

Agenda Item 3

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PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE

19 MARCH 2020

(7.50 pm - 10.00 pm)

PRESENT Councillor Linda Kirby (in the Chair), Councillor Najeeb Latif, Councillor Russell Makin, Councillor Simon McGrath, Councillor Peter Southgate, Councillor Billy Christie, Councillor Rebecca Lanning and Councillor Joan Henry and Councillor Stephen Crowe

ALSO PRESENT Tim Bryson – Planning Team Leader North
Jonathan Lewis – Planning Team Leader South
Lisa Jewell – Democratic Services Officer

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (Agenda Item 1)

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Dave Ward and David Dean
Councillor Stephen Crowe attended for Councillor Dean

2 DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY INTEREST (Agenda Item 2)

There were no declarations of pecuniary interest.

The Committee noted that Councillor Linda Kirby and Councillor Najeeb Latif had both Chaired recent Design Review Panel meetings. At these meetings neither take any part in the debate nor vote on the proposal

3 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING (Agenda Item 3)

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 13 February 2020 were agreed as an accurate record.

4 TOWN PLANNING APPLICATIONS (Agenda Item 4)

Supplementary Agenda: Amendments and modifications to the Officer's report, and an urgent report were published in a Supplementary Agenda. This applied to items 6,7, 8, 9, and 13

Order of the meeting – The Chair announced that the items would be taken in the following order: 9, 8, 5, 7, 6, 10, 11 and 13

5 98A HARTFIELD ROAD, LONDON SW19 3TF (Agenda Item 5)

Proposal: Erection of a shed in rear garden

The Committee noted the officer's report and presentation.

In reply to a Member questions the Planning Team leader North explained that the permission for the shed would be incidental to the flat, which allows uses such as

storage or home gym. If someone were to sleep in it long term this would conflict with the permitted usage.

RESOLVED

The Committee voted unanimously to GRANT Planning Permission subject to conditions

6 LAND REAR OF 27 LEAFIELD ROAD, MERTON PARK, SW20 9AG (Agenda Item 6)

Proposal: Erection of 1x 3 bedroom & 1x 2 bedroom single storey dwellings with associated landscaping

The Committee noted the officer's report and presentation and additional information in the Supplementary Agenda

The Objector had registered to speak but had sent a statement instead, this was read by the Chair. The Objector asked the Committee to note that residents did not want this proposal to be built and that residents would be left, in the long term, with properties that they had objected too.

In reply to Members' questions, the Planning Team Leader South said:

- The access to the site is currently gated, various access rights are conferred on the occupiers of neighbouring properties. The proposal does contain a condition to upgrade the surface of the access road. However the planning process cannot get involved in all the access issues
- The bin carrying distances to the collection point are all acceptable
- There is a condition on landscaping to cover the planting of new trees
- The eaves height of the two bungalows is the same

A member commented that this application represents a clever split of the land compared to the previous application, and the height of the proposed units is more acceptable. Access issues have been dealt with, and the right of way issues can be dealt with separately.

RESOLVED

The Committee voted unanimously to GRANT Planning Permission subject to conditions

7 FORMER MITCHAM FIRE STATION, 30 LOWER GREEN WEST, MITCHAM, CR4 3GA (Agenda Item 7)

Proposal: Erection of hoardings to front of Fire Station for a period of 12 months

The Committee noted the officer's report and presentation and additional information in the Supplementary Agenda

The Committee received a verbal representation from one objector, who made points including:

- The hoardings enclose an excessive area, and should only enclose the building and not a large area of land as well
- They have a damaging visual impact, damaging the uncluttered setting and preventing views of Vestry Hall
- They fail to preserve or enhance the views in the conservation area
- They are contrary to Merton Policy

In reply to Members' questions the Planning team Leader South made points including:

- The Hoardings do enclose land owned by the Council and not the applicant but the Council Property Management team have no objection to this
- There are concrete blocks within the hoardings as an additional measure to prevent illegal occupation of the site
- Permission is sought for 12 months but the committee can debate the length of time allowed
- There were guardians on site but this was when the building was under its previous ownership

Members made comments including:

- Understand that on-site guardians would be expensive but these hoardings could be made more acceptable. For example the hoardings currently on the High Path Estate contain information panels showing the history of the site
- The Building is beautiful but these hoardings are ugly
- Do not think these hoardings are acceptable, if the applicant had sought advice they would not be so bad.

The Planning Team Leader South proposed that as the Hoardings have been installed without relevant permission, but that an application for the site is expected to come forward in the future, it would be reasonable to defer the Committee decision by 3 months in order to allow the applicant to improve the visual impact of the hoardings, for example by adding with history boards.

Members were concerned that if these improvements were not forthcoming than Council Officers would be sanctioned to take enforcement action.

RESOLVED

The Committee voted unanimously to DEFFER Planning Permission whilst the applicant is allowed 3 months to provide visual improvements to the hoardings

8 15, 15A & 17 RUSSELL ROAD, WIMBLEDON, SW19 1QN (Agenda Item 8)

Proposal: Demolition of existing buildings and erection of part two, three and four storey detached buildings comprising of 9 self-contained flats.

The Committee noted the officer's report and presentation and additional information in the Supplementary Agenda

The Committee received verbal representations from two objectors to the application who made points including:

- This is not high quality design, as required by the NPPF
- The proposal would be dominant and oppressive for residents, in an area that is predominantly 2 storey buildings
- It is close to a Conservation Area and the listed building Wimbledon Theatre
- This proposal will result in the loss of two family homes, but none of the proposed units are 3 bedrooomed, they are 1 and 2 bedrooms – which is against Merton Policy
- The proposal is harmful and is not sustainable
- The proposal would not fit into the area which is predominantly residential, the height and massing is too great. Would appear as a four storey building to the neighbours behind.
- The footprint of the proposal would be 90% of the plot, so it would be double the footprint and height of the current building
- Pleased to see the obscured glazing but it is not high enough

The Committee received a verbal presentation from the applicant who made points including:

- The design takes reference from Wimbledon Theatre
- The height is not unreasonable in this area
- It is a highly energy efficient proposal, and is designed using the BRE light model
- Accept that most developments will have some impact on neighbour amenity, but we did try to reduce the design and we did make changes
- We are happy to increase the height of glazed screening to 1.8m prevent any overlooking

In reply to Members questions, The Planning Team Leader North made comments including:

- Wimbledon Theatre will not be affected by the construction, there will be a construction management plan by condition
- Wimbledon Society did not comment on this application
- The Height of the proposal would be a little higher than the height of the current chimneys
- Scheme has been changed regarding the outdoor space it provides. Screening to 1.8m is proposed to prevent overlooking
- There will be some impact to the neighbouring building to the South, but at the back. This is a Town centre location, and Officers have to achieve a balance when considering such applications

- Officers acknowledge that the landscaping could be moved
- The design is stepped in to minimise impact
- These are market homes not retirement homes.

Members made comments including:

- If looking towards the Broadway this is acceptable but if looking the other way down Russell Road it is inappropriate, but over time we will see more of this type of scheme
- The 1 storey buildings will be completely overshadowed by this, and I'm concerned that 6 stories are allowed in the master plan

RESOLVED

The Committee voted to GRANT Planning Permission subject to conditions

9 ABBEY WALL WORKS, STATION ROAD, COLLIERS WOOD, SW19 2LP
(Agenda Item 9)

Proposal: (1) Demolition of existing buildings and redevelopment of site to provide a part three, part five and part six storey block of 70 flats and a commercial unit (204 sqm) at ground floor level (comprising flexible A1 (excluding supermarket), A2, A3, B1, & D1 uses) and an associated landscaping, bin/cycle storage, parking, highway works and alterations to listed wall.

&

(2) Listed building consent for demolition of existing buildings and redevelopment of site to provide a part three, part five and part six story block of 72 flats and A commercial unit (204 sqm) at ground floor level (comprising flexible A1 (excluding supermarket), A2, A3, B1, & D1 uses) and an associated landscaping, bin/cycle storage, parking, highway works and alterations to listed wall.

The Committee noted the officer's report and presentation and additional information in the Supplementary Agenda.

The Committee received a verbal representation from an objector, who raised points including:

- Residents are concerned by this application
- The Planning Officer has made incorrect assumptions in their report – Station Road should not be classed as 'urban', it is a residential road and to describe it as urban is an incorrect representation of the character of the area
- The application will reduce daylight and sunlight to Station Road
- Station Road is a narrow road and not a thoroughfare, it will not be able to support 70 new units and their cars.
- We are not opposed to development of the site but want to see family homes, not the current proposal that is mainly one and two bedroomed units
- We understand that other applications in the area have had to reduce their height to 2 or 3 storeys to get Planning Permission
- The Level of affordable housing is too low

- Parents and Staff at new School will increase cars on this road
- It is not a high quality design
- Concerned about large commercial unit and excess refuse

The Committee received a verbal representation from the Applicant's Agent, who raised points including:

- All relevant Policies and guidance have been met by this application
- All external Consultees have no objection including Historic England
- It is High Quality Scheme
- Want to Emphasis the changes that have been made since we started consultations on this scheme
- The comments of the DRP and Urban Design Officer apply to the previous Scheme not this one
- Overall there has been a 40% reduction in floor space since the previous application went to the DRP (Design Review Panel)
- The amount of affordable housing has reduced as the size of the scheme reduced. The Council's Viability Study supports this
- A social rented 3 bedroomed unit is included
- The CIL payments will be £1.4 million and £30,000 toward a new cycleway
- Repairs to the Grade 2 listed Abbey Wall will be carried out as part of the scheme

The Committee received a verbal representation from the Ward Councillor Eleanor Stringer who raised points including:

- Very aware of need for more housing, and I do not object to providing these homes, but a large number of residents are concerned about the height, massing and loss of light caused by this scheme.
- The amount of affordable is too low at less than 10%
- Recognise that changes have been made to the design and proportions
- An early and late stage review are both necessary
- Heritage has to be recognised in construction and design
- A proper archaeological investigation should be carried out
- This area is the centre of a lot of development and local infrastructure must be improved so I was pleased to see the improvements to the highways and cycle path

The Committee received a written representation from Ward Councillor Nigel Benbow, read to the meeting by the Chair, who raised points including:

- I was initially in favour of redevelopment of this site but this proposal is too high and the massing too great. It will have a major impact on the current residents of Station Road
- I think the gap between the Wall and new building would turn into a rubbish magnet
- The new building at 40 Station Road is more suitable in terms of scale and appearance
- Why did Residents not receive a letter, and why did the consultation begin just before Christmas during the General Election period?

The Planning Team Leader North reminded the Committee of points including:

- The Building is set away from the listed Wall and Historic England Area content with the application
- The Council's viability assessor report supports the provision of affordable homes
- The original application was reviewed by the DRP and changes have been made following their comments. Including reducing the number of units

Members asked officers about the Single Aspect units. The Planning Team Leader North answered with some clarification provided by the Agent, and said that there were 22 single aspect units with 19 of these being North Facing. The Planning Team Leader North explained that this site was a difficult shape and the originally proposed long thin units had been replaced by the current proposal but that had resulted in a number of single aspect units.

The Agent reminded the Committee that the proposal was policy compliant, and that all the single aspect units were studios and 1 or 2 bedroomed units, and that all met relevant standards and the Mayor's guidance, Members were concerned that the single aspect units went against their aspirations for developments in the Borough.

A Member asked the Planning Team Leader North to confirm the Agent's assertion that the provision of single aspect units does conform to the Mayor's Guidance. He replied that the guidance does say that single aspect units, particularly North facing, should be avoided, but that other factors can be taken into account. This is not specific to Merton Policy and a balanced view must be taken. This is an awkward site, the original design for the site was not well received by DRP. The proposal now before you is considered by Officers to solve the previous issues and is now considered acceptable by Officers, and is not in breach of the Mayor's Guidance.

In reply to Members Questions The Planning Team Leader made comments including:

- He could confirm that no external consultee objected to the application
- He could confirm that the level of affordable housing offered was supported by the Council's own viability assessment
- There are two communal outdoor spaces on the roof, the boundaries are soft planting and glazing
- All windows are double glazed and Officers have considered the proximity to Merantun Way. The design is set back as far as possible
- The Climate Change Officer is happy with the scheme, and the carbon shortfall is covered by the S106

Members asked about parking and the ptal rating of 3. Officers replied that as there is currently parking available on Station Road, the parking bays provided by this scheme will formalize this arrangement. Officers confirmed that a ptal of 3 is considered suitable for encouraging sustainable transport options.

Members noted that the Officers report contained details of the pre-app design, which received comments from the DRP. Members noted that the design of the proposal before them had been changed since the DRP comments and that this new design had not been before the DRP.

Officers could not say how many single aspect units had been in this previous design, or how many rooms in current design don't achieve BRE standard for daylight and sunlight.

Officers confirmed that this proposal was not as high as the highest part of the new Harris Academy

A member asked about the DRP comment regarding the application being too close to the listed historic wall, and Officers confirmed that the proposal had been moved slightly further back, away from the wall, following discussions with Historic England

One Member commented that he understood the concerns regarding this application but that it does meet standards, it is clear that the site is a difficult shape, and Historic England was content with the application, he would, however, have liked to see more affordable housing.

Another Member commented that this application could be improved in many ways. He was concerned about the height, and the narrowing towards the eastern end which was in danger of looking ridiculous. There is a problem with the number of single aspect units, and the mix of units is a long way from our ideal. The density figure is high considering the poor ptal rating of 3. It is overdevelopment and too high, something more modest would have been more suitable. He said he was pleased with the development at 40 Station Road. These views were supported by another member who said that it was a poorly scaled building, it did not provide good quality homes, and there were concerns about the daylight and sunlight to the single aspect units and neighbouring properties to the north

A motion to refuse the application was proposed and seconded and carried by the vote.

The Committee were then asked to consider the Listed Building Consent, which sought approval for the impact of the proposal on the setting of the listed wall and for works to the listed wall, which had been found acceptable by Historic England. Members were very concerned that by giving listed building consent they would in some way be giving consent to the main application, just refused. Officers explained to members that this was not the case but suggested as an added assurance that the Chair and Vice Chair be party to the relevant drawing details outside of the meeting.

RESOLVED

The Committee voted to:

1. REFUSE Planning Permission for Proposal 1 -19/P4266 for the following reasons:
 - Height, Bulk, Mass and Scale are all too great
 - The Proposal does not respond positively to its siting, and rhythm

- Proportion of single aspect units is not acceptable
- Too tall in its context, and overly dominant
- Loss of daylight and sunlight to neighbours

2. DELEGATE to the Director of Environment & Regeneration the authority to make any appropriate amendments in the context of the above to the wording of the grounds of refusal including references to appropriate policies

RESOLVED

The Committee voted unanimously to GRANT Listed Building Consent for Proposal 2 – 19/P4268, subject to conditions

10 PLANNING APPEAL DECISIONS (Agenda Item 10)

The Committee noted the report on recent Planning Appeal Decisions

11 PLANNING ENFORCEMENT - SUMMARY OF CURRENT CASES (Agenda Item 11)

The Committee noted the report on recent Planning Enforcement

12 SUPPLEMENTARY AGENDA (Agenda Item 13)

The Committee noted the Supplementary Agenda and the Urgent Report Delegation of Planning Decisions. A member was concerned that the report did not give enough detail regarding:

- what would happen if the Chair was unable to take part
- what would happen if the Chair and Officers did not agree

However the Committee agreed that given the urgent nature of this report it should be agreed as it stood.

RESOLVED

- A. That Committee agrees to delegate authority to make decisions on the matters listed in paragraphs 7.2(a) to (o) of Appendix A to the Director Environment and Regeneration, in consultation with the Chair of the Planning Applications Committee, in cases where, in his reasonable opinion, to delay the decision to the next quorate meeting of the Committee would be detrimental to the interests of the Council or the applicant.
- B. To agree that the Director of Environment may choose to delegate the authority delegated to him to the Head of Development Control should he consider it necessary and appropriate
- C. That this delegation be reviewed after six months or if the law is changed to allow Committee Meetings to be conducted virtually, on the assumption that in

such circumstances, meetings of the Committee will be resumed, whichever is the earlier