

2. SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

- 2.1 Grosvenor Hill is a small cul-de-sac comprising an eclectic mixture of property styles and types with traditional and more contemporary houses and flats ranging from two to four storeys in height.
- 2.2 The current house forms part of a group of one detached house and two semi-detached two-storey houses built in 1920-21 and located on the south side of the road. Nos.11 and 12 are located immediately to the west and form the remainder of the group, whilst Mulberry Cottage, a detached two storey house built in the 1950s, which is set well back from the street, is located to the east. To the east of Mulberry Cottage is Clare Court, a five-storey block of 19 flats built in 1963. Oldfield Road is located to the south of the site.
- 2.2 The application site is located in the Wimbledon West Conservation Area (Sub-Area 16 (Grosvenor Hill)) and has a PTAL rating of 6a, which means it has excellent access to public transport. The site is also located in a controlled parking zone (Zone VC) and an Archaeological Priority Zone.

3. CURRENT PROPOSAL

- 3.1 The current application is for full planning permission to demolish the existing house and erect a five bedroom detached house.
- 3.2 The proposed house would be arranged over four floors, with accommodation at basement, ground, first floor and roof levels. It would have a traditional design, featuring a barn hip roof which addresses the street and double height front bay window. Ground floor elements featuring flat roofs would be located to the rear and side of the house. The principal materials would be facing brickwork and handmade clay tiles. Dormers would be located on the front, rear and west facing roof slope. Off-street parking for 1 to 2 cars is provided at the front of the house.
- 3.3 The house would have an eaves height of 6.1m and a maximum height of 10m when measured from the front. The application as originally submitted proposed ground floor rear and side elements with a height of 3.5m when measured from the ground floor height, which is approx. 70cm above the rear garden height due to the slope of the land (although this varies given the land also slopes downwards from west to east). The application has since been amended as follows:
- The basement and ground floor levels at the rear of the house have been lowered by approx. 70cm
 - The single storey rear and side elements have been reduced in height by approx. 70cm
 - The west facing flank wall of the house has been moved approx. 15cm further away from No.12 with the rear part of the west facing flank wall stepped in a further 80cm

4. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

- 4.1 MER1081/71 – Single storey rear extension. Granted - 06/01/1972
- 4.2 Pre –application advice for the demolition of the existing house and erection of a new five bedroom detached house was sought in July 2015 (Ref: 15/P2123/NEW)

5. POLICY CONTEXT

- 5.1 Adopted Merton Sites and Policies Plan and Policies Maps (July 2014): DM D2 (Design considerations in all developments), DM D3 (Alterations and extensions to existing buildings), DM D4 (Managing Heritage Assets), DM F2 (Sustainable urban drainage systems (SuDS) and; Wastewater and Water Infrastructure), DM O2 (Nature conservation, trees, hedges and landscape features)
- 5.2 Adopted Merton Core Planning Strategy (July 2011): CS.8 (Housing Choice), CS.9 (Housing Provision), CS.14 (Design), CS.20 (Parking, Servicing and Delivery)
- 5.3 London Plan (July 2011): 3.3 (Increasing Housing Supply), 3.5 (Quality and Design of Housing Developments), 3.8 (Housing Choice), 5.3 (Sustainable Design and Construction)
- 5.4.1 Merton Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) : New Residential Development (September 1999)
- 5.5 Wimbledon West Conservation Area Character Appraisal (Sub Area 16: Grosvenor Hill)

6. CONSULTATION

- 6.1 The application was publicised by means of Conservation Area press and site notice procedure and individual letters to occupiers of neighbouring properties. In response, 8 letters of objection have been received including an objection letter from the Wimbledon Society. The letters of objection are on the following grounds:
- Congestion/disruption caused during construction works
 - Potential damage to pair of trees at front of application site
 - Loss of daylight/sunlight and privacy
 - Concerns regarding subsidence and flooding resulting from the construction of a basement
 - Inaccuracies in proposed drawings
 - Loss of gap with No.12, which is part of the character of the conservation area

- The proposed house would be visually intrusive, overbearing and create a sense of closure due to its excessive height, depth, scale and siting when viewed from No.15 Grosvenor Hill
- Fails to respond to the local topography and the scale/height of adjacent single dwellings/overdevelopment of plot and visually incongruous

6.2 Wimbledon Society

The site is in an Archaeological Priority Zone and as such an Archaeological Evaluation Report should be required with any planning permission. There are also concerns regarding the potential for overlooking of houses at the rear on Oldfield Road. The flat roof at the rear should also be conditioned so that it cannot be used as a roof terrace.

6.3 Future Merton

The Flood and structural engineers have assessed the proposal and are satisfied with the details submitted so far. They have requested further conditions area attached with any approval.

6.4 Tree Officer

Has requested that the secant piling is extended to protect the roots of the Lime tree at the front of the application site and that the proposed front wall shown on the proposed ground floor plan is removed because it would result in the removal of the Lime tree.

7. PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

The main planning considerations in this instance concern the demolition of the existing house, the impact that the proposed house would have on visual and residential amenity, the standard of accommodation to be provided and any impact on parking/highways and trees.

7.2 Demolition of existing house

7.21 Policy DM D4 of the Adopted Sites and Policies Plan and Policies Maps (July 2014) states that proposals that will lead to substantial harm to the significance of, or the total loss of heritage assets will only be granted in exceptional circumstances. The loss of a building that makes a positive contribution to a conservation area should also be treated as substantial harm to a heritage asset.

7.22 Grosvenor Hill is a wide straight road with a mixture of large late nineteenth century houses alternating with modern terraced houses and blocks of flats, mainly behind high walls and tree screens. Of the 20 or so properties in Sub Areas 16A and 16B, six make a positive contribution to the character of the Conservation Area, nine are neutral and five have been identified as making a negative impact. The current house forms part of a group of one detached house and two semi-detached houses built in 1920-21, which have been identified in the Wimbledon West Conservation Area Character Appraisal (Sub Area 16) as making a negative contribution to the conservation area. The house itself is considered to have little architectural merit, with large modern

windows and lacking the rich detailing common to other properties in the conservation area.

- 7.23 There is therefore no in principle objection to demolition relative to Policy DM D4. Nevertheless, demolition would not be supported unless, a suitable replacement scheme that preserved or enhanced the character of the conservation area was proposed.

7.3 Design and Impact on Conservation Area

- 7.31 Policy DM D2 of the Adopted Sites and Policies Plan and Policies Maps (July 2014) states that proposals for development will be required to relate positively and appropriately to the siting, rhythm, scale, density, proportions, height, materials and massing of surrounding buildings, whilst using appropriate architectural forms, language, detailing and materials which complement and enhance the character of the wider setting.

- 7.32 In relation to the street and surrounding properties, it is not considered that the proposed house will be excessive in terms of its height, bulk or massing. The proposed house would be comparable in height to Nos. 11 and 12 with the eaves height lower than the eaves heights of these houses and the ridge height only slightly higher. The proposed house would also be significantly lower than Clare Court, which is a five storey block of flats, whilst Mulberry Cottage, which is located between the application site and Clare Court, is set well back from the street.

- 7.33 The proposed house is considered to be a high quality design that would enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area. Although there is no dominant style on Grosvenor Hill, it is considered that the new house will be compatible with the character of the buildings found throughout the wider Wimbledon West Conservation Area. The proposed house will feature a barn hip roof, which addresses the street and double height front bay. Facing materials will comprise facing brickwork and handmade clay tiles and the windows will be painted timber. The proposed dormers are not too bulky, as they are set well back from the roof eaves and in from the flank walls.

7.3 Standard of Accommodation

- 7.31 The London Plan was published in July 2011 and sets out a minimum gross internal area standard for new homes as part of policy 3.5. It provides the most up to date and appropriate minimum space standards for Merton.

- 7.32 In addition, adopted policy CS.14 of the Core Strategy and DM D2 of the Adopted Sites and Policies Plan and Policies Maps (July 2014) encourages well designed housing in the borough by ensuring that all residential development complies with the most appropriate minimum space standards and provides functional internal spaces that are fit for purpose. New residential development should safeguard the amenities of occupiers by providing appropriate levels of sunlight & daylight and privacy for occupiers of

adjacent properties and for future occupiers of proposed dwellings. The living conditions of existing and future residents should not be diminished by increased noise or disturbance.

- 7.33 As the proposed house would comfortably exceed the minimum space standards set out in the London Plan, with each habitable room providing good outlook, light and circulation, it is considered the proposal would provide a satisfactory standard of accommodation. In addition, the proposed house would provide more than 150sqm of private amenity space, which is well in excess of the minimum of 50sqm required in policy DM D2. The proposed house would therefore comply with policy 3.5 of the London Plan (July 2011), CS.14 of the Core Planning Strategy (July 2011) and DM D2 of the Adopted Sites and Policies Plan and Policies Maps (July 2014).

7.4 Residential Amenity

- 7.41 Policy DM D2 of the Adopted Sites and Policies Plan and Policies Maps (July 2014) states that proposals for development will be required to ensure provision of appropriate levels of sunlight and daylight, quality of living conditions, amenity space and privacy, to both proposed and adjoining buildings and gardens. Development should also protect new and existing development from visual intrusion.
- 7.42 The proposed house would project only 85cm beyond the rear wall of No.12 at first floor level whilst the ground floor rear element projects only 3.1m from the rear wall of this property. The ground level of the application site slopes downwards from north to south and from west to east, which means the single storey rear and side elements would be more prominent when viewed from the rear of No.12. On the advice of Council Planning Officers, the single storey rear and side elements have been reduced in height by 70cm so that they would have a height of approx. 3.5m when measured from the rear garden ground level. It is considered that this reduction in height combined with the stepping in of the rear part of the west facing flank wall of the house by a further 80cm, so that it is a minimum of 1m from the side boundary with No.12, means that the house would not be unacceptably visually intrusive or overbearing when viewed from the rear garden of No.12.
- 7.43 In terms of the proposal's impact on privacy at No.12 a condition will be attached requiring the windows in the west facing side elevation at first and second floor levels to be obscure glazed and fixed shut, whilst a condition will also be attached preventing the use of the roofs of the single storey elements as balconies or terraces. The proposal also passes the Council's Aspect Value Test to this property, which means it would not have result in an unacceptable impact on daylight/sunlight levels to this property.
- 7.44 No.15 (Mulberry Cottage) is set well back from the street frontage which means any impact from the proposed house would only be noticed from the front of this house and not from the rear garden or rear facing windows, which have a southerly aspect. It is considered that the proposed house would not be visually intrusive or result in an unacceptable loss of outlook when viewed

from the front of this house. It is noted that the proposed house is wider than the existing house and as such the flank wall of house at first floor level and above would be closer to the side boundary with No.15 than existing. However, it is considered that the proposed house has been designed to minimise this impact with for example part of the front elevation stepped back by 2.7m and the closest part of the house to the side boundary with No.15 only single storey in height. It should be noted that No.15 features a cat slide roof at its northern end which means the proposed house would only be visible from the single ground floor window in its front elevation or the front driveway. However, it should be noted that the front elevation of No.15 is orientated to the northeast, which means it does not directly face the proposed house, but instead the flank wall of the five storey Clare House, which can be argued has a far greater impact than the proposal.

- 7.45 It is also considered that the proposal has an acceptable impact on the amenity of occupiers of properties along Oldfield Road, which abuts the rear of the site. The rear dormer would be located approx. 19m from the rear elevation of No. 13 Oldfield Road., which is less than the minimum 25m separation distance suggested in the Council's supplementary guidance and consequently a condition would be required, requiring the rear dormer window to be obscure glazed up to 1.7m above finished floor level.

7.5 Basement Construction

- 7.51 The applicant has provided a Basement Construction Method Statement, demonstrating how the stability of ground conditions will be maintained in relation to adjoining properties. The applicant has also provided a ground investigation report which includes details of the results from two boreholes. Due to the proximity of adjacent dwellings and the potential for a localised rise in groundwater levels around the proposed structure, it will be recommended that passive drainage measures are implemented to reduce the risk of rising ground water around the basement.
- 7.52 The council's structural and flood engineers have assessed the proposal and are satisfied with the details submitted subject to the imposition of suitable conditions on any planning approval requiring a detailed scheme for the provision of surface water drainage and a detailed construction method statement to be submitted and approved by the LPA prior to commencement of development. It is therefore considered that the proposal would accord with policies DM D2 and DM F2 of the Adopted Sites and Policies Plan and Policies Maps (July 2014)

7.6 Parking and Traffic

- 7.61 The proposal will provide approx. two off-street car parking spaces, which is the same as the current house and as such is considered to be acceptable. Although the site is located in a controlled parking zone and has excellent public transport access (PTAL rating of 6a) it is considered that because the development would not result in a net increase in residential units that a S106 agreement for permit free parking would not be necessary in this instance

given it is unlikely that the development would have an adverse impact on parking in the surrounding road network.

- 7.62 The proposal does not show any cycle parking provision. Policy DM T1 of the Adopted Sites and Policies Plan and Policies Maps (July 2014) states that development must provide cycle parking in accordance set out in the London Plan. It states that residential cycle parking facilities should be provided in secure, covered and conveniently sited positions with good access to the street. Policy 6.13 of the London Plan states that developments must meet with minimum cycle parking standards set out in Table 6.3 which in this instance requires 2 spaces. A condition will therefore be attached requiring details of secure cycle storage are submitted prior to commencement of development.

7.7 Trees and Landscaping

- 7.71 There is a prominent Lime tree located on the front boundary of the application site. It should also be noted that a similar sized Lime tree is located on the front boundary of Clare Court close to the application site. It is considered that these trees offer significant amenity value and as such any proposal must demonstrate how they will be protected.

- 7.72 The applicant has submitted an arboricultural report including a tree survey and tree constraints plan which provides sufficient information to determine the likely impact of the proposal on the Lime trees (listed as T1 and T2), which have a category 'B' rating. The application as originally submitted proposed a front wall which would have impacted one of the Lime trees (T1) and this has now been removed from the scheme. The applicant has also updated the submitted construction method statement following advice from the Council's Tree Officer with the secant pile retaining wall now extended across the whole of the buildings front (two-storey element) to further aid in the protection of the tree's roots. The Council does not raise any objections to the removal of a category 'U' Oak tree which is located in the rear garden as it is considered to be a poor quality specimen.

8. SUSTAINABILITY AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT REQUIREMENTS

- 8.1 The application does not constitute Schedule 1 or Schedule 2 development. Accordingly, there are no requirements in terms of EIA submission.

9. LOCAL FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 9.1 The proposal would result in a net gain in gross floor space and as such will be liable to pay both Mayoral and Merton Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). The funds will be spent on the Crossrail project, and strategic infrastructure and neighbourhood projects.

10. CONCLUSION

- 10.1 It is considered that the proposed house would be acceptable in terms of its size and design and would not have an unacceptable impact on the Grosvenor Hill streetscene or the wider Merton (Wimbledon West) conservation area. The house is also considered to have an acceptable impact on neighbouring properties, traffic/parking and trees. Overall it is considered that the proposal would comply with all relevant planning policies and as such planning permission should be granted.

RECOMMENDATION

(1) GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION subject to the following conditions:

1. A.1 (Commencement of Development)
2. B.1 (External Materials to be Approved)
3. B.4 (Details of Site/Surface Treatment)
4. B.6 (Levels)
5. C.1 (No Permitted Development (Extensions))
6. C.2 (No Permitted Development (Windows and Doors))
7. C.4 (Obscured Glazing (Opening Windows))
8. C.8 (No Use of Flat Roof)
9. C.10 (Hours of Construction)
10. F.1 (Landscaping/Planting Scheme)
11. F.2 (Landscaping (Implementation))
12. F.5 (Tree Protection)
13. F.8 (Site Supervision)
14. F.9 (Hardstandings)
15. No part of the development hereby approved shall be occupied until evidence has been submitted to the council confirming that the development has achieved not less than the CO2 reductions (ENE1), internal water usage (WAT1) standards equivalent to Code for Sustainable Homes level 4. Evidence requirements are detailed in the "Schedule of evidence Required for Post Construction Stage from Ene1 & Wat1 of the Code for Sustainable Homes Technical Guide. Evidence to demonstrate a 25% reduction compared to 2010 part L regulations and internal water usage rates of 105l/p/day must be submitted to, and acknowledged in writing by the Local Planning Authority, unless otherwise agreed in writing.

Reason: To ensure that the development achieves a high standard of sustainability and makes efficient use of resources and to comply with the following Development Plan policies for Merton: policy 5.2 of the London Plan 2011 and policy CS15 of Merton's Core Planning Strategy 2011.

16. Prior to the commencement of the development details of the provision to accommodate all site operatives, visitors and construction vehicles and loading / unloading arrangements during the construction process shall be submitted and approved in writing with the Local Planning Authority. The approved details must be implemented and complied with for the duration of the construction process.

Reason: To safeguard the amenities of the occupiers of neighbouring properties.

17. No development approved by this permission shall be commenced until a scheme for the provision of groundwater and surface water drainage has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The drainage scheme shall dispose of water by means of a sustainable drainage system (SuDs) to ground, watercourse or sewer in accordance with the drainage hierarchy contained in the London Plan (Policies 5.12 and 5.13) and the advice contained within the National SuDs Standards.

Reason: To ensure satisfactory means of surface water drainage, to reduce the risk of flooding and to comply with the following Development Plan policies for Merton: policy 5.13 of the London Plan 2011, policy CS16 of Merton's Core Planning Strategy 2011 and policy DM F2 of Merton's Sites and Polices Plan 2014.

18. No development approved by this permission shall be commenced until a detailed method statement has been submitted produced by the contractor and reviewed/agreed by a chartered structural engineer. Construction working drawings including sequence of construction and temporary support drawings shall be submitted.

Reason: To ensure that structural stability of adjoining houses is safeguarded and neighbour amenity is not harmed and to comply with policy DM D2 of Merton's Sites and Polices Plan 2014.

19. C.4 (Obscure glazing up to 1.7m above FFL – rear dormer)
20. Cycle storage provision

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