

## Comment on a planning application

### Application Details

**Application:** 2025/0074

**Address:** Mount Clare Campus Minstead Gardens Roehampton Gate SW15 4EE

**Proposal:** Use as hostel accommodation (Sui generis) with associated landscaping and cycle parking

### Comments Made By

**Name:** Miss Susan Marks

**Address:** 39 SWAYTHLING HOUSE TUNWORTH CRESCENT LONDON SW15 4PQ

### Comments

**Type of comment:** Object to the proposal

**Comment:** I do not oppose the idea of putting these shamefully neglected and dilapidated buildings to good use. However, I am deeply concerned about the risks the current proposal poses to both the potential residents and the surrounding community.

If this project genuinely aims to improve the lives of people who have fallen—for whatever reason—through so many cracks, it must not become a mere “storage facility” for the homeless. It requires significantly more thought, transparency, and planning to ensure the wellbeing of future residents and to address the legitimate concerns of the local community. In particular, there must be clarity on who exactly would be accommodated, and who would be held accountable for the site’s effective and responsible management.

Additionally, the complete lack of engagement with the local community—whose input could have fostered empathy and support—instead risks creating an atmosphere of fear, resistance, and conflict.

#### Key Concerns:

**Living Conditions:** The majority of the units are single rooms of just 12m<sup>2</sup> which, however well-appointed with cooking and bathing facilities, is barely adequate for one person and their belongings. Most residents would be living cheek by jowl with seven strangers and the only escape offered from such a claustrophobic and potentially tense situation are the meagre communal facilities in a windowless basement. The “look and feel of communal areas” illustrated in an earlier proposal document is entirely misleading and does not match the current proposal. In fact, the new proposal increases population density compared to last year’s version (and the preceding staff and student numbers) by converting the potentially useful ground floor of Picasso House into more bed-spaces rather than shared amenities.

**Local Amenities and Accessibility:** The area offers very few local amenities—aside from Richmond Park and two small shops. Other necessary services are two or three bus stops away, and the only large, affordable supermarket (Asda) requires taking two separate buses. The claim that the area is well-served by “numerous local buses” does not align with reality; the two only two regular daytime routes do not even meet TfL’s own Quality of Service benchmarks (source: Putney News, May 31, 2025).

**Oversight and Management:** According to an earlier proposal “It is proposed to lease the accommodation to a Council, or a housing association who will oversee the landlord functions for the site”. While the management protocols include 24 hour security and welfare visits, it is not clear who will ultimately be responsible for ensuring that the protocols are met. Crucially, there is no provision for a permanent, on-site welfare officer—surely essential given the likely complex needs (mental health, healthcare, economic support) of such a large and vulnerable population.

**Community Impact:** “to be frank Roehampton has got large social deprivation” (Councillor Dikerdem at the Cabinet Meeting on June 16th 2025). Placing around 270 vulnerable individuals—many potentially unemployed and without daytime engagement—into an already strained community without sufficient support could exacerbate tensions and lead to serious social consequences. Recent events elsewhere have shown how quickly misinformation and mistrust can ignite

unrest.