

**CLOSES ON Monday 10 August 2021: KANDA Survey for London Square's proposed development for 16 storey and 11 storey tower blocks next to John Kewis in open space right next to the Thames**

**THAMES SIDE WHARF – Please comment now. Here are my comments. You can post your responses through this link: <https://thamessidekingston.co.uk/have-your-say/>**

**Q1: How would you best describe yourself?**

I live in Canbury Ward near Richmond Park. The rise of the land means I can even see high towers in Kingston Town Centre from my house over one kilometre away. The towers are destroying the heritage, and historic and natural environment of Kingston . Kingston is an ancient market town and has a Grade I listed All Saints Church, the G1 listed Clattern Bridge and the G1 Listed Coronation Stone at its heart. It also lies adjacent to the River Thames which is protected, can be viewed from G1 listed Richmond Park and from listed Bushy Park, Home Park and Hampton Court Palace. Kingston Bridge is also listed Grade 2\*. The whole of Kingston Town is therefore due significant protection. This has been noted in the new London Plan in policy SD1 on Opportunity Areas, where the Mayor of London has stated that "Kingston town centre, with its ancient market is rich in heritage and forms an important part of the setting of Hampton Court Palace, its gardens, the Thames and surrounding Royal Parks". This needs to be respected in the type of development that comes forward in the area. This proposed development is destructive to Kingston's heritage.

**Q2: Do you agree that the site is currently underutilised and that development for it is welcome?**

Strongly disagree

**Q3. Are you aware of any health or well-being issues in the local community or area?**

High exposure to pollution from heavy traffic and light pollution; danger to wildlife from lack of open, green space close to the river in this location. Lack of green space and recreational areas for local residents and the local community in Kingston Town Centre, especially with the development of the Old Post Office and redevelopment of Eden Quarter and the Unilever/ Cube towers as well as the proposals for development of Canbury Place Car Park and the Canbury Business Park. This space is desperately needed as open green space for the people of Kingston Town and beyond to enjoy. If developers rely on new residents all going to protected habitats in Bushy Park and Richmond Park for their recreation, these will be destroyed and people's mental health will suffer as they realise that they are responsible for the destruction of invaluable biodiversity and natural and historical heritage of national significance.

**Q4. Do you agree that the redevelopment of this site will help to facilitate the wider regeneration of this part of Kingston's riverside?**

Strongly disagree

#### **Amenity Space**

"In addition to balconies for each home, there will also be communal roof terraces with dedicated play areas for residents to enjoy.

These spaces will be heavily greened and will offer a tranquil amenity space for residents of the building."

**Q5: Do you agree that a brownfield site such as Thames Side Wharf should be prioritised when considering sites to be used to deliver Kingston's housing targets?**

Strongly disagree

6. The redevelopment of the site offers a unique opportunity to provide new public realm along the Thames, increasing health and wellbeing in the local area and providing a better experience for residents and visitors.

The activation of this part of the riverside in particular will help to complete the link between Canbury Gardens to the north of the site to the array of bars, restaurants and cafes to the south.

The space will encourage pedestrian movement along the water's edge, inviting those using the area to make full use of the space along the river.

The space will also be landscaped with new trees and planters, offering much needed greening to the area, which is heavily built up. This new greening, along with new benches for public use, will encourage people to use this space to sit and relax. There also is an opportunity to include play opportunities for younger children.

**Q6. Do you agree that the provision of increased greening and pedestrianisation will make this part of the riverside more attractive to walk through, visit and spend time?**

Strongly disagree

**We are keen to hear the thoughts of the local community to understand what you would like to see in this space to make it truly attractive to local residents, workers and visitors to the area.**

I would like to see a park in this space with no development on it at all. Recreational space on roofs is an unacceptable alternative to green space at ground level and will be devoid of biodiversity. Kingston Town Centre is already short of open space with massive residential developments happening or planned on the Old Post Office Site, Canbury Place Car Park, Kingfisher and Cattle Market sites and the Guildhall. This proposal will not open up the area. It will close it down with a huge tower and many more people. It will not be affordable to local people as prices in such a prime riverside location will start so high that - even with a discount to market price - they will not be in any way affordable.

**New commercial space**

Contributing to the new creative quarter

This part of Kingston Town Centre comprises mainly parking and is less animated and populated compared to the rest of Kingston. It also does not have a clear purpose or vision. We have therefore looked at the potential wider role of Thames Side Wharf in transforming this "forgotten" quarter.

Alongside wider work by Kingston Council, including the recently published Canbury Gardens Masterplan and their Reimagining Kingston Town Centre's Streets and Spaces Strategy, future development on Thames Side Wharf can contribute towards a successful, vibrant and inclusive town

centre which supports the delivery of good growth. A key objective of the proposals is therefore to support and facilitate the realisation of a Creative Quarter in this part of Kingston.

We currently envision the proposals including new commercial space at ground floor. This space will be allocated as Class E. Class E is a flexible, catch-all use class that can be used for a variety of spaces, including:

- Retail
- Cafes and Restaurants
- Fitness
- Offices/workspace
- Nurseries

We are designing this space to be a flexible creative space to contribute to the new Creative Quarter envisaged by the Council for this part of Kingston.

However, we would be interested to hear your views about what you would like to see delivered. The space is flexible and can be used for a variety of uses, and we want to work with the local community to identify the local needs and priorities for space in this key riverside location.

#### **Q7. What would you like to see this space used for?**

I would like to see open green space in the form of a park in this key riverside location

#### **Improved Accessibility**

Opening the site up

The proposals for Thames Side Wharf will open up the site and offer better connections along the River Thames and into the town centre.

Pedestrians have been put into the forefront of our public realm strategy, and the new riverside space has been designed to accommodate those travelling on foot. As well as the public realm improvements immediately adjacent to the river, the proposals seek to enhance the pedestrian experience with widened pavements along Vicarage Road for those accessing the riverside from the Town Centre.

The new landmark building on the riverside will help to draw attention to this new space, whilst the public realm improvements will allow for a much more pleasant link between the town centre and Canbury Gardens, making both spaces easier to access.

We are currently working with John Lewis to produce a solution that allows for their deliveries to continue, whilst facilitating changes to the road network which will allow the the proposed closure of this part of Thames Side to vehicles to take place.

**NO QUESTION HERE**

#### **Height and design**

***Design***

The design of the building is inspired by the local context and heritage of Kingston, whilst creating its own distinct character.

Across the local area, brick and masonry use is prevalent, in particular white bricks and rich detail, in an Art Deco style. This style was popular in the early 20th Century when part of the town centre was being built.

Although we are still evolving the design and architecture of the proposed buildings for Thames Side Wharf, we envision them having clear references to these distinct styles found elsewhere in the town centre.

The materials will likely be a mixture of light brick and material colours, with metal and concrete detailing across the building to offer relief from the bricks.

### **Height**

The proposals will be carefully designed to respond and respect the local character of the site. This has resulted in a careful balance between optimizing the mix of uses on the site due its accessibility and adhering to the principles and opportunities set out in the Kingston Local Plan, while producing a design solution sensitive to site's proximity to neighbouring residential properties and local heritage assets.

It is noted that the previous permission for the site included buildings rising to 11 storeys and with no affordable housing. This permission was not implemented for viability reasons. For redevelopment to take place, including the delivery of 35% affordable housing and new public realm, a tall building on the site is therefore needed.

The current proposals comprise a building rising to 16 storeys with a shoulder building rising to 13 storeys behind. We are continuing to discuss this with Kingston planning officers, councillors and local stakeholder groups. However, we feel that we have struck the balance between maximising the site's potential to deliver wider benefits to Kingston, whilst respecting the site's context.

### **Q8. Do you agree that the design of the building appropriately references the wider design of Kingston town centre?**

Strongly disagree

### **Q9. Do you agree that varying the heights of the riverside building and the shoulder building next to it means that the impact of the buildings on the townscape is reduced?**

Strongly disagree (No option to comment). This question feels like a trick question...

### **Q10. Please let us know if you have any other comments.**

This proposed development is totally inappropriate in this location and given the huge lack of local ground level green space in Kingston. Your own picture show how Fairfield is the only green space in an area where more than 1000 residential units will be coming forward in the next few years. This is unacceptable as is the significant harm that a high rise development in this location will cause to the Arcadian Thames and to listed assets all around the site and the wider area. In addition, none of the units in this development will be affordable to local people even at a discounted rate.

The last question in the survey is misleading: 9. Do you agree that varying the heights of the riverside building and the shoulder building next to it means that the impact of the buildings on the

townscape is reduced? I don't think that the height of either of the buildings is appropriate in this location

There is also no question on the section labelled "Improved Accessibility". I do not see how building two high rise towers can in any way be deemed to improve accessibility across the area. This is something a park would do. Towers will loom over the area, casting shadows and the huge number of new units will bring many hundreds more new residents in to an already densely built area on the very banks of the Thames.

### **Next steps**

Thank you for taking the time to view our first virtual public exhibition on the early proposals for Thames Side Wharf, Kingston-Upon-Thames.

We will update this website in the coming months with our detailed proposals ahead of submitting a planning application to the Royal Borough of Kingston-Upon-Thames.

At this early stage, we are eager to hear the views of local people on our ideas for the site. We would urge you to provide your feedback, which you can do until 9th August 2021.

On the next page you can find a summary of your answers, which can be submitted alongside your contact details.

Once we have reviewed the feedback we received we will continue to progress our proposals ahead of the next stage of public consultation.

### **privacy notice**

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Thank you for taking the time to fill in this consultation feedback form.

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