



Subject: Land at the former Maria Fidelis School Starcross Street London - objection to planning application



Application ref: 2021/3796/P

Dear Mr Marfleet,

Further to my letter on 4th September requesting an extension of time to respond to these plans, as a local resident I would like to register my objection to the proposals in their current form for the following reasons:

Site location: The HS2 block will cater for up to 2,500 staff at any one time. The CSC will host an additional 120 students and 30 staff. This is on a site which will also be home, according to the plans, to the former Maria Fidelis school building as co-working office space. This a significant increase in footfall and activity to this area which suffers from significant anti-social problems. There is no acknowledgement of stress already endured in this area including on-going noise, pollution and disruption from major HS2 works in the immediate vicinity, rubbish, drugs and anti-social behaviour, or suggestions as to how this proposed development might help mitigate this stress if the building is located here. There are references to skills training at the CSC for people in the borough of Camden, but not direct benefits in relation to the young people in the

vicinity of the proposed building and surrounding streets. For these reasons this is not an appropriate site for the above development.

Scale and massing: the building will be at least one storey taller plus plant than Maria Fidelis, the dominant building in the immediate area. It will be higher than the tallest part of George Mews on NGS. The planning statement states the development will be the 'front door' to HS2 Euston HQ from the Hampstead Road. I believe this does not accord with the townscape or local character of the surrounding area, such as Starcross St or North Gower Street, which is predominantly 4 storeys and with several listed buildings in close proximity to the site.

Design: the proposal is for portacabins wrapped in plastic vinyl and mechanically ventilated. Even though the application is for a temporary 10 year permission, it is noticeable that the design is not higher quality or more sustainable (eg solar panels, rainwater retention, non mechanical ventilation) at a time of acute climate crisis. I attended a consultation by the applicants on the design of the proposal - this focused on the design and colour of the vinyl wrap rather than the design, or height/massing of the building.

Noise: It is not clear how noise from the roof plant will be controlled or mitigated. The service yard for HS2 will be open 24 hours a day, and the HS2 site open 7am-7pm, Saturday 7-2pm, the CSC will be open Monday to Friday 8-6pm. It is not clear how noise - particularly at night - will be controlled in this densely populated residential area.

Access: The principal access to the CSC centre will be via the 'community garden' on Starcross Street. It is easy to see how the garden will be used as an amenity space for CSC centre, rather than being a space for the community (although I understand the garden will be open at weekends, when the CSC centre is closed). We understood that this garden was intended for community use - in part as replacement for the loss of St James' Gardens as a result of HS2. It is not clear how parking will be controlled with HS2 workers who drive to site at weekends (free parking on surrounding streets).

For these reasons I wish to register my objection to the proposals. I would be grateful if you could keep me updated on the outcome of this application.

Kind regards,
Henrietta Billings