

**PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE**  
**14<sup>th</sup> JULY 2016**

<u>UPRN</u>	<u>APPLICATION NO.</u>	<u>Item No:</u>	<u>DATE VALID</u>
	16/P0080		09/02/2016
<b>Address/Site:</b>	Brook House, 1A Cricket Green, Mitcham CR4 4LA		
<b>Ward:</b>	Cricket Green		
<b>Proposal:</b>	Extension to roof to provide 6 residential units (2 x 1-bedroom and 4 x 2-bedroom) and alterations to the external elevations		
<b>Drawing No.'s:</b>	'Proposed Site Plan C1165-301 Rev C2', 'Proposed Roof Plan 15-C1165-922 Rev P5', 'Proposed Roof Extension Level Plan 15-C1165-940 Rev P3', 'Proposed West Elevation 15-C1165-941 Rev P3', 'Proposed North Elevation 15-C1165-942 Rev P3', 'Proposed East Elevation 15-C1165-943 Rev P3', 'Proposed South Elevation 15-C1165-944 Rev P3', 'Substation Plinth & Housing Design GAD-400'		
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Felicity Cox (020 8545 3119)		

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**RECOMMENDATION**

**Subject to any resolution at Full Council on 13th July pertaining to the issue of affordable housing contributions, grant permission subject to a S106 obligation/ Unilateral Undertaking and conditions.**

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**CHECKLIST INFORMATION**

- Is a screening opinion required: No
- Is an Environmental Statement required: No
- Has an Environmental Statement been submitted: No
- Press notice: Yes
- Site notice: Yes
- Design Review Panel consulted: No
- Number of neighbours consulted: 50
- External consultations: 0
- Controlled Parking Zone: No

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 This application is being brought to the Planning Applications Committee for determination due to the level of public interest and the site's location within a Conservation Area.

## **2. SITE AND SURROUNDINGS**

- 2.1 The application site comprises a three storey, modern brick building known as Brook House. Construction works are currently underway to convert the former office building into 46 residential units following determination of a "prior approval" application (see section 4 - Planning History). The site lies on the north-eastern side of Cricket Green, Mitcham and is within the Mitcham Cricket Green Conservation Area and is in an Archaeological Priority Zone.
- 2.2 The building is not listed, however is noted to be located next to the three storey Mitcham Court which is on the LBM Local List of Buildings of Historical or Architectural Interest. Mitcham Court is currently used as a school. To the south of the site, on the opposite side of the footpath (Cold Blows) is a two storey house that has been converted into a day care nursery and numerous single and two storey buildings accommodating NHS clinics at Birches Close.
- 2.3 The Mitcham Cricket Green to the west of the site is designated as metropolitan open land, open space, green corridor, green chain and within the Wandle Valley Regional Country Park.
- 2.4 Access to the site is via both the front elevation from Cricket Green and via the rear elevation from Chatsworth Place.

## **3. CURRENT PROPOSAL**

- 3.1 The current proposal is for an extension to the roof to provide 6 new residential units (2 x 1-bedroom and 4 x 2-bedroom self-contained flats) and alterations to the external façade.
- 3.2 The original scheme submitted proposed a mansard style roof with dormers which created 9 residential units. Following consultation, the current scheme was submitted that reduced the number of flats to 6 and reduced the extent of changes to the existing roofline. The proposal also removed the originally proposed dormer windows.
- 3.3 The current proposal is to alter the pitch of the roof by 2.5 degrees to create sufficient ceiling height internally for the new flats. The ridge of the roof would be approximately 43mm higher than the height of the existing ridge. The proposal retains the central entrance and tower with faceted roof, although does increase the pitch of this roof element to match the alterations proposed to the primary hipped roof. Conservation grade Velux rooflights are proposed to the all roofslopes.
- 3.4 The existing stairwells on the northern and southern side elevations would also be increased in height to facilitate staircase access to the new roof storey of the building, though this will be set below the ridge height of the main roof.

- 3.5 Proposed materials include the use of reclaimed slate from the existing roof and new slate factor matched to the existing.
- 3.6 Other external alterations to the façade include a new smooth white render finish to the second floor with brickwork soldier courses. Feature white render elements are also proposed on the ground and first floors, the central element on the principal façade of the building and to the stair cores.
- 3.7 A new substation is proposed to contain the required updated electrical intake by the statutory electricity authority. The substation will have dimensions 2.8m wide x 2.8m deep, 2.2m to eaves and 2.4m to peak of roof (gable roof) and will be located in the north-western corner of the front car park (Cricket Green frontage). The substation will be of simple construction and finished in Green GRP (Glass-fibre Reinforced Plastic).

#### **4. PLANNING HISTORY**

- 4.1 The site has the following relevant planning history:

15/P4281 - ALTERATIONS TO ELEVATIONS COMPRISING INSTALLATION OF REPLACEMENT WINDOWS IN CONNECTION WITH THE CHANGE OF USE OF THE OFFICE BLOCK TO RESIDENTIAL USE PERMITTED UNDER PRIOR APPROVAL DECISION REFERENCE 15/P0671 - Grant Permission subject to Conditions

15/P0671 PRIOR APPROVAL IN RELATION TO THE CHANGE OF USE OF OFFICE SPACE ON GROUND, FIRST AND SECOND FLOORS (CLASS B1a) TO RESIDENTIAL (CLASS C3) CREATING 46 x SELF-CONTAINED FLATS - Prior Approval Not Required

14/P0273 PRIOR APPROVAL IN RELATION TO THE CHANGE OF USE WITHIN A CONSERVATION AREA OF OFFICE SPACE ON GROUND, FIRST AND SECOND FLOORS (CLASS B1) TO RESIDENTIAL (CLASS C3) CREATING 21 x SELF-CONTAINED FLATS, COMPRISING 10 x 1 BED, 9 x 2BED AND 2 x 3 BED FLATS - Prior Approval Not Required

11/P2839 - CHANGE OF USE FROM (CLASS B1) OFFICES TO (CLASS D1) EDUCATIONAL USE - Grant Permission subject to Conditions

#### **5. CONSULTATION**

- 5.1 Fifty (50) neighbouring properties were consulted by letters, a site notice was displayed and a press notice was published.
- 5.2 Four representations were received; three from residents and one objection from the Mitcham Cricket Green Community & Heritage Group. Comments to the proposal were as follows:
- Extra traffic and disturbance when combined with the prior approval conversion of the building
  - Negatively visual impact on view from Mitcham Cricket Ground, adjoining Mitcham Court building and will be more visible from a distance

- Roof adds bulk to already large building and results in loss of balance, presenting as a higher building
- New full length windows are unbalanced and out of proportion with the building
- Proposal does not promote high quality sustainable design
- Insufficient provision of parking and additional parking stress on surrounding area
- Other external works such as rendering considered to improve visual impact of the building
- Errors in supporting documentation provided by applicant
- Dormer windows will be intrusive and result in loss of privacy
- Loss of light from new roof
- Contributions and CIL will not negate impact on schools, leisure and public open space from the development

5.3 Re-consultation was undertaken following receipt of amended plans. Two further objections were received (one from a resident who submitted during the original consultation period and one objection from the Mitcham Cricket Green Community & Heritage Group). The objections reiterated the above comments in addition to the following:

- The amended roof form would still be visually harmful to the building and conservation area by disrupting the roof elevations and increasing the perceived height;
- Amended roof design is not consistent with other roof styles in conservation area;
- Concerns over impacts of new broadband street cabinet located out the front of the property and new electricity substation;
- No strong commitments made to energy and water efficiency and the sustainability of the construction materials

5.4 Transport Officer: No objections. Level of parking provision and cycle provision for new flats is considered acceptable.

5.5 Environmental Health – No objections or comments.

5.6 Conservation Officer – objected to original proposal on basis that design, scale, bulk and massing of the mansard roof addition with overly large dormer windows will have negative impact on character of conservation area. In response to the issues raised by the conservation officer, the applicants submitted a revised scheme that reduced the extent of changes to the roof profile and removed the dormer windows.

5.7 Tree Officer – recommended the substation is located outside of root zone of lime trees along southern boundary so as to not impact on the existing trees. In response to these comments, the applicants have relocated the location of the substation to the north-western corner of the site away from the trees.

## **6. POLICY CONTEXT**

- 6.1 NPPF - National Planning Policy Framework (2012):  
Part 6 Delivering a wide choice of high quality homes  
Part 7 Requiring Good Design.
- 6.2 London Plan (2015).  
3.3 Increasing housing supply;  
3.4 Optimising housing potential;  
3.5 Quality and design of housing developments.  
5.3 Sustainable design and construction.  
6.9 Cycling  
7.4 Local character  
7.6 Architecture  
7.8 Heritage assets and archaeology
- 6.3 Merton Sites and Policies Plan (July 2014).  
DM D2 Design considerations in all developments  
DM D3 Alterations and extensions to existing buildings  
DM D4 Managing Heritage Assets
- 6.4 The site is designated as 'Site Proposal 53' on Merton's Sites and Policies Plan and Policies Maps which amongst other uses, including a nursing home or hotel, identifies residential uses as a suitable alternative use for the building.
- 6.5 The site proposal identifies that protecting the residential amenity of the adjacent properties and respecting the character of this part of the conservation are key issues to be addressed as part of any development of the site.
- 6.6 Merton Core Strategy (2011).  
CS 2 Mitcham Sub-Area  
CS 8 Housing choice;  
CS 9 Housing provision;  
CS 14 Design;  
CS 15 Climate change  
CS 18 Active transport  
CS 20 Parking, servicing and delivery
- 6.7 Supplementary Planning Guidance:  
Merton Council Supplementary Planning Guidance – Design (2004)  
London Housing Supplementary Planning Guidance (2016)

## **7. PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS**

- 7.1 The main planning considerations include assessing the principle of development, the need for additional housing and housing mix, impact of the proposal upon the character of the building and Mitcham Cricket Green Conservation Area, the standard of the residential accommodation, affordable housing, the impact on residential amenity and impact on car parking and servicing.

### Principle of Development

- 7.2 The Sites and Policies Plan 2014 'Site Proposal 53' states that the allocated use of the site is any or a mix of community (including education D1 Use Class), nursing home/care home (C2 Use Class), hotel (C1 Use Class) and/or residential (C3 Use Class) uses.
- 7.3 Core Planning Strategy Policy CS9 encourages the development of additional dwellings within residential areas in order to meet the London Plan target of 42,389 additional homes per year from 2015-2036 (Merton - 411 per year). The National Planning Policy Framework 2012 and London Plan policies 3.3 & 3.5 promote sustainable development that encourages the development of additional dwellings locations with good public transport accessibility.
- 7.4 Policy CS 2 seeks to improve the overall environment of the Mitcham area surrounding the Mitcham Town Centre by providing quality shopping, housing, community facilities and good transport links. Policy CS 2 states that council seeks to achieve this by improving the quality and mix of housing and conserving and enhance the historic environment, including around the Cricket Green.
- 7.5 The site has a PTAL rating of 4 which is considered to be very good and is surrounded by residential development. The building is subject to Prior Approval in relation to conversion from office to residential units (46 units) which is currently under construction.
- 7.6 The proposal would provide 6 additional flats in an area of good public transport accessibility, helping to provide a mix of dwelling types within the local area and making a further contribution to housing targets. Thus, the principle of the extension to the building for the purpose of additional flats is considered acceptable.

### Character and Appearance

- 7.7 London Plan policies 7.4 and 7.6, Core Strategy policy CS14 and SPP Policies DMD2 and DMD3 require well designed proposals that will respect the appearance, materials, scale, bulk, proportions and character of the original building and their surroundings.
- 7.8 Mitcham Cricket Green Conservation Area was originally designated in 1969 and the particular features which merit the designation include its historical background, the number of listed buildings and the character and diversity of buildings generally and the generous open spaces. The Mitcham Cricket Green Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan identifies that one of the most dominant features of the conservation area is the visual impact of the large areas of green space, around which built form is clustered creating well defined edges. The Cricket Green has a very open layout, with the buildings that surround it varying in age, style, materials and building line.
- 7.9 Brook House stands at a prominent site along Cricket Green which features several statutory and locally listed buildings fronting the Mitcham Cricket

Green, including the locally listed Mitcham Court directly adjoining the site, in addition to Elm Lodge (listed) and The Birches (locally listed) within close proximity to the site.

- 7.10 SPP Policy DM D4 states that proposals for new development in conservation areas are required to preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area and development proposals are expected to complement the character and appearance of the wider setting, by careful consideration of how the proposed density, scale, design and materials relate to the urban setting in which the development is placed.
- 7.11 Brook House is a later 20<sup>th</sup> century office building. It is set back from the building line of the historic buildings which enables Brook House to take a less prominent position and creates a background for the Statutory Listed and Locally Listed Buildings.
- 7.12 The revised scheme has addressed initial concerns regarding scale, massing and character by proposing a roof design that is more sympathetic to the building's existing hipped roof form with central entrance tower. The increase in roof pitch of the existing roof as opposed to an overly bulky and top heavy mansard roof more closely reflects the existing roof form. The use of rooflights as opposed to dormer windows further helps minimise the bulk and mass of the roof extensions.
- 7.13 Whilst the proposal will increase the pitch of the roof of Brook House, the design overall retains the key characteristics of the existing roof profile, including the existing ridge height and central entrance tower feature of the original building. The proposal will increase the visual presence of the roof, however is considered to achieve a massing, design and scale that continues to complement the conservation area.
- 7.14 Taking into consideration the setback of Brook House behind the Date Valley School and relative height of this building, the proposed changes to the roof are not considered to be overbearing on this locally listed building and will still allow for Brook House to take a secondary presence to the listed buildings along Cricket Green. Overall the proposal is considered to be sympathetic to the character of the host building and will preserve the character of the conservation area in accordance with the above policies.
- 7.15 The location of the substation was revised following comments from the LBM Tree Officer. The revised location will allow for the retention of the row of trees along the southern boundary of the site. Landscape screening is proposed around the substation (to be secured by condition) and it is therefore considered that the substation will be sufficiently concealed so to preserve the visual amenities of the conservation area.

#### Neighbouring Amenity

- 7.16 London Plan Policy 7.6 (Architecture) requires that buildings and structures should not cause unacceptable harm to the amenity of surrounding land and buildings, particularly residential buildings, in relation to privacy and

overshadowing. SPP policy DMD2 states that proposals must be designed to ensure that they would not have an undue negative impact upon the amenity of neighbouring properties in terms of loss of light, quality of living conditions, privacy, visual intrusion or noise.

- 7.15 The design proposes skylights as opposed to roof dormers, and consequently is considered to give rise to limited opportunity for overlooking into adjoining properties.
- 7.16 The existing building is a three storey building that is undergoing conversion to residential units. Given the separation distances to the nearest three-storey dwellings to the east and orientation of these buildings (nearest building has secondary high-set windows facing Brook House with primary windows facing north), the additional accommodation within the roofspace and change to the roof profile is not considered to result in adverse overlooking, overshadowing, loss of daylight or noise levels on these dwellings.
- 7.17 The adjoining buildings to the south are a combination of a Nursery and an NHS clinic. When viewed from these buildings, the extension will be screened via the existing row of mature trees along the southern boundary and is therefore not considered to have adverse amenity impacts on these properties.
- 7.18 The adjoining building to the north is a school. Taking into consideration that the front wall of Brook House is setback behind Mitcham Court, the change to the pitch of the roof is not considered to substantially increase overshadowing or result in a significant loss of sunlight or daylight to this building. The proposal is therefore not considered to be harmful to the amenities of the occupiers of the adjoining properties in accordance with Policy DMD2.

#### Standard of residential accommodation

- 7.19 Policy DM D2 and DM D3 of the Site and Policies Plan states that all proposals for residential development should safeguard the residential amenities of future occupiers in terms of providing adequate internal space, a safe layout and access for all users; and provision of adequate amenity space to serve the needs of occupants. Policies CS 8, CS9 and CS14 within the Council's Adopted Core Strategy [2011] states that the Council will require proposals for new homes to be well designed.
- 7.20 Policy 3.5 of the London Plan 2015 states that housing developments should be of the highest quality internally and externally and should ensure that new development reflects the minimum internal space standards (specified as Gross Internal Areas) as set out in Table 3.3 of the London Plan (Amended March 2016).
- 7.21 The proposed flats all meet the minimum gross internal floor area requirements of the London Plan, as shown in the following table. Both the single and double bedrooms comply with the National Housing standards room size requirements (7.5m<sup>2</sup> and 11.5m<sup>2</sup> respectively).



Flat No.	Bedroom/Spaces	GIA Proposed (m2)	GIA Required (m2)
Flat 1	1b, 2p	53	50
Flat 2	2b, 4p	73	70
Flat 3	2b, 3p	62	61
Flat 4	1b, 2p	53	50
Flat 5	2b, 4p	70	70
Flat 6	2b, 4p	73	70

7.22 Policy DM D2 requires that all proposals for residential development provide adequate private amenity space to meet the needs of future occupiers. The London Plan states that a minimum of 5 square metres of private outdoor space should be provided for 1-2 person flatted dwellings. In terms of larger units, an extra square metre should be provided for each additional occupant.

7.23 Whilst 5 - 7 square metres of amenity space would normally be required for each of the flats, the proposed flats are not family sized units. Given the site is located adjacent to Mitcham Cricket Green which will provide residents with expansive open space for recreation, it is considered that the absence of outdoor private amenity space would not be the basis to withhold permission in this instance.

7.24 Potential overlooking between the new flats within the internal 'courtyard' area of the building has been addressed through the provision of high-level windows with a minimum sill height of 1.7m above ground level to the new bedrooms. The windows will be obscured glass and openable to allow for ventilation. Electrically openable roof lights are also proposed to the bedrooms to provide additional light and ventilation.

7.25 It is considered that all rooms will maintain reasonable outlook, access to daylight and sunlight, and ventilation. It is therefore considered that the proposed flats would provide a satisfactory standard of accommodation in accordance with the above policy requirements.

#### Transport and parking

7.26 Core Strategy policy CS20 requires that development would not adversely affect pedestrian or cycle movements, safety, the convenience of local residents, on street parking or traffic management.

7.27 Sites and Policies Policy DM T3 states that development should only provide the level of car parking required to serve the site taking into account its accessibility by public transport (PTAL) and local circumstances in accordance with London Plan standards unless a clear need can be demonstrated.

7.28 Brook House has a PTAL of 4 and has two parking courts at ground level accessed from Cricket Green and Chatsworth Place. Spaces 1-18 are to the front of Brook House accessed off Cricket Green, with spaces 19-51 to the west and north of Brook House (rear) and accessed via Chatsworth Place. Parking spaces 46-51 (6 spaces) will be allocated to the six new dwellings.

7.29 Given the good PTAL rating of the site, the provision of 6 spaces for the 6 new units, and the provision of 51 spaces overall for the combined 52 units being created under the current conversion and this proposal, is considered appropriate to ensure that no additional parking stress results from the proposed development. The applicant has provided a Traffic Impact Assessment in support of the application. LBM Transport and Highways were consulted and commented that the level of parking provision was acceptable.

#### Refuse storage and collection

7.30 Policy CS20 of the Core Strategy [July 2011] states that the Council will seek to implement effective traffic management by requiring developers to incorporate adequate facilities for servicing to ensure loading and unloading activities do not have an adverse impact on the public highway.

7.31 The refuse collection for the proposed dwellings will continue on-street from Chatsworth Place as currently occurs. The bins will be located adjacent to the entrance to the western car park off Chatsworth Place, which is within the recommended distances of 10m as outlined in the Manual for Streets and the LBM's Waste and Recycling Storage Requirements Guidance Note. This is considered to be unobtrusive and will facilitate safe refuse collection from the street in accordance with policy.

#### Cycle storage

7.32 Core Strategy Policy CS 18 and London Plan policy 6.9 call for proposals that will provide for cycle parking and storage. A new 1 bedroom flat would be required to provide 1 bicycle space, and new two bedroom flats would be expected to provide a store for at least 2 bicycles.

7.33 The current scheme makes provision for 41 cycle parking spaces in a secure communal storage area at the southern end of the site, for both the converted lower levels and new units within the roof. As there was no obligation to provide cycle parking under the prior approval previously issued, it is considered that 10 spaces can be allocated to the new units to ensure compliance with this policy.

#### Affordable Housing

7.34 LDF policy CS.8 seeks the provision of a mix of housing types including affordable housing. Financial contributions towards affordable housing for schemes creating between 1 and 9 additional units are sought under the terms of adopted policy. In May this year the Court of Appeal decision upheld the Government's position that local planning authorities should not pursue requirements for affordable housing financial contributions on small sites (1-10 dwellings). In the event that Full Council (13th July) resolves that the Council considers Merton should currently stop seeking affordable housing contributions from small sites of 10 homes / 1,000 square metres or less within planning decisions then no contribution would be sought on this application. In the event that such a resolution is not endorsed then permission would be granted subject to the completion of a S106 to secure such a financial contribution.

## **8. CONCLUSION**

- 8.1 The proposal would provide six additional flats to the existing residential building in an area of good public transport access and local services. It is considered that the modifications to the roof are of an appropriate design, scale and massing to preserve the character of the conservation area. The design of the flats meets minimum standards required for Gross Internal Area, and is considered to provide an acceptable standard of accommodation for future occupiers. The proposal is not considered to result in adverse amenity impacts on neighbours, and is therefore recommended for approval.

### **RECOMMENDATION:**

**Subject to any resolution at Full Council on 13th July pertaining to the issue of affordable housing contributions, grant permission subject to a S106 obligation/ Unilateral Undertaking and conditions.**

### **Heads of terms (subject to any resolution at Full Council on 13th July)**

1. An off-site contribution towards affordable housing (To be confirmed).
2. The developer agreeing to meet the Councils costs of preparing drafting and monitoring the Section 106 Obligations.

### **Conditions**

- 1) A1 Commencement of works
- 2) A7 Built according to plans; 'Proposed Site Plan C1165-301 Rev C2', 'Proposed Roof Plan 15-C1165-922 Rev P5', 'Proposed Roof Extension Level Plan 15-C1165-940 Rev P3', 'Proposed West Elevation 15-C1165-941 Rev P3', 'Proposed North Elevation 15-C1165-942 Rev P3', 'Proposed East Elevation 15-C1165-943 Rev P3', 'Proposed South Elevation 15-C1165-944 Rev P3', 'Substation Plinth & Housing Design GAD-400'
- 3) B3 External materials to be approved
- 4) C04 Obscured Glazing (Opening Windows)  
  
Before the development hereby permitted is first occupied, the windows facing in the internal courtyard shall be glazed with obscured glass and non-openable up to 1.7m and shall be maintained as such thereafter.
- 5) C07 Refuse & Recycling (Implementation)
- 6) D10 External Lighting
- 7) H04 Provision of Vehicle Parking
- 8) H07 Cycle parking to be implemented.

9) No part of the development hereby approved shall be occupied until evidence has been submitted to the Local Planning Authority demonstrating that the development has achieved not less than the CO2 reductions (ENE1) (a 25% reduction compared to 2010 part L regulations), and internal water usage (WAT1) (105 litres/p/day) standards equivalent to Code for Sustainable Homes level 4. Reason for condition: To ensure the development achieves a high standard of sustainability and makes efficient use of resources and to comply with policies 5.2 of the Adopted London Plan 2015 and CS 15 of the Adopted Merton Core Planning Strategy 2011.

10) Non-Standard Condition

No development shall take place until full details of a landscaping and planting scheme to screen the new substation has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority and these works shall be carried out as approved before the commencement of the use or the occupation of any building hereby approved, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To enhance the appearance of the development in the interest of the amenities of the area, and to comply with the following Development Plan policies for Merton: policies 7.4 and 7.8 of the London Plan 2015, policies CS13 and CS14 of Merton's Core Planning Strategy 2011 and policies DM D2 and D4 of Merton's Sites and Policies Plan 2014.

11) NPPF Informative

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To view Plans, drawings and documents relating to the application please follow [this link](#)

Please note that this link, and some of the related plans, may be slow to load