

**PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE  
14 MAY 2020**

**Item No:**

**UPRN**

**APPLICATION NO.**

**DATE VALID**

19/P3324

11/09/2019

**Address/Site** 28 Lauriston Road, Wimbledon, SW19 4TQ

**(Ward)** Village

**Proposal:** Demolition of existing detached dwelling house and the erection of a new single storey dwelling house with accommodation at basement level) and provision of off-street parking and associated landscaping works.

**Drawing Nos** 219.07.2000.PL P1, 21000.PL P2, 24000.PL P2, 31000.EL P2, 32000.EL P2, 34000.EL P2, 33000.EL P2, 41000.SEC P2, 42000.SEC P2 and Design and Access Statement

**Contact Officer:** Richard Allen (020 8545 3621)

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**RECOMMENDATION**

**GRANT Planning Permission subject to conditions.**

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**CHECKLIST INFORMATION**

- Heads of agreement: No
- Is a screening opinion required: No
- Is an Environmental impact statement required: No
- Has an Environmental Impact Assessment been submitted: No
- Press notice: Yes
- Site notice: Yes
- Design Review Panel consulted: No
- Number neighbours consulted – 8
- External consultants: None
- Density: n/a
- Number of jobs created: n/a
- Archaeology Priority Zone: No
- Conservation Area: Yes (Wimbledon West)

## 1. **INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 This application has been brought to the Planning Applications Committee due to the nature and number of objections received.

## 2. **SITE AND SURROUNDINGS**

- 2.1 The application site comprises a two storey detached dwelling house situated on north east side of Lauriston Road at the junction with Wilberforce Way. The application property occupies a corner plot with a side garden boundary onto Wilberforce Way. There are mature trees within the front garden and alongside the side garden boundary. The application site is within the Merton (Wimbledon West) Conservation Area. The surrounding area comprises residential properties.

## 3. **CURRENT PROPOSAL**

- 3.1 The current application involves the demolition of the existing detached dwelling house and the erection of a new single storey dwelling house (with accommodation at basement level) and provision of off-street parking and associated landscaping works.
- 3.2 The proposed building would be sited between 5 and 10 metres away from the Lauriston Road frontage and would range in width between 9.5 and 16.5 metres in width. The overall length of the house would be 27 metres. The building would have a flat roof with the height of the building ranging between 3.5 and 5.2 metres. The building would be arranged as a series of pavilions with courtyard gardens between various wings of the building. The proposed house would be single storey although a basement would be provided beneath the central section of the building. A contemporary design approach has been adopted for the proposed dwelling house, with use of flat roof design and external facing brick to elevations.
- 3.3 Internally, at basement level, a studio, gym, plant and store rooms would be provided. At ground floor level the proposed house would comprise an entrance hall, study/bedroom, combined living/kitchen/dining area, utility room, garden room and three further bedrooms.
- 3.4 Vehicle access would be provided off Wilberforce Way and the existing access off Lauriston Road would be closed, providing pedestrian access only. Four outdoor courtyards would be provided, each with a mixture of soft and hard landscaping.

## 4. **PLANNING HISTORY**

- 4.1 In July 2018 a pre-application meeting was held in connection with the proposed demolition of the existing dwelling and erection of a new dwelling house (LBM Ref.18/P2187).

## 5. CONSULTATION

- 5.1 The application has been advertised by Conservation Area Site and Press notice procedure and letters to occupiers of neighbouring properties. In response 5 letters of objection have been received. The grounds of objection are set out below: -

-The site has been derelict for some time and residents are keen to see the redevelopment of the site. However, the proposed design of the dwelling is not in keeping with the Conservation Area and the listed buildings nearby. The local area in Lauriston road and Wilberforce way has seen positive redevelopment of several houses including 3 Wilberforce way and the house opposite the application site. These developments include a variety of architectural styles, but as required by policy DM D2, they all relate positively and appropriately to the setting, respecting a common theme and somewhat traditional character of housing.

-The proposed design is a low height concrete structure with a flat roof throughout. It is unremittingly ugly and not at all in keeping with anything seen in Wimbledon, let alone in the Conservation Area. It resembles a military installation or a prison.

-The proposal would result in brick walls along Lauriston Road and Wilberforce Way and these walls would be at least 2 metres in height, rising to 4 metres in parts along Wilberforce Way, save for a door in Lauriston Road the walls are solid and unbroken by any windows, railings or planting. The view of the property from the surrounding streets and neighbouring houses would be of unremitting brickwork.

-The design of the proposed house is not in keeping with the open design of neighbouring properties.

-It is proposed to provide two parking spaces accessed from Wilberforce Way. Historically vehicular and pedestrian access has been from Lauriston Road and not from Wilberforce Way. The only access from Wilberforce way has been from a small door in the fence, which has not been used for many years. There has never been vehicular access from Wilberforce Way and the proposed parking would result in the loss of at least one on-street parking space in Wilberforce Way. Therefore, off street parking for the development should be from Lauriston Road.

## 5.2 The Wimbledon Society

The Wimbledon Society note that the current house is derelict and lies within the Merton (Wimbledon West) Conservation Area. The unusual design for a single storey building over a basement, will most likely have a corresponding low impact on the street scene. Battery storage and PV panels are mentioned but it is not clear from the energy statement if gas is to be used for central heating. Permeable paving is a welcome intent. All of the trees on the site are recommended for removal in the arbouricultural report. The Wimbledon Society would like to suggest that a condition be imposed regarding

replacement trees, in order to compensate for the loss of significant tree mass in the local scene, the Council should require replacement trees that match the combined ages of all those trees that will be lost.

5.3 Two letters have been received supporting the proposed development have been received and comments are set out below: -

-Of particular concern to residents is the state of the trees within the site and the overgrown trees along the edge of the property which are alien species and have been allowed to grow to a stage where they are a danger to surrounding properties and pedestrians. The roots have damaged the pavement and road. There is a real risk from the trees as witnessed 4/5 years ago when one tree fell and damaged the roof of 28 Lauriston Road. Therefore, the findings of the Arbouricultural Report are supported and the trees should be removed.

-The proposed design of the house an imaginative 'pavilion' style low rise building set in four planted courtyards.

-The varying heights of the 'pavilions' will create visual interest particularly from the north facing Wilberforce way and also from Lauriston Road itself. The low rise design is a welcome element and makes a change from the latter day temptation to build bigger and bulkier when a dilapidated building is replaced. Both types and sizes of trees specified for the courtyards will be well suited for the scale of the building.

-The proposed building would not overlook other properties which is a welcome feature and privacy would be maintained, not only for the new occupants but for the surrounding neighbours.

-The proposed boundary walls are in keeping with those of other properties in the northern end of Lauriston Road.

-Wilberforce Way directly adjacent to the property will be immeasurably improved and become a more pleasing amenity for all adjacent residents.

-Currently the very tall and densely sited forest conifers along the boundary in Wilberforce Way shield light from the properties at 30 and 32 Lauriston Road. There is no environmental case for keeping these forest trees particularly as they will be replaced by more attractive and appropriately sized trees. Those who oppose the removal of the trees are not be ones suffering from light deprivation from them nor do they live adjacent to them.

-there is no point in replacing the tall trees with further 5 metres trees as it will still deprive light to neighbours.

5.4 Council's Tree Officer (Original comments)

-Proposed to clear the site of all existing trees, and to provide new trees as part of the landscaping to the new development. The proposed removal includes a large mature Sycamore and Lime tree. There is a row of 8 no. Monterey Cypress trees lining the road to Wilberforce Way. The remaining trees are relatively small and insignificant specimens;

-The Sycamore tree has been given a 'C' category rating and is described as having been subjected to poor management techniques; having defects within its form; having minor root girdling; severe aphid infestation; and sooty bark disease. The tree is a visually dominant specimen which this officer considers should have a 'B' category rating. The reported aphid infestation is a common

feature amongst urban trees, particularly Lime trees, and is not a reason to remove a tree. The reported claim of 'Sooty Bark Disease' is actually the remnants of an accumulation of dirt behind a former lattice fence that was resting on the trunk of the tree. This tree should be retained, however this would require a significant redesign of the submitted scheme;

-The row of Monterey Cypress trees do create an unpleasant, oppressive feel to this area of Wilberforce Way, and judging from the objections received thus far, are proving to be unpopular amongst the local residents. I would support their removal as part of this development;

-The Lime tree has been given a 'C' category rating and is described as being close to the boundary fence; as having been crown reduced with prolific re-growth; likelihood of need for regular pruning; and there have been soil level changes around the tree with pruning wound cavities and possible root severance. This tree is a large mature specimen which merits a 'B' category rating. None of the defects justify downgrading this tree to a lower category, particularly since its lifespan expectancy is estimated to be between 15 – 20 years. The tree could be retained within the proposed scheme and this would not require any amendments;

-The landscaping: The proposed mix of tree species is ambitious for such small areas. The proposed species of trees include Birch, Hornbeam, Pine and Oak. Most of these are unlikely to be retained in the future as they will outgrow the given space. The Tree Officer, therefore, advises that either the scheme is amended to retain the Sycamore tree and Lime tree, or that consideration is given to a refusal of planning consent.

#### 5.5 Thames Water

Thames Water have been consulted and raise no objections to the proposed development subject to conditions being imposed on any grant of planning permission in respect of surface water drainage.

#### 5.6 Conservation Officer

No objection to the proposal.

#### 5.7 Amended Plans

Following discussions with officers, the flank walls of the proposed building adjacent to the boundary with 20 Lauriston Road, has been set back from the boundary (at first floor level by 1 m) to reduce the visual impact of the flank wall upon 20 Lauriston Road. The elevation treatment to the Wilberforce Way frontage as also be amended. A re-consultation has been undertaken and a further three letters of objection have been received. The grounds of objection are set out below: -

##### 10 Wilberforce Way

-It is noted that a small amendment has been made to the design of the proposed dwelling. A substitution of a small section of 2 metre brick boundary wall fronting Wilberforce Wat in front of the 6 metres tall pavilion, with metal or wood railings to allow some greenery to break up the 34 metre run of brickwork. However, the two pavilions remain hard up against the pavement rising to 4 metres in height and the design still looks cold and drab and is not suitable for a Conservation Area.

- The two 'pavilions' should be set back from the pavement by 1 metre and more railings provided to break up the design.
- No attempt has been made to replace or even retain some of the 16 trees which would be removed as part of the development.
- At least two of the trees on the Wilberforce way frontage are worthy of retention and the building should be adapted to leave them in situ.

#### 4 Wilberforce Way

- The revisions have made some attempt to address original concerns regarding the length of the brick wall fronting Wilberforce Way. Unfortunately, the revisions provide for the replacement of only one section of brickwork; the bulk of it, including the 4-metre-high side walls of the two pavilions of the property would remain. The overall look therefore still remains very urban.
- Two parking spaces are still proposed with access from Wilberforce Way rather than Lauriston Road.

#### 17 Lauriston Road

- None of the changes materially change objections to the scheme. There is still no visible planting from Lauriston Road apart from through a small gateway, so the severe effect of the continuous brickwork, flat roofs and no external windows is just the same. The development is out of keeping with the nature of neighbouring houses in Wilberforce Way.

#### 5.8 Council's Tree Officer (Amended comments)

Following careful consideration, the loss of the Sycamore tree can be accepted and the Lime Tree is to be retained, and has been agreed to be subject of a Tree Preservation Order.

### 6. **POLICY CONTEXT**

#### 6.1 Adopted Merton Core Strategy (July 2011)

CS8 (Housing Choice), CS9 (Housing Provision), CS14 (Design), CS15 (Climate Change), CS16 (Flood Risk Management), CS20 (Parking, Servicing and Delivery).

#### 6.2 Sites and Policies Plan (July 2014)

DM H4 (Demolition and Redevelopment of a Single Dwelling house), DM H2 (Housing Mix), DM D2 (Design Considerations in all Developments), DM D4 (Managing Heritage Assets), DM F1 (Support for Flood Risk Management), DM F2 (Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS)) and DM T3 (Car Parking and Servicing Standards),

#### 6.3 The London Plan (2016)

The relevant policies within the London Plan are 3.3 (Increasing London's Housing Supply), 3.4 (Optimising Sites Potential), 3.5 (Quality and Design of Housing), 3.8 (Housing Choice), 5.2 (Minimising Carbon Dioxide Emissions), 5.3 (Sustainable Design and Construction), 6.13 (Parking), 7.4 (Local Character), 7.6 (Architecture) and 7.8 (Heritage Assets).

6.4 NPPF (2019)

## 7. PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

7.1 The main planning considerations are Design/Conservation Issues, Neighbour Amenity, Standard of Residential Accommodation, Trees, Parking and Sustainability issues.

### 7.2 Design/Conservation Issues

7.2.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states that planning should always seek to secure high quality design and a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings. The regional planning policy advice in relation to design is found in the London Plan (2016), in Policy 7.4 - Local Character and 7.6 - Architecture. These policies state that Local Authorities should seek to ensure that developments promote high quality inclusive design, enhance the public realm, and seek to ensure that development promotes world class architecture and design.

7.2.2 Policy DM D2 seek to ensure a high quality of design in all development, which relates positively and appropriately to the siting, rhythm, scale, density, proportions, height, materials and massing of surrounding buildings and existing street patterns, historic context, urban layout and landscape features of the surrounding area. Local Development Framework Policy CS14 supports these SPP Policies. Policy DM D4 seeks to protect heritage assets in the Borough. The heritage assets in this case are the Conservation Area and the Grade II Listed Buildings (opposite the site).

7.2.3 *The site lies within Sub-Area 11 within the Conservation Area appraisal in which its character is described as: one of the classic approach roads to the Common. It is the best local showcase for the neo-Dutch and "Queen Anne" styles of architecture widely practised around the 1880s and thereafter – Dutch gables, flat arches and similar William & Mary features, and with such an embarrasse de richesse the Society found it difficult to decide which houses to recommend for listing. Three of the houses, Nos. 9, 15 and 17, are Grade II Listed Buildings.*

7.2.4 The application property is described as having a neutral impact on the Conservation Area, dating from the 1930s. The existing dwelling house is in a poor state of repair and is of no particular architectural merit. Whilst it has traditional features, such as clay tile hipped roof and tile nagging, it is not considered to make a positive contribution to the setting of the Conservation Area. There are no objections in principle to the demolition of the existing dwelling house and the redevelopment of the site with a new replacement dwelling house, subject to the replacement being of suitable design and scale to the Conservation Area and visual amenities of the area. Although a contemporary design has been adopted for the proposed house, the building would be single storey (with a basement) and would be sited behind brick boundary walls. The adjoining neighbouring dwelling to the east and dwellings opposite on Lauriston Road comprises large two and half storey detached

traditional dwellings, which have a positive imposing effect on the character of the road. The proposed dwelling would have external facing brick elevations, but be of a contemporary design approach with various heights of the single storey pavilions. The road comprises a variety of types of dwellings and types of front boundary treatment. Owing to its single storey height, and its set back position from the road front, officers are satisfied that the proposal would more so add to the residential character of the road, rather than cause a visually harmful impact on the character of the road.

7.2.5 Numbers 15 and 17 opposite the site are Grade II Listed Buildings. Although the proposed dwelling would take a more contemporary approach to its design, by reason of its low height officers are satisfied that it would not seek to compete with these listed buildings in the road and nor would it cause a harmful impact on the setting of these listed buildings. Their setting is more derived from the properties on that side of the road and the striking features of on the front elevations of these buildings.

7.2.6 The solar panels would be installed throughout all the flat roof of the building, but would be concealed behind the parapet walls of the roof. Officers are therefore satisfied that the solar panels would not be visually intrusive to the local area. A condition is recommended seeking to secure final details of the solar panels.

7.2.6 Overall, officers are satisfied that the proposal would not cause a harmful impact on the Conservation Area or the setting of the Grade II Listed Buildings, and is compliant with Policies DM D2 and DM D4 in this regard.

### 7.3 Neighbour Amenity

7.3.1 Policy DM D2 seeks to ensure that development does not adversely impact on the amenity of nearby residential properties.

7.3.2 The proposed new house would be set behind boundary walls which would partially screen the building from neighbouring residential properties. Windows within the proposed house would face onto courtyard gardens and as the proposed building is single storey, there would be no overlooking and/or loss of privacy to neighbouring residential properties. The proposal was amended to set back the higher single storey section of wall on the eastern side, moving it further away from the shared boundary with number 20. The dwelling at number 20 is set far back from the shared boundary. Whilst some parts of the dwelling would be visible from this neighbouring plot, due to its very limited height, it would not cause any material harm. The property to the north has a front driveway which lies adjacent to the site boundary. The proposed dwelling would be stepped away from this northern boundary. To the west and south are roads which are sited in between the site and neighbouring residential properties. The proposal is therefore considered to be acceptable in terms of policy DM D2 (Design Considerations in all Developments).

### 7.4 Standard of Residential Accommodation

7.4.1 The internal layout of the proposed house is considered to be acceptable and the rooms sizes exceed the minimum requirements as set out in the London Plan. Amenity space for the proposed dwelling house would comprise four landscaped courtyard gardens. Overall, the proposal would provide a high standard of accommodation for future occupiers.

## 7.5 Trees

7.5.1 The applicant has submitted an Arboricultural Impact Assessment as part of the application and LBM Tree Officer have assessed the application. A number of trees would be removed to accommodate the proposal. A line of Cypress trees would be removed adjacent to Wilberforce Way. These are described as oppressive by the Tree Officer and no objections are raised with regards to their removal. Originally proposed was the removal of a Lime Tree and Sycamore Tree. Following further discussions with the Tree Officer, the applicant has amended the proposal so that the Lime tree can be retained, but still remove the Sycamore tree.

7.5.2 The Council's Tree Officer has outlined that the Lime Tree will become protected by Tree Preservation Order and that the Sycamore tree can be removed. Several new trees are proposed to be planted as part of the wider landscaping scheme for the whole site. Whilst these would be small in scale at first, they would grow and make a good contribution to the character of the site and general amenity of the surrounding area. For example, 6 trees are proposed to be planted in the front courtyard garden area. Officers note the concerns raised by the Tree Officer with the potential species of trees at the front, however, these can be finalised via planning condition. Given the loss of the existing trees proposed, officers consider it necessary to ensure that the new planted trees are protected via condition for at least 10 years, and not the standard 5 years. This is to ensure that good soft landscaping is maintained and adhered to and allowed to mature.

7.5.3 Overall, officers raise no objection to the landscaping works, subject to a number of conditions regarding a landscaping scheme (including tree planting), tree protection and site supervision.

## 7.6 Parking

7.6.1 The proposal would provide two off-street parking spaces accessed from Wilberforce Way. Although the proposed access would result in vehicles reversing out to Wilberforce Way, this road is a quiet residential road which serves a handful of properties. The access and parking provision are considered to be acceptable for a single dwelling house and the proposal accords with policy CS20 (Parking).

## 7.7 Sustainability Issues

7.7.1 The proposal involves the demolition and redevelopment of a single dwelling house and Policy DM H4 (Demolition and Redevelopment of a Single

Dwelling house) is relevant in this instance. In order to address the requirements of policies CS15 and DM H4, the proposed house has been designed along the pasivhaus principles with additional focus on sustainable construction materials. The building fabric will be specified to produce a highly efficient thermal envelope with high performance glazing, high level of air tightness and the use of a mechanical ventilation and heat recovery (MVHR) system combined with low energy lighting, with natural light maximised through large glazed openings facing landscaped courtyards. It is also proposed to use Photovoltaic (PV) panels on the flat roofs with battery storage to store surplus energy in-house over the short term to automatically come into use when required. The above measures are considered to satisfy the requirements of policies CS15 and DM H4. An appropriate condition is recommended in order to capture the sustainability requirements.

## 8. **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT REQUIREMENTS**

- 8.1 The proposal does not constitute Schedule 1 or Schedule 2 development. Accordingly, there is no requirement for an EIA submission.

## 9. **CONCLUSION**

- 9.1 There are no objections to the demolition of the existing dwelling house and the redevelopment of the site by the erection of a new dwelling. The design of the proposed replacement dwelling house is considered to be acceptable and the proposal would not harm neighbour amenity. The proposal would also preserve the character and appearance of the Merton (Wimbledon West) Conservation Area and would not cause a harmful impact on the setting of the listed buildings. Accordingly, it is recommended that planning permission be granted.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

### **GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION**

Subject to the following conditions: -

1. A.1 (Commencement of Development)
2. A.7 (Approved Drawings)
3. B.1 (Approval of Facing Materials)
4. B.4 (Details of Site Surfacing)
6. C.2 (No Permitted Development - Windows and Doors)
7. C.8 (No Use of Flat Roof)

8. F.5 (Tree Protection)
9. F.8 (Site Supervision-Trees)
10. H.6 (Provision of Cycle Parking)
11. H.9 (Site Working and hours/days of construction)
12. 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.

13. No development approved by this permission shall be commenced until a detailed basement construction 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.

14. No development shall take place until full details of a landscaping and planting scheme (to include tree planting) 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. The details shall include on a plan, full details of the size, species, spacing, quantities and location of proposed plants, together with any hard surfacing, means of enclosure, and indications of all existing trees, hedges and any other features to be retained, and measures for their protection during the course of development.

15. All hard and soft landscape works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details as agreed under Condition 14. The works shall be carried out in the first available planting season following the completion of the development or prior to the occupation of any part of the development, whichever is the sooner, and any trees which die within a period of 10 years from the completion of the development, are removed or become seriously

damaged or diseased or are dying, shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of same approved specification, unless the Local Planning Authority gives written consent to any variation. All hard surfacing and means of enclosure shall be completed before the development is first occupied.

16. No part of the development hereby approved shall be occupied until evidence has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority confirming that the development has achieved CO2 reductions of not less than a 19% improvement on Part L regulations 2013, and internal water consumption rates of no greater than 105 litres per person per day.
17. Details to be submitted of Solar Panels.
18. **INFORMATIVE**  
The applicant is advised to check the requirements of the Party Wall Act 1996 relating to work on an existing wall shared with another property, building on the boundary with a neighbouring property, or excavating near a neighbouring building. Further information is available at the following link:  
<http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/buildingregulations/buildingpolicyandlegislation/currentlegislation/partywallact>