

*Campden Hill Residents' Association
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Tel: 020 7229 5684

Councillor Merrick Cockell
Leader of the Council
Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea
The Town Hall
Hornton Street
London W8 7NX

30th January 2008

Dear Cllr Cockell,

LEA Consultation on a new Holland Park School redevelopment proposal

Thank you for your response to my letter dated 21 January.

You indicate in your letter that you believe that the Royal Borough has undertaken enough pre-application consultation on the redevelopment plans for Holland Park School. As the Royal Borough withdrew its planning application before a public enquiry was initiated, we believe that it is imperative that that a fresh look is taken at the plans for the school.

It is clear, for instance, that the Royal Borough could use funds from the Government's Building Schools for the Future (BSF) scheme to help finance a refurbishment for Holland Park, which would make it unnecessary to sell the school play area which amounts to nearly one quarter of the current school site. All your public materials have suggested that BSF finance could not be used to fund improvements and our discussions with the Department for Children, Schools and Families have suggested that this is factually incorrect. As this is a viable option, we believe it should be presented to residents by way of a pre-application consultation.

We also believe that it is unacceptable for the Royal Borough to consider that a small number of public meetings on your plans will be sufficient pre-application consultation on the new proposals. We would expect that the Council would wish to work alongside residents throughout the process of developing plans. It would seem currently that you intend to present residents with finalised proposals for the school, rather than undertaking an open process whereby residents comments and concerns are taken on board.

Whilst we are interested to learn that nearly two third of the Borough's residents will receive a leaflet outlining your proposals, this would again

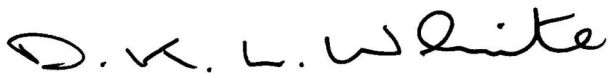
suggest that you intend to present a final scheme rather than accept comments upon it.

Given that the recent *HPS Newsletter Issue 4* from the Royal Borough indicated, somewhat prematurely, that Sport England had given its formal support to your new proposals, when no planning application is yet with them on which to issue a formal planning opinion (as is made entirely clear in the letter from Sport England that you quote selectively in your interview with the Daily Telegraph [published 22 January 2008]) we have little faith that any consultation material on the plans will be open or balanced.

I would also take issue with two further quotations attributed to you in the Daily Telegraph article. You say that the area you propose to sell is a dilapidated tarmac area. It is indeed dilapidated because your Council has neglected to maintain it. With a comparatively small amount of expenditure it could form an ideal all-weather pitch and the extensive and important habitat areas which would be lost under the Council's proposals could be maintained. As Chairman of the local leading residents' association, I am well aware just how misleading it is to say that there has not been widespread opposition of the Council's proposals. Although little, if any, reference has been made to this by the Council during the previous consultation period, more than 90% of respondents expressed their opposition to the Council's proposals. This was again repeated during the planning process.

We appreciate that you are allowing our association to play a part in the process of discussion on the plans for Holland Park School but wish that the Royal Borough would properly listen to residents in the area. It is simply not acceptable for you to suggest that presenting us with a ready designed scheme and having the statutory consultation will enable sufficient pre-application consultation.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "D. K. L. White". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

David White
Chairman

c.c. All Members of the Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea.

Derek Myers, Town Clerk & Chief Executive, Royal Borough
of Kensington & Chelsea

Anne Marie Carrie, Executive Director for Family and Children's Services

Sir John Baker, Chairman of Holland Park School Governing Body

Robin Price, Chairman, Kensington Society

David Le Lay, Chairman, Chelsea Society

Rt Hon Sir Malcolm Rifkind QC MP (Kensington & Chelsea)

Karen Buck MP (Regent's Park & Kensington North)

Angie Bray, AM (West Central Constituency, Greater London Authority)

Ken Livingstone, Mayor of London

Nicky Gavron, Deputy Mayor, Greater London Authority

Sean Holt, London Region Director, Sport England

Baroness Kay Andrews, OBE, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State, DCLG

Jim Knight, Minister of State for Schools, Department for Children, Schools & Families