

## **PLANNING APPLICATION PUBLIC COMMENT**

Application number: PP/21/01425  
Site Address: 81-103 (odd) King's Road, LONDON, SW3 4NX  
Proposal: Demolition of existing building and redevelopment for new building up to five storeys (Use Class E); basement excavation works; creation of a courtyard area at ground and lower ground levels; roof terraces; landscaping works; installation of plant; and associated works.  
(MAJOR APPLICATION)

**Comment received:** PLANNING APPLICATION PP/21/01425 81 - 103 KING'S ROAD

The Chelsea Society exists to protect the interests of all those who live and work here and to preserve the unique character of this part of London. We have around a thousand members.

We object to the above planning application because it is in our view incompatible with the Council's policies on context and character; on design quality; on building heights; and on optimising site capacity through design-led approach.

The current building on the site is not listed, nor is it within a conservation area. But it is located directly opposite the Chelsea Conservation Area and is immediately visible at the end of Markham Street, an unspoiled vista typical of Chelsea. More importantly it is on the King's Road, one of London's most iconic streets. Preserving the unique nature of the King's Road should be a key planning priority for the Council.

King's Road is a shopping street, but it is quite different in character to, for example, Oxford Street, Sloane Street or Kensington High Street. Its defining features, in architectural terms, are its low-rise buildings, the multiplicity and variety of its individual shops, the irregularity of its skyline and its combination of narrowness and airiness. The proposed development would be damaging to this unique character. In particular:-

- The height, scale and massing of the building would have overall an overbearing and dominant impact;

- At the front elevation this would have a canyonisation effect of enclosure on King's Road: the building would be significantly higher than its surroundings and would be an incongruous, monolithic slab in an otherwise heterogeneous streetscape. The view down Markham Street would be damaged.

- At the rear it would cause harm to existing houses, given that its proposed height and scale is significantly greater than what currently exists: the proposed green wall would not mitigate the loss of light and the building's bulk would adversely affect their outlook.

The proposal would thus be contrary to the following Council Policies

a) Pg 182 - Policy CL1 Context and Character states that the Council will require all development to respect the existing context, character and appearance, taking opportunities available to improve the quality and character of buildings and the area and the way it functions, including being inclusive for all.

b)Pg 185 - Policy CL2 Design Quality states that the Council will require all development to be of the highest architectural and urban design quality, taking opportunities to improve the quality and character of buildings and the area and the way it functions.

c) Pg 203 - Policy CL12 Building Heights states that the Council will require new buildings to respect the setting of the borough's valued townscapes and landscapes, through appropriate building heights. To deliver this the Council will, inter alia, a. require proposals to strengthen our traditional townscape in terms of building heights and roofscape by requiring developments to: i. reflect the prevailing building heights within the context ii. provide, for larger developments, a roofscape that reflects that of the context of the site; iii. seldom use height to express local landmarks so the prevailing building height is maintained; b. resist buildings significantly taller than the surrounding townscape other than in exceptionally rare circumstances, where the development has a wholly positive impact on the character and quality of the townscape; etc

d)

Pg 125 - Policy D3 Optimising site capacity through the design-led approach - which includes the requirements - ref `Form and layout' 1) enhance local context by delivering buildings and spaces that positively respond to local distinctiveness through their layout, orientation, scale, appearance and shape, with due regard to existing and emerging street hierarchy, building types, forms and proportions and `Quality and character' 11) respond to the existing character of a place by identifying the special and valued features and characteristics that are unique to the locality and respect, enhance and utilise the heritage assets and architectural features that contribute towards the local character.

We have other concerns about the application.

It involves the excavation of two basements, something which it is the Council's policy only to allow in the case of a large site where all construction activity can take place in an enclosed space. It is not clear to us that this condition can be satisfactorily fulfilled in this case.

The space allocated for servicing the range of commercial and other activities which are envisaged for the site is rather small. We

would urge the Council to satisfy itself that what is proposed is realistic.

The construction activity which will take three years, has the potential to cause massive disruption to life on the King's Road. A robust and credible Construction Traffic Management Plan will be required. We are not convinced that the applicant has yet produced one.

We have put some of these concerns to the developers during the course of the consultations which they have undertaken with the Chelsea Society. In doing so we acknowledged that the concept they are working on is in many respects attractive and imaginative and that some of the facilities which it embodies would be an asset to Chelsea. A lower, less massive building of this design might be welcome. But in its current form it is too high, too dominant and too monolithic

Planning committee member (Royal Hospital Ward), The Chelsea Society

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Comment type: Objection