

# Comments for Planning Application 13/00832/FUL

## Application Summary

Application Number: 13/00832/FUL

Address: Former Ruskin College Site Walton Street Oxford Oxfordshire

Proposal: Redevelopment of existing student accommodation and teaching site comprising the demolition of all buildings, with exception of the 1913 Ruskin College facade to Walton Street and Worcester Place, and erection of 90 student study rooms, 3 Fellows/Staff residential rooms, teaching facilities, library archive social space, landscaping and associated works.

Case Officer: Angela Fettiplace

## Customer Details

Name: Mrs Mary Keen

Address: 4 Walton Street Oxford

## Comment Details

Commenter Type: Neighbours

Stance: Customer made comments neither objecting to or supporting the Planning Application

Comment Reasons:

- Effect on adjoining properties
- Effect on character of area
- Height of proposal
- Light - daylight/sunlight
- On-street parking

Comment: 4 Walton Street

Oxford OX1 2HG

14 May 2013

With regard to the planning application for:

EXETER COLLEGE, Ruskin College Site, Walton Street

I should like to add a further comment to those I made on 12 February 2013.

Blocking of light because of the height of building along Worcester Place: As this is already a very narrow street the proposed added height of the building if permitted to proceed according to the planning application will deprive the south side of the street of light to a far greater degree than is at present the case. The houses opposite will be in shadow which will be a real sadness for the residents.

My other comments, below, remain the same:

My house is on the corner of Walton Street and Worcester Place. I am the nearest neighbour to this site. I am pleased at the thought of having undergraduates as neighbours, but there are some points which I am anxious to raise at this planning stage.

1. Cycling arrangements and bike parking
2. Parking

3. Roof height alteration

4. Finish of building and glass glare

Causes of concern

I raised all these points when I attended the public exhibition on 31 January 2013 in Ruskin College, and handed in a paper on them at the Jericho Residents Meeting on 11 February.

1 Cycling and Parking

Cycling

The arrangements proposed for wheeling bicycles in to the College need to be reconsidered. The solution may be to make access to the bike racks proposed in the College accessible through Walton Street and not through the side entrance on Worcester Place. I know this presents a challenge, but serious issues of public safety are involved, set out in detail below:

There is provision on the plans for bike racks inside the College. The proposed access to these at present is through an entrance on Worcester Place, which is a one-way street. This is a dangerous idea, which is really at odds with public safety. Already, Worcester Place is narrow, there is a junction with Walton Lane which is two way and has garages constantly used, there are two disabled parking spaces between Walton Lane and Walton Street. Even at present, before any more cyclists are added, there are occasions when people cycle against the one-way regulation. It is predictable that cyclists leaving the College via the Worcester Place entrance will mount and ride up Worcester Place to Walton Street against the regulation, and with the already narrow road, parked on both sides, accidents are all too probable. This is not a situation which should be allowed to occur, and I fear that if it did pass the planning stage tragedies and sad incidents would cause things to be rethought and modified.

There is a proposal for a cycle rack on Worcester Place. This will replace one of the few parking spaces, referred to below. It will not be in sight of the Porters Lodge. I fear it will become neglected and degraded, with bicycles left there with punctures and bits stolen. For example, on the corner of Walton Street and Worcester Place there is a bike rack with currently a bike with a punctured wheel. It has been there some time and I fear it will soon be plundered for parts and become a wreck.

I have metal railing along the Worcester Place side of my house. At present there is occasionally a bike parked against them, but if this were to become an informal bike park I would strongly object. The arrangements for cyclists should be seriously rethought, bearing in mind the likelihood of undergraduates taking chances and seizing opportunities.

Parking I strongly object to any parking spaces being removed. There are few enough already for visitors and workmen. We cannot afford to lose any more. In particular, the two spaces at the Walton Street front of Ruskin are very useful, with one hours parking, and are constantly in use. During the presentation at the Jericho Meeting all the photographs shown of the current front of Ruskin College demonstrated that these two spaces are in constant use, strikingly by the repair vans of the City Council, perhaps working on those houses opposite which belong to the Council. Please do not remove them. Moreover the proposed widening of the pavement there will result in a narrowing of the road, which is already hardly wide enough as cars and larger vehicles queue for the lights at the Beaumont Street/Walton Street junction. When I raised this point at the 31 January exhibition I was told that this alteration would only align this stretch of road with the width

of the rest of Walton Street. Extra width is highly desirable and no narrowing should be allowed, particularly as there are bus stops involved. On Worcester Place all the parking spaces are needed, so the loss of one for the proposed bike rack would be bitterly regretted and resented.

## 2. Roof height and finish of buildings.

Height: Jericho is remarkable for the low height of its buildings, and already Ruskin stands out above its surroundings. It is a deviation from this harmonious area to raise the roof of the Ruskin Building above its existing level. The College argues that they need to house a certain number of undergraduates on the site, but there is scope for building extra height on the proposed undergraduate rooms in the North Quad.

Finish: The cladding descending from the roof down the side of the building does not look in keeping with the street on the Worcester Place side. I understand that the bronze-coloured metal tiles used will not alter in colour over time but glare on the surface would be objectionable. It looks too imposing for the area. Residents have not been shown an example of finish proposed.

Glare on glass end of building looking down Worcester Place at right angles to it. These windows will catch the sun. The Wolfson Building inside Somerville College wall further down on the east side of Walton Street has windows with darkened glass which overcomes the problem of glare and looks very handsome at sunset. I would like thought to be given to the finish