be required alongside, the grandeur of the period entrance would stand out attractively as part of the street frontage and provide a continuation of the idea of the historic school doorway through which generations of students have passed. It is currently in use, so I reject the argument that it can have no role in future due to its size.

Proper assessment and screening of light and noise:

Since the MUGA area behind the Phoenix Rd frontage will be for outdoor games, including games at night, I believe there should be much more effort made to screen noise and light. A proper impact assessment for residents of Oakshott Court and the other surrounding blocks of flats is needed. The Design and Access statement makes worrying little mention of these issues. Nowhere can I even find information about when the MUGA will be closed each night, whether the floodlight bulbs will be visible from flats, what dB increase in noise level it presents etc. This is irresponsible planning.

Oakshott Court is unfortunately extremely well orientated to receive all noise and light from the Phoenix road direction into each flat's living rooms and bedrooms through their large single-glazed balcony doors. Decades of resident complaints await the council and the staff of the school if this is not properly planned for now.

Local residents currently experience a very quiet neighbourhood, especially at night. There is almost no traffic noise in the area and residents can enjoy very quiet evenings - with windows and balcony doors wide open in summer (a necessity when the weather is hot). A person's voice can easily be heard on still nights as they talk on Phoenix road. When this is replaced by teams of school girls yelling on the games area the ability for residents to sleep or relax in the evenings will likely be severely compromised. Did the planners and architects ever visit the area at night to observe this? How many dB will be added to the current street noise levels when the MUGA is in full use?

A better option would have been an enclosed building given the proximity and density of homes in the area. An open floodlit sports area in use most evenings of the week represents a grave threat to the peaceful home life of local residents. Unless the impact of the MUGA is properly assessed and mitigated now I foresee major issues for all stakeholders.

All the current trees on Phoenix Road are tall and deciduous and will offer no light or sound screening

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in winter. It may help to incorporate a much thicker natural screen of tall trees and a thick hedge directly behind and/or in front of the brick wall.

The games area may need to be sunken further below ground level, and shifted back from the street. Acoustic baffles of some kind may be needed all around the MUGA perimeter.

The proposed wall may need to be higher than the current plans and avoid the metal grill gaps as it currently appears wholly insufficient to protect the residents nearby from noise and light pollution. However it must also avoid worsening the oppressive, brutal nature of the current wall design. Hence an expert selection of sound-absorbing plants, hedges, ivy, evergreen trees etc is also needed to augment the plans.

I cannot support the plans in their current form as they fail to assess or address any of these issues.

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