

SA 14 Kneller Hall, Whitton

It has been announced that Kneller Hall will be released for disposal. Appropriate land uses include residential (including affordable housing), employment (B uses) and employment generating uses as well as social infrastructure uses, such as health and community facilities. Any proposal should provide for some employment floorspace, including B1 offices. The Council will expect the playing fields to be retained, and the provision of high quality public open spaces and public realm, including links through the site to integrate the development into the surrounding area as well as a new publicly accessible green and open space, available to both existing and new communities.

- Kneller Hall, the 'home of military music', is currently occupied by the Royal Military School of Music.
- Defence Minister Mark Lancaster announced the release of Kneller Hall on 18 January 2016. This was confirmed in the document 'A Better Defence Estate', Nov 2016, where it was stated that there was an intention to release Kneller Hall for disposal in 2020.
- It is acknowledged that conversion or potential redevelopment for residential uses may be needed to support the protection and restoration of the listed building. The provision of residential uses (including affordable housing), will need to respect the site's setting within the historic core of Whitton and ensure that any proposal integrates well within the existing surrounding area and existing Whitton community.
- It is expected that this site will provide some employment uses (B uses), including lower cost units suitable for small businesses, the voluntary sector, creative industries and scientific and technical businesses including green technology. Other employment generating uses, such as a hotel, may also be supported.
- Social infrastructure and community uses, such as leisure, sport and health uses, should be incorporated and the need for such facilities should be fully explored.
- It is expected that the existing playing fields will be retained and where possible upgraded, such as with ancillary facilities, including changing provided to support the use of the playing fields, provided that any existing ecological benefits and the openness and character of the Metropolitan Open Land is retained and, where possible enhanced.
- Any redevelopment proposal for the whole site will require the restoration and enhancement of the existing Grade II listed building (Kneller Hall). The reuse of this historic building offers an excellent opportunity to ensure the site incorporates and promotes a cultural and historic legacy of the 'home of military music'. Any development should be sensitive to the significance of the historic building and respond positively to the setting of the listed building.
- Parts of the site are designated as Metropolitan Open Land and development in this area would not be acceptable. There is an expectation that any redevelopment proposal improves the character and openness of the Metropolitan Open Land.
- Any scheme will need to ensure that the site establishes a positive relationship with the surrounding area. This should also include increased permeability for pedestrians and cyclists through the site.
- A Masterplan / site development brief will be prepared in conjunction with the Council and in cooperation with local communities. This will guide future development and land uses for this site, and determine the appropriate scale, form and design of development, ensuring that the scheme also contributes to the vitality and viability of Whitton as a whole.
- Design objectives and general guidance relating to the local character of the area, which the redevelopment of this site should have regard to, is set out in the Whitton and Heathfield Village Planning Guidance SPD.

