

PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE 22 MARCH 2018

APPLICATION NO.
17/P3551

DATE VALID
18/09/2017

Address/Site Phoenix Hotel, 123-125 Merton Road, Wimbledon SW19 1ED

Ward Abbey

Proposal: Application for outline planning permission for the demolition of the existing hotel and the erection of a five storey building comprising 21 flats (11 x 1 bedroom and 10 x two bedroom) and 1 x two bedroom and 1 x three bedroom detached houses and associated access and parking (Access, site layout and scale of development to be considered, with appearance and landscaping reserved matters).

Drawing Nos 1602-014-D, 1602-016-G, 1602-17-G, 1602-018-G, 1602-019-F, 1602-020-F, 1602-021-E, 1601-022-C, 1602-029-F, 1602-030-F, 1602-033, 1602-034-F, 1602-055-J and Planning Statement, Design and Access Statement, Daylight and Sunlight Report and Transport Statement

Contact Officer: Richard Allen (8545 3621)

RECOMMENDATION

GRANT Outline Planning Permission subject to completion of a S.106 Agreement and conditions

CHECKLIST INFORMATION

- Heads of agreement: Yes
- Is a screening opinion required: No
- Is an Environmental Impact Statement required: No
- Press Notice: Yes
- Site notice: Yes
- Design Review Panel consulted: Yes
- Number of neighbours consulted: 40
- External consultants: Yes
- Density: 670 hrph
- Archaeology: No

1. **INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 The application is being brought before the Planning Applications Committee due to the scale of the proposed development.

2. **SITE AND SURROUNDINGS**

- 2.1 The application site comprises the Phoenix Hotel a four storey building situated on the west side of Merton Road. The existing hotel has car parking and servicing at the rear accessed from Griffiths Road. To the north of the site are flats within a three storey building at 123-125 Merton Road (although planning permission has been granted for an additional floor of accommodation at 123-125). To the south of the site is Wesley Court, a three storey development of town houses and flats accessed from Griffiths Road. On the corner of Merton Road and Griffiths Road is Wimbledon Methodist Church, a modern building that abuts the back of the footway with part of the flank elevation abutting the application site. To the west of the site is the rear of the William Morris Hall and three storey housing in Griffiths Road. The application site is not within a conservation area. The site is however within a Controlled Parking Zone (Zone 4F) and the site has a PTAL rating of 6a.
- 2.2 The current site was in residential use until the 1980's when purchased by the current owners. There were three houses on the site at 123 and 125 Merton Road and 1 A Griffiths Road. 1A Griffiths Road was purchased to provide access to the rear of the site. The existing gross internal floor area of the hotel is 884m².

3. **CURRENT PROPOSAL**

- 3.1 The current application seeks outline planning permission for the redevelopment of the site by the erection of a five storey building comprising 21 flats (11 x 1 bedroom and 10 x two bedroom) and 1 x two bedroom and 1 x three bedroom detached houses and associated access and parking (Access, site layout and scale of development to be considered, with appearance and landscaping reserved matters).
- 3.2 The main building would comprise a five storey building fronting Merton Road between Wimbledon Methodist Church and the residential flats at 121 Merton Road. The proposed building would be 0.9 metres taller than the existing ridge height of the hotel, but lower than the existing water tower. The building would extend rearwards into the site with the rear elevation of the proposed building aligning with the rear elevation of Wesley Court, a development of town houses at the rear of the Methodist Church. In the north west corner of the site a detached two storey dwelling house would be provided whilst on the Griffiths Road frontage a further detached house would be provided with access onto Griffiths Road.
- 3.3 Internally, the main block (Building A) would provide 21 flats comprising 11 x one bedroom and 10 x two bedroom units. Building 'B' would be a 2 bedroom dwelling house and building 'C' a 3 bedroom dwelling house. A servicing

access for building 'A' would be provided from Merton Road with secure cycle storage and refuse and recycling facilities provided alongside the servicing access. A single parking space would be provided for house 'C' on the Griffiths Road frontage with the flat units and house 'B' being designated 'permit free'.

4. **PLANNING HISTORY**

- 4.1 In July 1980 planning permission was granted for the change of use of 123-125 Merton Road to a hostel involving internal alterations (Ref.MER1043/79). A number of further applications have been submitted for minor works to the existing hotel.

5. **CONSULTATION**

- 5.1 Major site and press notice procedure and letters of notification were sent to occupiers of neighbouring properties. In response 13 letters of objection have been received. The grounds of objection are set out below:-

- The proposed development is too tall.
- The plans lack detail.
- The development would result in the loss of privacy to the garden of 9 Griffiths Road and would also block off light.
- The application should be refused on grounds of bulk, height and massing.
- The proposal would obstruct windows in 121 Merton Road.
- The occupier of flat 2, 1B Griffiths Road is pleased to note that building 'C' is now single storey rather than two storey which would have compromised a first floor window. However, there are still concerns regarding the roof of building 'C' as the parapet could impede on the window.
- The 3.8 metre height of building 'C' would be only 1 metre away from 1 Wesley Court and this would affect light to the property.
- There is insufficient parking for the development which will adversely affect parking in the surrounding area.

5.2 **The Wimbledon Society**

Although the developers proposal includes 9 affordable units are welcome and should be included in the final design, the Wimbledon Society consider that the internal light well that serves to give light to bedrooms is small, narrow and deep. The standard of light one will have in apartments 2 and 3 is questionable. Building 'C' will have an adverse effect on the adjoining house in Griffiths Road and the proposed 1.8 metre high wall proposed in front of building 'C' would be a visual barrier in the street scene. The outline application refers to nearby listed buildings and consequently when detailed design is submitted it should acknowledge and positively embrace the historical architecture of the nearby listed church of St. Winifred's.

6. **POLICY CONTEXT**

- 6.1 The relevant policies within the Adopted Merton Core Strategy (July 2011) are

CS6 (Wimbledon Town Centre), CS7 (Centres), CS12 (Economic Development), CS14 (Design), CS15 (Climate Change) and CS20 (Parking, Servicing and Delivery).

- 6.2 The retained policies within the Adopted Merton Sites and Policies Plan (July 2014) are DM H2 (Housing Mix), DM H3 (Support for Affordable Housing), DM R6 (Culture, Arts and Tourism), DM D1 (Urban Design and the Public Realm), DM D2 (Design Considerations in all Developments), DM F2 (Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS)), DM T1 (Sustainable Transport and Active Travel), DM T3 (Car Parking and Servicing Standards).
- 6.3 The Policies contained within the London Plan (March 2015) 4.5 (London's Visitor Infrastructure), 5.1 (Climate Change Mitigation), 5.3 (Sustainable Design and Construction), 7.5 (Public Realm) and 7.6 (Architecture).

7. PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

- 7.1 The principal planning considerations concern employment issues, housing provision together with design, neighbour amenity, transport/parking, developer contributions and sustainability issues.
- 7.2 Loss of Employment Land
The London Plan seeks to ensure that development does not result in the loss of important hotel capacity (i.e. 15,000m² outside central London). However the existing hotel has 31 bedrooms and a floor area of approximately 884m². Therefore the loss of this small hotel would not have any material effect on this strategic planning objective. A 176 bedroom hotel is also currently under construction at 153-161 The Broadway (LBM Ref.16/P1149) and permission has also been granted for a 150 bedroom hotel at 12 Hartfield Road (LBM Ref.16/P1374).
- 7.3 Housing Provision
Policy DM H2 (Housing Mix) of the Adopted Sites and Policies Plan requires new development to provide an appropriate mix of housing sizes and types based on the needs of the local area. The proposal would provide 21 flats (11 x one bedroom and 10 x two bedroom) together with 1 x 2 bedroom and 1 x 3 bedroom houses. The London Plan includes a density matrix based on the location and accessibility to public transport (PTAL). For a site in an urban location with a PTAL of 6a it suggests that up to 700 habitable rooms per hectare would be appropriate. The proposed development would have a density of 670 habitable rooms per hectare which is with guidance contained within the London Plan and the proposal would deliver a total of 23 new homes in a central location. The proposal therefore accords with aims of policy DM H2. Policy 3.3 of the London Plan 2016 states that development plan policies should seek to identify new sources of land for residential development including intensification of housing provision through development at higher densities. Core Strategy policies CS8 & CS9 seek to encourage proposals for well-designed and conveniently located new housing that will create socially mixed and sustainable neighbourhoods through

physical regeneration and effective use of space. The National Planning Policy Framework 2012 and London Plan policies 3.3 & 3.5 promote sustainable development that encourages the development of additional dwellings at locations with good public transport accessibility

7.4 Design Issues

The proposed main building fronting Merton Road (Building A) would be of similar height to the existing hotel, with the top floor set back on all boundaries. The proposed building would be marginally taller than the ridge height of the existing hotel (0.9 metres). However, the proposed building would be lower than the hotel water tower. It should also be noted that the adjacent building, 121 Merton Road has planning permission for the erection of an additional level of accommodation and formation of a mansard roof to provide 3 additional residential units (LBM Ref.17/P0539). The resulting building at 121 Merton Road would therefore be of similar height to the proposed building at 123-125 Merton Road. The top floor of building 'A' would be set back and would therefore be less noticeable from street level. The rear of building 'A' would be located on the area currently occupied by the hotel bar/café terrace and the proposed building would align with the residential development at Wesley Court, with the top floor of the rear elevation of the proposed building also set back to reduce its massing and visual impact. In any event this is an outline application so details would be secured through the reserved matter applications process.

- 7.4 Building 'B' would be a 'Mews style' building two storeys in height with the upper floor contained within a mansard style roof set back by 3 metres from the garden of 1 Griffiths Road. The building would have a mansard style roof. Building 'C' would be single storey building due to the existing windows within Wesley Court that overlook the hotel access road. Although the proposed house would extend beyond the rear building line of 1 Griffiths Road, the building would only be single storey with a garden behind. The proposed building would also have an inner courtyard to provide light to bedrooms.

7.5 Standard of Residential Accommodation

The proposal involves the provision of a new building providing 21 flats. 11 x one bedroom and 10 x two bedroom units and two detached dwelling houses (1 x two bedroom and one three bedroom units). The indicative plans show all the flat units exceeding the minimum gross internal floor area standards as set out in the London Plan. However, the gross internal floor area of house 'C' at 91 m² is slightly below the London Plan minimum standard of 96 m². The schedule of accommodation is set out below:-

Flats Building 'A'	Number Bedrooms	Number Persons	Gross Internal Floor Area	London Plan Requirement
1	1	2	52.6 m2	50 m2
2	2	3	77m2	61 m2
3	2	3	77.1m2	61 m2
4	2	3	77 m2	61 m2
5	2	3	77.1m2	61 m2
6	1	2	61.7 m2	50 m2
7	1	2	55.1 m2	50 m2
8	1	2	52.6	50 m2
9	2	3	77 m2	61 m2
10	2	3	77.1 m2	61 m2
11	1	2	61.7 m2	50 m2
12	1	2	55.1 m2	50 m2
13	1	2	52.6 m2	50 m2
14	2	3	77.1 m2	61 m2
15	1	2	61.7 m2	50 m2
16	1	2	55.1 m2	50 m2
17	1	2	52.6 m2	50 m2
18	2	3	77 m2	61 m2
19	2	3	73.5 m2	61 m2
20	2	3	89.4 m2	61 m2
21	1	2	49.7 m2	50 m2

House	Bedrooms	Persons	GIFA	London Plan
'B'	2	3	89 m2	83 m2
'C'	3	5	91 m2	96 m2

The slight shortfall in the floor space of house 'C' is not considered to be of such detriment to warrant refusal of the application.

7.6 Neighbour Amenity Issues

The concerns of neighbouring residents are noted. However, the application is submitted in outline, albeit that an indicative layout of the proposed residential units have been submitted, to demonstrate that an acceptable arrangement of flats and houses can be accommodated within the site. At the Reserved Matters stage further consideration can be given when final window/balcony positions are known. In terms of potential overlooking, building 'C' is single storey with a flat roof and would have a maximum height of 3.182 metres. Windows within house 'C' would face front and rear and onto an internal courtyard. Therefore no overlooking issues are envisaged. Building 'B' has an east west aspect and does not directly overlook neighbouring properties or gardens (apart from oblique views). The main building (A) would have windows within the rear (west) elevation and would have views across the rear parts of gardens of properties in Griffiths Road. However, this would be similar to the existing situation with the windows in the adjacent Wesley Court development and the first floor windows in the hotel. In terms of daylight and

sunlight the applicant has supplies a Daylight/Sunlight Assessment produced by MES Building Solutions which assesses the impact of the development upon surrounding properties. The report demonstrates that the proposed development would have a low impact upon neighbouring properties in line with BRE guidelines. The proposed development would also remove vehicle movements to and from the hotel along the access road from Griffiths Road. The removal of the access road and its replacement with a dwelling and gardens would improve the outlook and amenities for occupiers adjacent dwellings. The proposal is therefore considered to be acceptable in terms of policy DM D2 (Design Considerations in all Developments).

7.7 Transport/Parking Issues

The application site is close to both Wimbledon and South Wimbledon stations and is on several bus routes. And the application site has a PTAL rating of 6a which is excellent. The application site is also within a Controlled Parking Zone (Zone 4F). The location of the development is therefore appropriate for a 'permit free' development secured through a S.106 agreement. The development would however require 34 secure cycle spaces. The development would provide 40 spaces which exceeds the London Plan standard. The proposed dwelling fronting Griffiths Road would however be provided with a single parking space. The proposal is therefore considered to be acceptable in terms of policies CS20 and DM T3.

7.8 Sustainability

The applicant has confirmed that the energy performance of the proposed scheme would be designed in accordance with the London Borough of Merton Core Strategy Policy CS15 (Climate Change) and set out in the Explanatory Note: Approaches to Sustainable Design and Construction Version 1.0 (June 2017) and detailed in chapter 5 of the Greater London Authority (GLA) London Plan (2016). Details of energy performance would be provided at the Reserved Matters stage in accordance with the requirements of policy CS15.

7.10 Developer Contributions

The Council seek to secure affordable housing provision for all developments of more than 10 units. For developments of 10 units or more 40% affordable housing is sought having regard to the sites characteristics and the economics of provision; i.e. financial viability. It is the Council's requirements that of the 40%, 60% of housing is social rented and 40% intermediate housing. The Council expect that affordable units be provided on site as part of the development and it is in only exceptional circumstances would off-site provision or a financial contribution in lieu of provision would be considered. The current proposal would provide 9 units (39%) on a shared ownership basis.

The development will therefore be required to secure the affordable housing and 'permit free' development through a S.106 Agreement.

7.9 Local Financial Considerations

The proposed development is liable for the Merton Community Infrastructure Levy and the Mayoral Community Infrastructure Levy, the funds of which will be applied by the Mayor towards the Crossrail project. The CIL amount is

non-negotiable and planning permission cannot be refused for failure to agree to pay the CIL.

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 on EIA submission.

9. **CONCLUSION**

9.1 There are no objections to the loss of the existing hotel due to the number of new hotel rooms currently being constructed in Wimbledon Town Centre. The access, layout and scale of development is considered to be acceptable. The detailed design and appearance of the proposed development would however be considered as Reserved Matters, with details being submitted pursuant to the outline approval. Accordingly, it is recommended that Outline planning permission be granted.

RECOMMENDATION

GRANT Outline Planning Permission

With the following matters reserved: Appearance and Landscaping.

Subject to completion of a S.106 Agreement covering the following heads of terms:-

1. The developer providing 9 units of affordable housing.
2. The development being designated 'Permit Free',
3. The developer paying the Council's legal and professional costs in drafting, completing and monitoring the agreement.

and subject to the following conditions:-

1. A.1 Commencement of Development (5 Years)
2. A.7 Approved Plans
3. B.1 (Approval of Facing Materials)
4. B.4 (Details of Site Surface Treatment)
5. C.6 (Refuse and Recycling – Details to be Submitted)
6. C.7 (Refuse and Recycling – Implementation)
7. D.1 (Hours of Construction)

8. D.5 (Soundproofing of Plant and Machinery)
 9. D.9 (No External Lighting)
 10. H.4 (Provision of Parking)
 11. H.6 (Cycle Parking)
 12. H.8 Travel Plan
 13. H.9 (Construction Vehicles – Major Sites)
 14. H.12 (Delivery and Servicing Plan to be Submitted)
 15. INF12 (Works Affecting the Public Highway)
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