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PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE

8 MARCH 2018

(7.15 pm - 11.00 pm)

PRESENT Councillor Linda Kirby (in the Chair), Councillor Najeeb Latif, Councillor Philip Jones, Councillor Laxmi Attawar, Councillor Peter Southgate, Councillor Stephen Crowe, Councillor David Dean, Councillor Andrew Judge, Councillor Geraldine Stanford and Councillor John Dehaney

ALSO PRESENT Councillor Martin Whelton – Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Environment and Housing
Councillor Katy Neep
Councillor Suzanne Grocott
Paul Mc Garry - Head of Future Merton
Tara Butler - Programme Manager Future Merton
Zulema Nakata – Senior Planner
Awot Tesfai – Senior Planner
Sarath Attanayake – Transport Planner
Lisa Jewell – Democratic Services

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (Agenda Item 1)

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Joan Henry.
Councillor John Dehaney attended as her substitute.

Councillor David Dean was present at the start of the meeting but had to give his apologies during the meeting and left during the discussion of Item 5, which was the first item considered. Accordingly he did not vote on any of the items.

2 DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY INTEREST (Agenda Item 2)

There were no declarations of interest.

3 TOWN PLANNING APPLICATIONS (Agenda Item 3)

Supplementary Agenda - Modifications: Amendments and modifications to the Officer's report were published in a Supplementary Agenda - Modifications. This applied to all items on the Agenda. This was published on line on the day of the meeting and paper copies were distributed to all present at the meeting (The Committee and members of the public). The Chair allowed 10 minutes reading time before each item, to give all attendees the time to read the relevant sections of the Supplementary Agenda.

Order of the meeting – The Chair announced that the order of items taken at the meeting would be: 5, 6 and 4

The Committee received an introductory presentation from the FutureMerton Programme Manager, who made the following points in relation to all the three estate applications:

- All three applications are for Outline Planning Permission, and will include Parameters for size and scale, the application for Ravensbury Estate also contains scale, layout and access details. All other details are Reserved Matters.
- The decisions made by Committee on these Outline Applications will be referred to The Mayor of London and the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government.
- Reserved Matters will cover details such as Access (for High Path and Eastfields), the exact number of units, exact number of bedrooms, the mix of tenure, materials, car parking, and children's play space.
- If approved at this meeting all three sites will return to Committee at Reserved Matters stages. Prior to that the developer will be required to engage with residents and infrastructure providers. The DRP will be re-consulted at reserved matters stages where this relates to design.
- The regeneration of High Path Estate is the most financially viable of the projects and will fund the regeneration at Ravensbury and Eastfields Estates. The S106 legal agreement will include over-arching Heads of Terms, detailed in the Supplementary Agenda – Modifications, to achieve this linkage.
- The information published in the Supplementary Agenda – Modifications, updates members on the Policies which guides these applications
- The proposed Wimbledon to Sutton Tram service will impact the High Path Estate if the proposed South Wimbledon spur is built.

4 EASTFIELDS ESTATE, MITCHAM CR4 1ST (Agenda Item 4)

Proposal: Outline planning application (with all matters reserved, except in relation to parameter plans) for the comprehensive regeneration of the Eastfields Estate comprising the demolition of all existing buildings and structures; erection of new buildings ranging from 1 to a maximum of 9 storeys providing up to 800 residential units (C3 Use Class); provision of up to 275 sqm of flexible commercial non-residential floorspace (flexible Use Classes A1 and/or A2 and/or A3 and/or A4 and/or B1 and/or D1 and/or D2 Use Classes); provision of new public open space and communal amenity spaces including children's play space; new public realm, landscaping works and new lighting; cycle parking spaces (including new visitor cycle parking) and car parking spaces (including within ground level podiums), together with associated highways and utilities works.

The Committee noted the officer's report, the Supplementary Agenda – Additional Information and the Supplementary Agenda – Modifications. Officers drew Members' attention to the revised overarching and estate specific heads of terms contained in the Supplementary Agenda – Modifications.

The Committee received an introductory presentation from Officers, and verbal representations from Councillor Suzanne Grocott and The Cabinet Member for Environment Regeneration and Housing.

Councillor Suzanne Grocott spoke representing residents and made points including:

- There is a current community at this estate
- The proposal will double the number of units and is very high
- The number of affordable units will reduce
- Leaseholders will lose amenity space
- Residents may lose their gardens
- Concerned about loss of greenery
- There is no space for a decant of current residents

Councillor Martin Whelton spoke as Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Housing and Environment and made points including:

- Estate was built in 1965 and is now very energy inefficient
- Current Estate is very poorly laid out
- Could be considerably enhanced by providing more new homes
- Increase in housing density is very important as we need more new homes to meet shortage in London
- This estate can be better in the future

The Committee discussed the application under the following headings:

Principle of Development and Land Use

In answer to Members Questions, officers gave the following replies:

- The retail provision is 275m², this will be flexible, but is the size of a small supermarket

Members commented that they welcomed this scheme and are pleased that current tenants will be rehoused in a unit that is the size they now need, and not in a like-for-like unit. Pleased that current tenants and Leaseholders will get new homes at 'Decent Homes' standard. They also welcome the proposed new design, feel that Clarion has done well.. The current estate is inward looking, unconnected and the green space is desolate and not used.

Viability and Affordable Housing

Members asked if the redevelopment of this estate will have to wait until the more viable estates have been redeveloped? Officers replied that the under the S106 agreement the applicants have to provide a reasonable delivery of this estate, it will not have to wait for the other estates to complete.

One Member commented that he thought that the overall provision of affordable housing across the three estates was not acceptable.

Design and Heritage

Members commented that they took note of the Design Review Panel's comments on the design, and they liked the new design which was wholly appropriate,

Open Space and Biodiversity

Members noted that the unsuitable plane trees on the site perimeter will be removed and new trees planted.

Parking and Transport

In answer to Members Questions, officers gave the following replies:

- The site has a low PTAL rating, despite being close to Mitcham Eastfields Station, because the PTAL rating is a measure of Transport connectivity, and not proximity to a single mode of transport
- The site will provide a higher level of parking than required by the London Plan because current residents are being offered like-for-like parking arrangements. Concerns regarding commuter parking in these spaces can be met by a future CPZ, this is allowed for under the Heads of Terms, with the developer to pay for this.

RESOLVED

The Committee voted to GRANT outline planning permission subject to any direction from the Mayor of London, any direction from the Secretary of State, the completion of a S106 agreement and conditions

5 HIGH PATH ESTATE, SOUTH WIMBLEDON, SW19 2TG (Agenda Item 5)

Proposal: Outline planning application (with all matters reserved, except in relation to parameter plans) for the comprehensive phased regeneration of the High Path estate comprising the demolition of all existing buildings and structures; erection of new buildings ranging from 1 to a maximum of 10 storeys providing up to 1570 residential units (C3 use class); provision of up to 9,900 sqm of commercial and community floorspace (including replacement and new floorspace, comprising: up to 2,700 sqm of use class A1 and/or A2, and/or A3 and/or A4 floorspace, up to 4,100 sqm of use class B1 (office) floorspace, up to 1,250 sqm of flexible work units (use class B1), up to 1,250 sqm of use class D1 (community) floorspace); up to 600 sqm of use class D2 (gym) floorspace); provision of new neighbourhood park and other communal amenity spaces, including children's play space; new public realm, landscaping works and new lighting; cycle parking spaces (including visitor cycle parking) and car parking spaces (including within ground level podiums), together with associated highways and utilities works.

The Committee noted the officer's report, the Supplementary Agenda – Additional Information and the Supplementary Agenda – Modifications. Officers drew Members' attention to the revised overarching and estate specific heads of terms contained in the Supplementary Agenda – Modifications.

The Committee received an introductory presentation from Officers, and verbal representations from 3 objectors, the Applicant, a Ward Councillor and The Cabinet Member for Environment Regeneration and Housing

Representations by three objectors:

Eve Cohen made points including:

- This proposal will not enhance South Wimbledon
- The Documents are confusing
- This proposal is too high, and the massing too great – it will be a large monolith.
- 4 Storeys would be high enough
- It is out of keeping with there rest of South Wimbledon with its Victorian and Edwardian housing
- The proposal does not comply with Merton Policies
- This is a missed opportunity

Cypren Edmunds, representing the High Path Residents' Association made points including:

- The proposal will result in a loss of 72 Trees, need to ensure that applicant does replace these trees
- Must ensure that the London Mayor's target of 50% affordable homes is achieved in the development
- Must ensure that the design is meets aspirations

Caroline Muller-Carpenter made points including:

- The development will overlook my property and cause a drastic loss of light
- Don't have any faith in the Day Light reports
- Windows of residential lounges will have their light restricted
- There will be a far reaching affect
- The building heights on Merton High Street are excessive and set a precedent, the street will be darkened

Representation by Applicant:

Paul Quinn, Director of Clarion Spoke and made points including:

- The 3 sites will be developed together over 10 to 15 years to deliver better quality homes
- Clarion is working with all stakeholders
- All affordable housing will be replaced
- All current residents will keep their existing tenure
- There will be an uplift in affordable rented property
- The developments will generate a large amount in CIL (Community Infrastructure Levy, they will boost the local economy and create new jobs
- The High Path development will cross subsidise the Ravensbury and Eastfields Estate regenerations

- High Path was built 40 years ago, and this proposal allows us rebuild quality homes
- There have been over 25 Consultation events, and the DRP gave the development a green light
- Traditional homes will front onto streets, with well defined open spaces, with every unit having some private open space. There will be a central park, many trees will be retained, 250 new trees will be planted.
- High Path has long been identified for densification, and proposals are lower than the current 12 storey buildings
- The proposal takes into account local heritage and meets all requirements for daylight and sunlight.
- Parking will be rationalised, electric car charging points will be provided, car clubs will be encouraged and cycle paths built
- Significant social and economic benefits from the mixed balanced community created
- The proposal is highly sustainable with a District heating system, water efficiency and Sustainable Urban Drainage

Officers answered points made by the Objectors:

- With regards to trees, the application contains conditions requiring landscaping details and an Arboricultural Impact Assessment to be submitted
- The High Path regeneration enables the delivery of regeneration at Eastfields and Ravensbury Estates. If it were on its own High Path could deliver more Affordable Housing, but the three applications are linked. The overarching Heads of Terms require a viability review to be undertaken. The GLA has no objections to the delivery affordable homes.
- The Consultation time was extended, over 3000 letters were sent out and 30 site notices were displayed
- The proposed buildings are to be built in traditional blocks on the historical grid pattern
- The heights of the proposed buildings drops from the existing 12 storey buildings to 8 or 9 Storey around South Wimbledon Tube Station and Morden Road - these heights are not unprecedented
- The London Plan encourages intensification around transport Hubs

Ward Councillor Katy Neep made points including:

- The redevelopment of High Path is a once in a lifetime opportunity
- Welcome the proposals to resolve overcrowding, and we need to ensure regeneration of the area
- But this development only provides 16% affordable housing
- Heights of the Buildings will dwarf the cottages on Morden Road

Councillor Martin Whelton made points including:

- There is a Housing crisis, and lack of affordable housing in London
- We need to intensify our house building, and build higher for more homes

- We need to learn the lessons of the past, the current High Path estate was badly designed, and it is important now to have good design
- This development will improve the lives of people who live in the Estate

The Committee discussed the application under the following headings:

Principle of Development and Land Use

In answer to Members Questions on Viability Assessments and funding arrangements the Council's independent legal advisor gave following reply:

- There has been an independent viability assessment for each of the three estate applications. These can be viewed to give a cumulative over arching effect or reviewed individually
- Some grant funding is available but the bulk of funding is by the developer. The overall funding required by the three developments is £1 Billion. High Path will receive £21.4 Million in grant funding, Eastfields £15.7 Million and Ravensbury £6.4 Million. Further Grant Funding may be forthcoming for High Path Estate (unconfirmed at £60,000 per unit)

Members asked about Building heights of the proposal and noted that all the proposed buildings would be lower than the existing 12 storey towers. Details of lifts in the proposed 4 storey buildings would be a detail for reserved matters but there are policy options to support this.

Members asked if the proposed commercial units would improve the viability of Merton High Street. Officers said that hadn't yet assessed this but suggested that the increase in population from the development would increase footfall in Merton High Street and the additional people employed in the commercial units would also add to this increase.

Members asked about the amount of Community Infrastructure Levy due on the development and noted that precise figures will not be known until further details of the development are set. CIL monies are not payable until the start of development.

Viability and Affordable Housing

Members commented that they wanted to see as much affordable housing as possible, and noted that the provision at this outline stage was below the Council's target of 40% affordable housing subject to viability. However the Committee noted that under the Overarching Heads of Terms the developers were obliged to undertake review mechanisms of viability at each stage of the development this would provide opportunity for the Council to push for significantly higher levels of affordable housing, dependant on the new viability figures.

Members noted that the Council has informed the Developer that they want to see as much affordable housing as possible, and that the viability review mechanism would seek to clawback funding to be translated into affordable housing.

Members asked why the report appears to show a net loss of affordable housing and noted that the table referred to was just showing the figures for phase one and not the whole development.

Members asked if the developer had taken future maintenance costs into account and will they be affordable. The Chair allowed Paul Quinn, from Clarion, to answer directly and he said that Clarion do design with service charges in mind and do consider how estates will be managed, but it was too early to be clear on actual service charges.

Design and Heritage

Members noted that much of the design information, including Materials will be submitted and determined at the Reserved Matters stage.

Members asked about the developer's policy on fire safety, and noted that this is not determined at this stage.

Members asked about the setting of St John's Church in the proposed development and its relationship with the taller buildings. Officers explained that a lower level mews street is proposed that will allow for views of the front of the Church.

Members noted the condition on Archaeology that ensures that a written scheme of investigation is to be submitted prior to any demolition or development work onsite. Members spoke in detail about the local history of the area including Merton Priory.

Members asked if existing residents will get the chance to specify what type of property they receive in the new development. The Chair allowed Paul Quinn to answer and he replied that for phase 1, Clarion were negotiating with existing residents to determine their housing needs and preferences. This principle would be applied across the whole estate with affordable housing considered first.

Open Space and Biodiversity

One member commented that care should be taken so that 'rat run' road routes are not created across the proposed green spaces.

Another member commented that the green space to be provided was a very positive proposal and that access routes should be encouraged.

It commented on that All Saints recreation ground had not been taken into account.

Parking and Transport

Members noted that a more detailed assessment would be submitted as part of Reserved Matters

Members discussed the provision of parking in the proposed scheme and noted that existing residents will get a replacement space. However there are a lot of resident concerns regarding parking on the estate and in the surrounding roads. Members noted that if High Path residents want to have controlled parking this would be considered after reserved matters. Under the Heads Of Terms High Path residents will not get a parking permit for any surrounding streets and if Residents on the surrounding streets want CPZ times extended then the developer will pay for this.

The Applicant was asked about current on-site garages and stated that most are too small for modern cars. The Committee noted that the amount of on-plot parking on the proposed development is a subject for reserved matters.

Members commented that the Street pattern of the proposal is based on the historic grid, and reminded officers that they have to ensure permeable routes through the site, Members noted that the exact routes were for Reserved Matters.

Members commented that owing to the commitment to replicate parking for current tenants will have to provide more parking than is required in a 6A PTAL (Public Transport Accessibility Levels) area.

Members asked the requirement for disabled parking would be met, and noted the Flexibility with disabled access and with being near to transport.

Additional Member Questions

Members asked about the impact of height on neighbouring buildings close to The Nelson Arms Pub and noted that there were potential overshadowing issues for number 21 Merton High Street. The Applicants had provided new details on this issue which were read out by Officers. In summary this stated that although a small graphical error had been made, their model and data were in fact correct and there would be no significant harm to 21 Merton High Street from overshadowing.

Members then made comments on the proposed scheme:

- The Height at Merton High Street and Morden Road is a big increase but is acceptable
- The development will be a high quality build
- It will increase vibrancy on Merton High street
- The current context of the High Path Estate does not add to the quality of the Merton High Street, this proposal will be positive
- Encouraging to hear that there will be a higher density of housing around the transport hubs, there is justification in Planning Terms to do this.
- Happy that the development respects the listed and locally listed buildings

One Member commented that he was unhappy with the level of affordable housing offered on the site.

RESOLVED

The Committee voted to GRANT outline planning permission subject to any direction from the Mayor of London, any direction from the Secretary of State, the completion of a S106 agreement and conditions.

6 RAVENSBURY ESTATE, MORDEN, CR4 4DT (Agenda Item 6)

Proposal:

Outline planning application (with layout, scale and access for approval, exact in relation to parameter plans for height) for the regeneration of the Ravensbury Estate (on land to the west of Ravensbury Grove) comprising the demolition of all existing buildings and structures; erection of new buildings ranging from 2 to 4 storeys providing up to 180 residential units (C3 Use Class); provision of replacement community centre (up to 160 sqm of Use Class D1 floor space); provision of new public realm, landscaping works and new lighting; cycle parking spaces (including new visitor cycle parking) and car parking spaces, together with associated highways and utilities works. Landscaping works are also proposed to the east of Ravensbury Grove and along Hengelo Gardens.

The Committee noted the officer's report, the Supplementary Agenda – Additional Information and the Supplementary Agenda – Modifications. Officers drew Members' attention to the revised overarching and estate specific heads of terms contained in the Supplementary Agenda – Modifications.

The Committee received an introductory presentation from Officers, and verbal representations from an objector, the Applicant and The Cabinet Member for Environment Regeneration and Housing

Christopher Holt, speaking on behalf of the Ravensbury Grove residents made points including:

- Majority of residents are against this development. It is over densification
- The area is a Flood Area, the Environment Agency cannot afford to object. Increasing the footprint will increase the possibility of flooding
- At four storeys high the massing is unacceptable.
- This application will reduce the quality of Ravensbury Village

Paul Quinn, Director of Merton Regeneration, Clarion Housing Group, made points including:

- The Orlit homes were declared deficient in 1984, Clarion want to replace them with high quality homes
- 50% of the homes provided will be affordable
- There have been 13 consultation events with residents
- The development received a 'green' from the Design Review Panel
- None of the proposed buildings are higher than the current Ravensbury Court building
- The proposed buildings will be brick built, respect heritage, and will be sustainable
- Flood measures are in place
- Parking levels will accord with London Standards

Officers made the following points in answer to the objectors comments:

- 600 consultation letters were sent out, and the consultation time was extended, 5 replies were received
- Flood risk has been an important consideration, and new properties have been designed to be above ground and to cope with surface flood water via a void system. Sustainable Urban drainage schemes are planned across the site, the Environment Agency are satisfied with these arrangements. Full details are in the Officer's report

Councillor Martin Whelton made comments including:

- Welcome this development as the sub-standard Orlit homes need to be replaced
- Reassured by view of the Environment Agency
- No evidence to say that residents are opposed to this development when only 5 representations were received

The Committee discussed the application under the following headings:

Principle of Development and Land Use

Members asked about the timescale and if it was in line with development at High Path? Officers replied that Phase 1 should start this year and the overarching Heads of Terms require a reasonable timescale

Members commented that this development will change the character of the Ravensbury Estate but the Orlit homes do need replacing with high quality new homes

Affordable Housing and Viability

One Member commented that the provision of 50% affordable housing was unacceptable because there was only a small gain in affordable housing once all existing tenants had been reprovided with new homes. Officers replied that viability was covered in the Heads of Terms and that Officers would work with the developer with a view to increasing the level of affordable homes

Design and Heritage

Members asked about the heights of the proposed buildings in relation to the existing Ravensbury court and the Grade II listed Ravensbury Mill, and noted that there are current buildings that are 4 storeys with a pitched roof, and that the proposal will replace 2 and 3 storey homes with 3 and 4 storey blocks. This will mirror and balance the existing heights. Members also noted that some of the increased height would be in response to the flood risk concern. flooding.

Members noted that overall the DRP had given the development a green light, with a total of 8 greens out of a possible 12. Amber scores were given to landscaping, refuse/recycling facilities, local amenities, and these were areas that could be further improved.

Open Space and Biodiversity

Members commented on the possibility of a foot bridge over the River Wandle and said that this was a contentious and potentially expensive proposal. Officer asked Members to note the revised Heads of Terms in the Supplementary Agenda – Modifications which made the developer responsible for funding an assessment of the possibility of such a footbridge. If the construction of this bridge were to go ahead details of the developers financial contribution would be set out in the S106 agreement, but that this would be determined at the reserved matters stage.

Parking and Transport

Members commented that although the number of units was doubling the proposed number of parking spaces was only very slightly greater than the current number. Officers replied that the proposal will achieve a good level of parking on site. Members noted that details of cycle storage will form part of the reserved matters application.

Flood Risk

Members asked when was the last recorded incidence of flooding on the estate, but Officers reported that following conversations with residents there had not been any recent flooding to report.

RESOLVED

The Committee voted to GRANT Outline Planning Permission subject to any direction from the Mayor of London, any direction from the Secretary of State, the completion of a S106 agreement and conditions