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PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE

22 OCTOBER 2020
(7.15 pm - 10.10 pm)

PRESENT Councillor Linda Kirby (in the Chair),
Councillor Stephen Crowe (Vice-Chair), Councillor Billy Christie,
Councillor David Dean, Councillor Joan Henry,
Councillor Rebecca Lanning, Councillor Russell Makin,
Councillor Simon McGrath, Councillor Peter Southgate
and Dave Ward

IN ATTENDANCE: Councillor Peter McCabe and Councillor Eleanor Stringer
(Cabinet Member for Children's Services and Education)

Jourdan Alexander (Planning Officer), Tim Bryson (Development Control Team Leader (North)), Louise Fleming (Democracy Services Manager), Neil Milligan (Development Control Manager, ENVR), Farzana Karamat-Mughal (Democratic Services Officer), Tim Lipscomb (Case Officer), Tony Smith (Planning Officer) and Awot Tesfai (Senior Estates Development Management Officer)

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (Agenda Item 1)

There was no apologies for absence.

2 DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY INTEREST (Agenda Item 2)

Councillors Crowe and Dean declared a non-pecuniary interest in respect of item 9 (2 Westcoombe Avenue, West Wimbledon). They did not take part in the debate or vote on the proposal and left the meeting.

3 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING (Agenda Item 3)

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 24th September, 2020 were agreed as an accurate record.

4 TOWN PLANNING APPLICATIONS (Agenda Item 4)

Supplementary Agenda: Amendments and modifications to the officers' report were published in a modification sheet. This applied to items 5, 7 and 8.

The Chair advised that the order of the agenda was changed and that item 8 would be taken after item 5. For the purpose of the minutes, items are minuted in the order they appeared in the published agenda.

5 ROAD BRIDGE BISHOPSFORD ROAD - LONDON ROAD MORDEN SM4
(Agenda Item 5)

Proposal: Erection of Replacement Bridge to reconnect Bishopford Road to London Road in Mitcham, where the A217 crosses over the River Wandle. The proposal included a change in the road alignment to the north of the bridge and changes that would be required to the eastern boundary of Ravensbury Park.

The Committee noted the report and the plans presented by the Senior Estates Development Management Officer. The Committee also noted the modifications contained in the supplementary agenda. The Senior Estates Development Management Officer provided updates on various matters relating to the amendments.

Two residents had registered to speak in objection and at the invitation of the Chair, raised a number of points including the following:

- the proposal was costing millions of pounds and it should be designed to last well over 100 years;
- it needs to be fit for purpose for the future;
- the plans caused unnecessary harm, including loss of trees, parked vehicles, noise and pollution, which would harm the conservation area;
- the plans failed to meet the cycling standards;
- the new bridge would be out of date and needed a better design;
- the proposed application was against Council policy in respect of loss of MRL and loss of public open space which would be a detrimental impact on the conservation area.

The applicant's agent had registered to speak and at the invitation of the Chair highlighted the following points:

- the collapse of the bridge in June, 2019 had presented a number of considerable challenges for the Council. The loss of the infrastructure had affected people's lives, particularly those travelling to key sites such as a local hospital and schools;
- the Council wanted a bridge that was both fit for purpose and affordable;
- the new bridge would provide additional cycle and would also enhance local amenity within the constraints exist;
- following the pre-application consultation in May, the bridge design had been changed to add a segregated cycling to the northbound.. This complied with the latest government guidance on cycle design.
- the new bridge would offer not only a return to normality for many residents, it represented a tangible improvement;
- the application was supported by the Environment Agency and the Metropolitan Police .

The Senior Estates Development Management Officer advised the Committee that a further petition was received in support of the application with additional 33 signatures.

In response to questions from the Committee regarding further widening the bridge to the east into National Trust, Local Nature Reserve Land, Watermeads; the Senior Estates Development Management Officer addressed the following points:

- widening the bridge even further (which had already been widened westwards) would cause significant transport (healthy streets) and ecological barriers;
- the issues with widening of the bridge eastwards, i.e. upstream into the National Trust's Local Nature Reserve land, Watermeads would result in permanently reducing the width of the existing pavement outside the houses on London Road (Mitcham town centre side);
- this would also result in removing on-street parking for London Road, removing London Road resident's vehicle crossovers;
- there would be further implications of removing the street trees and not being able to replace them on the narrower pavement. Furthermore, there would be implications on utilities and how these would be facilitated;
- at present, other than the carriageway, the new bridge design showed there would be x3 routes for cyclists over the river (both north and south – the western segregated cycle lane, the eastern shared surface and the wooden footbridge). If we count the highway, then cyclists would have x5 routes across the river;
- pedestrians would have only two routes (the eastern shared surface and the wooden footbridge) and those are shared with cyclists in all instances;
- the new bridge has already expanded westwards (to improve the cycle provision and to improve the highway alignment) and is now 1 metre from wooden footbridge.

With regards to Ecological Impacts, the Senior Planning Officer expressed the following concerns that would arise if the Bridge was to be further widened into the Eastern Side;

- greater width of shaded area would adversely affect aquatic ecology, habitat connectivity, fish migration etc;
- the Environment Agency would not approve with an increased width of shading;
- several large trees would be lost, as they were already on the cusp of being damaged by the works;
- any extra width of footprint, the roots would be too severely impacted, and would have to be felled;
- the loss of large trees would be a significant loss of visual amenity as well as ecological value;
- loss of larger value trees would also result in a large financial impact.

Councillor Peter McCabe had registered to speak on behalf of his ward and constituents. He advised the Committee since the bridge had collapsed he had played a very active role in trying to get the bridge repaired. Officers had worked hard to come up with a plan that meets all the conflicting needs. The design of the new bridge provided additional cycling capacity and would reduce the flood risk to properties. The local people would benefit from the new bridge and look forward to using it for the future.

During the debate, Members' expressed both their support and concerns relating to this proposal and stated it was prudent to have a bridge that was sustainable and user friendly.

The Chair moved to the vote on the officer's recommendation and it was

RESOLVED that the application number 20/P2438 be GRANTED planning permission subject to conditions.

6 MELROSE SCHOOL, CHURCH ROAD, MITCHAM, CR4 2BE (Agenda Item 6)

Proposal: Proposed expansion of Melrose School, involving the erection of a school hall and primary school teaching block. The proposal would also involve creation of a secondary drop-off and parking area. In addition to various external works, ancillary facilities, landscaping, hardstanding and boundary treatments.

The Committee noted the report and the plans presented by the Planning Officer.

An objector had registered to speak and at the invitation of the Chair raised a number of point, including

- there was lack of local engagement prior to the proposal being submitted;
- the current plans would be built over a large part of the school's remaining open ground;
- concerns relating to loss of trees and poor design.

In response to the objector, the Planning Officer stated that in term of the loss of trees, it was in the conditions for a tree planting scheme to be submitted to the Council, subsequently reviewed by the Agricultural Officer.

Councillor Eleanor Stringer had registered to speak on behalf of her role as Cabinet Member for Children's Services and Education, and in doing so, addressed the Committee that the proposal would allow 24 primary school children with such needs to be educated closer to their home in Merton that cannot be met in the mainstream schools. The development would provide the best learning experience for children. She further stated that he understood the concerns around the loss of trees and that only four of those were assessed as category b trees of moderate quality and as outlined in the report three trees would be replaced.

The Chair moved to the vote on the officer's recommendation and it was

RESOLVED that the application number 20/P2184 be GRANTED planning permission subject to conditions.

(The Chair adjourned the meeting at 9:35 pm for a short break. The meeting was resumed at 9.40 pm)

7 101 HAMILTON ROAD, SOUTH WIMBLEDON, SW19 1JG (Agenda Item 7)

Proposal: Erection of a two storey terrace building comprising 5 residential units (3 x 5 bedroom houses, 1 x 2 bedroom flat and 1 x 3 bedroom flat) with associated works, including outbuildings, landscaping, car parking and cycle/bin storage.

The Committee noted the report and the plans presented by the Development Control Team Leader (North). The Committee also noted the modifications contained in the supplementary agenda.

An objector had registered to speak and at the invitation of the Chair the following points were raised:

- there were still concerns relating to the design, outdoor space and parking;
- 5 bed for 10 person house would be overcrowding for occupancies;
- the front of the building, in particular, the dormer windows was out of character with the adjoining properties and did not comply with the DM D2 policy;
- there were insufficient cycle storage;
- the garden to the ground floor was too small for this development.

The applicant's agent had registered to speak and at the invitation of the Chair addressed the Committee with the following points:

- the development had been designed with the existing character to Hamilton Road;
- the site was in a sustainable location;
- the proposal was for a modern interpretation of the existing properties and would complement the overall scheme;
- in terms of parking, two new parking bays were proposed situated on Hamilton Road;
- cycle storage and bin storage was also provided in line with the Council's standards;
- in terms of sustainability, solar panels was proposed on parts of the roof and there would be a 19 reduction on carbon emissions over building road requirements.

In response to the objector and Members questions, the Development Control Team Leader (North) addressed the following points:

- the garden space that was proposed did meet the standard requirements;
- the two on street parking bays available was deemed to be acceptable;
- the number of cycle storage provided was in line with the policy;
- it was clarified that should the application be granted, Members' could include an additional condition that the window frames be white.

Councillor Nigel Benbow had submitted a written speech and the Senior Democratic Services Officer had read this out to the Committee. The Committee noted that Councillor Nigel Benbow welcomed the latest development plans, however he felt there were still issues relating to the design, in particular, the proposed development was not kept with the appearance and character of Victorian Terrace houses in Hamilton Road and the surrounding area. The development was still too large for the area and concerns whether the development provided acceptable living conditions for the occupiers. He further recommended that the large dormer windows to be removed to keep with the character of Hamilton Road.

The Chair moved to the vote on the officer's recommendation and it was

RESOLVED that the application number 20/P2547 be GRANTED planning permission subject to a S106 agreement and conditions.

8 16 - 20 MORDEN ROAD, SOUTH WIMBLEDON, SW19 3BN (Agenda Item 8)

Proposal: Demolition of Existing Bank (Class A2) and Erection of a new residential block (Class C3) comprising 26 x self-contained flats with associated parking and landscaping.

The Committee noted the report and the plans presented by the Case Officer. The Committee also noted the modifications contained in the supplementary agenda. The Case Officer provided updates on various matters relating to the amendments.

Two residents had registered to speak in objection and at the invitation of the Chair raised a number of point including the following:

- the proposed block of flats was six stories high and would be located forward of Falcon House, which was four stories high. The development would be significantly out of scale with Falcon House;
- the proposed development would have a detrimental impact on the occupiers of Falcon House, in terms of, overlooking to habitable rooms, and loss of light to windows on the northern elevation;
- the development had only one staircase which would be a significant problem in the events of a fire;
- no parking was provided other than four spaces which were reserved for blue badge holders;

- it was recognised that more housing was needed nonetheless, however, housing that improves people's lives, in particular for wheelchair accessible and the vulnerable;
- the proposed development does not offer affordable housing;
- the poor quality development had a detrimental impact on the appearance of the area.

The applicant's agent had registered to speak and addressed the Committee and responded to the points raised by the objectors. He advised that following consultations with the Planning and Design Officers, concerns were raised in terms of the design. Subsequently, significant changes had been made to the scheme outlined in the report. He further advised that the original application was for 30 flats and this had been reduced to 26 flats. In addition, the parking in the immunity space had been improved considerably reducing down to three parking spaces only for disabled occupiers.

The Case Officer addressed the concerns raised by the objectors as follows:

- in terms of lack of lighting to the south facing window, obscure glazing would be applied to the windows, therefore, it would still allow lighting;
- the applicant had provided details to indicate that the one staircase to the proposed development would meet building control standards;
- in terms of the parking, this was an area of virtually the highest public transport accessibility with bus route next to a train station;
- it was clarified that the single aspect units would be either studio units or one bed, two person units.

Councillor Nigel Benbow had submitted a written statement on behalf of the residents and this was read out by the Senior Democratic Officer. Whilst he welcomed the new residential development, he felt that the design and quality of the proposed planning application was poor and would not enhance the appearance of the building in the community.

Councillor Eleanor Stringer addressed the Committee on behalf of her ward, although she supported more homes to be built in her ward, she recognised that there was lack of affordable housing and that Wimbledon was deemed to be one of the most deprived wards.

In response to Members' questions and comments, the Case Officer highlighted the following points:

- in addition to the balconies, community amenity space was provided, therefore, not providing a private amenity space was acceptable and within the guidelines;
- in terms of fire exits and sprinklers, this would be dealt with in the building control stage, however, this was included in the conditions;
- in terms of only one staircase being provided, this would be addressed under building control standards.

A motion to refuse the application was put forward on the ground that the living conditions was deemed to be inadequate, the poor design and appearance of the building and the ground floor units' proximity to the main street to the front.

RESOLVED that the application number 19/P3772 be REFUSED, on the grounds that:

- a) there was inadequate living conditions for the occupants;
- b) the poor design aspect and appearance of the building; and
- c) the ground floor units proximity to the main street to the front.

9 2 WESTCOOMBE AVENUE, WEST WIMBLEDON, LONDON, SW20 0RQ
(Agenda Item 9)

Proposal: Erection of two storey side extension, a part-single part-two storey rear extension, front porch extension and rear roof extensions with associated façade changes and landscaping.

The Committee noted the report and the presentation provided by the Planning Officer.

The Chair moved to the vote on the officer's recommendation and it was

RESOLVED that the application number 20/P1483 be GRANTED planning permission subject to 'Option A' pertaining to facing material and conditions.

(Councillors Crowe and Dean declared an non-pecuniary interest in respect of this application and left the meeting)

10 PLANNING APPEAL DECISIONS (Agenda Item 10)

The Committee noted the Planning Appeal Decisions.

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

The Committee noted that there were no planning enforcement cases reported.

12 MODIFICATIONS SHEET (Agenda Item 12)

The Committee noted the Modification sheet.