

PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE

10th February 2022

Item No:

UPRN

APPLICATION NO.

DATE VALID

21/P3635

01/11/2021

Address/Site:

Land to the Rear of 1-5 Archway Close, Wimbledon Park,
London SW19 8UL

(Ward)

Wimbledon Park

Proposal:

Planning permission is sought for the erection on open land of converted modular container units to form work units including sanitary facilities.

Drawing Nos:

Design & Access Statement: Site Location Plan; P01; P02
Rev A; P03

Contact Officer:

Brenda Louisy-Johnson (0208 545 3169)

RECOMMENDATION

GRANT Planning Permission Subject to Conditions

CHECKLIST INFORMATION

- Heads of agreement: No
- Is a screening opinion required: No
- Is an Environmental Statement required: No
- Has an Environmental Impact Assessment been submitted: No
- Press notice: No
- Site notice: Yes
- Design Review Panel consulted: No
- Number of neighbours consulted: 42
- External consultations: None
- Flood Zone: Flood Zone 1

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The application has been brought before the Planning Applications Committee due to a Member call-in by Councillor Edward Gretton.

2. SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

- 2.1 The site was formerly an open area of land owned by Network Rail including the brick arches of Durnsford Road forming the structure of the raised road over the railway lines. The submitted Design and Access Statement says that the site was formerly a designated depot on Network Rail plans and had been vacant for a number of years. Various previous uses of the site including the arches, had ceased before the building in question was erected.
- 2.2 The surrounding area is industrial and residential in nature. To the south of the site is residential, the closest residential properties are Nos.1-4 Railway Cottages. To the west of the site are the industrial premises of Nos.1-5 Archway Close and to the north of the site are industrial premises. These industrial areas to the west of the site are designated a Strategic Industrial Location and a Waste Plan Schedule 2 Area. To the east of the site are railway lines.

3. CURRENT PROPOSAL

- 3.1 Planning permission is sought for the erection on open land of converted modular container units to form office work units including sanitary facilities.
- 3.2 Eighteen modular units form the single two storey building. The building is nine modular units at ground level with a further nine modular units stacked on top to create the first floor. 17 modular units form the office work units and one unit for sanitary facilities on ground level. The first-floor modular units are accessed via external staircases on both sides of the building where they rise to a walkway across the rear of the building. The building measures 21.7m wide (25m wide when including the staircases) and 6.5m deep (and 8.2m wide when including the depth of the first- floor walkway).

4. PLANNING HISTORY

- 4.1 No relevant recorded planning history.

5. POLICY CONTEXT

- 5.1 National Planning Policy Framework 2021:

Section 2: Achieving sustainable development
Section 6: Building a strong, competitive economy
Section 9: Promoting sustainable transport
Section 11: Making effective use of land

- 5.2 London Plan 2021 Policies:

GG2 Making the best use of land
GG5 Growing a good economy
D4 Delivering good design

D11 Safety, security and resilience to emergency
E1 Offices
E2 Providing suitable business space
SI 7 Reducing waste and supporting the circular economy
SI 13 Sustainable drainage
T5 Cycling
T6.2 Office parking

5.3 Core Strategy 2011 Policies:

CS 12 Economic Development
CS 14 Design
CS 17 Waste Management
CS 18 Active Transport

5.4 Sites and Policies Plan 2014 Policies:

DM E4 Local employment opportunities
DM D2 Design considerations in all developments
DM T1 Support sustainable transport and active travel
DM T2 Consideration of transport impacts of development
DM T3 Applying relevant car parking and servicing standards

6. CONSULTATION

6.1 The application has been publicised by means of individual letters sent to occupiers of neighbouring properties and site notice. 1 objection has been received.

Reasons for objection:

- The building is not well screened
- Loss of privacy
- Light pollution
- Insufficient parking provision

Council's Environmental Health Officer:

No objection.

Council's Transport Planner:

Observations: the site is accessed through a single access form Archway Close through an industrial estate on Endeavour Way. The site is not located within a CPZ and consequently the surrounding streets do not contain parking restrictions.

Car Parking: Parking spaces for users are provided in the middle of the site at a lower level, accessed through an archway under Durnsford Road. The

proposal provides 3 car parking spaces. One space should be to disabled users with an electric vehicle charging point.

Cycle parking: The proposal provide 4 no. cycle spaces which should be secure and undercover.

Recommendation: Raise no objection subject to –

- Car parking as shown to include one disabled space
- EVCP
- Cycle parking to be secure and undercover.

Network Rail:

No objection

Transport For London (TFL):

Confirm that the application relates to land outside of the limits of land subject to consultation by the Crossrail 2 Safeguarding Direction, however, the applicant should be aware that the application site has been identified as land required for a depot and stabling site for Crossrail 2 and therefore could be affected in the event that Crossrail 2 is taken forward in the future.

7. PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

The key issues in the assessment of this planning application are:

- Principle of Development
- Design/visual amenity
- Residential Amenity
- Car and Cycle Parking

7.1 Principle of Development

7.11 Section 6 of the NPPF seeks to build a strong, competitive economy and requires that decisions should help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt. In doing so, the expectation is that significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development.

7.12 Policy GG5 of the London Plan in accordance with the NPPF also seeks to grow a good economy by amongst other things planning for sufficient employment and industrial space in the right locations to support economic development and regeneration.

7.13 Policy CS12 of the Core Strategy like section 6 of the NPPF and Policy GG5 of the London Plan seeks to promote economic development by seeking to

ensure an adequate supply of viable and appropriate sites and premises for employment use in locations which minimise the need to travel by private car.

- 7.14 Policy DM E4 seeks to create employment opportunities in Merton by requiring all major development to provide opportunities for local residents and businesses to apply for employment and other opportunities during the construction of developments and in the resultant end use.
- 7.15 Section 11 of the NPPF seeks to make effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses, while safeguarding and improving the environment and ensuring safe and healthy living conditions in a way that makes as much use as possible of previously developed land or brownfield land.
- 7.16 Policy GG2 of the London Plan seeks to create successful sustainable mixed-use places that make the best use of land by proactively exploring the potential to intensify the use of land to support additional homes and workspaces, promoting higher density development, particularly in locations that are well-connected to jobs, services infrastructure and amenities by public transport, walking and cycling.
- 7.17 The application details that the site is owned by Network Rail and has been empty for several years, and was subject to fly tipping in 2016. The site is not subject to any designations under the Council's Sites and Policies Plan Proposals Map.
- 7.18 The application site is a site of previously developed land (undesigned) within a short walking distance of Wimbledon Park underground station. Prior to the modular units being erected the site had been empty for a number of years. The site attracted illegal operators due to its open area and neglected use and had been subject to major incidences of fly-tipping. The applicant seeks to provide a viable use of the land through the development of work units which will prevent such occurrences and aims to improve the local environment. The proposal would develop the site which is in a reasonably sustainable transport location and put it to employment use, while at the same time improving the local environment is in accordance with section 11 of the NPPF and Policy GG2 of the London Plan. While the present lessee of the site aims to restore the land to beneficial usage there are limitations to the number of commercial companies attracted to the facilities proposed. However, the lessee has found a working model that is currently proving to be commercially viable and is in demand such as the proposed work units for smaller companies and individuals. The current proposal for these employment premises is in accordance with section 6 of the NPPF, Policy GG5 of the London Plan, Policy CS12 of the Core Strategy and Policy DM E4 of the SSP. Therefore, it is considered that the principle of development is acceptable.

7.2 Design/visual amenity

- 7.21 Policy DM D1 of the SSP requires that development should relate 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. Policy CS14 of the Core Strategy supports this Site and Policies Plan Policy.
- 7.22 The proposed building comprises modular units which are constructed of a steel box frame, the walls comprise grey painted metal panelling, the roof metal insulated sheeting, the windows have double glazed metal framed screens and the doors are metal framed and glazed. The double glazed and tinted windows and doors provide privacy and thermal efficiency. The side walls of the building are clad in glazed panels to provide additional natural daylight to these units. The steel decked walkway is lit by time controlled external lighting. The two-storey height of the proposed building is similar to surrounding industrial and residential properties, but the building does stand on slightly higher ground than the neighbouring residential properties. The main public vantage points of the building is for the adjacent main road, however, the road rises over the bridge which eventually becomes the same level with the building and therefore its visual prominence in the surroundings is limited. The width of the proposed building is constrained by the width of the site and optimises the potential of the site for development. The simple form of the building and considerable use of metal in its design, in particular, the dark grey painted metal for its external walls, and door and window frames give an industrial appearance in keeping with its industrial surroundings.
- 7.23 There is a concrete yard directly in front of the block which has a lower level which would be used for parking for the work units, this area in the middle of the site is accessed through an archway under Durnsford Road. All access to and servicing the site will be via the main entrance from Archway Close.
- 7.24 It is considered that overall the design of the proposed building is appropriate for its surroundings taking into account the context of the site and would comply with Policy CS14 of the Core Strategy and Policies DM D1 and DM D2 of the Site and Policies Plan.

7.3 Residential Amenity

- 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 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.
- 7.32 The nearest residential properties are Nos. 1-4 Railway Cottages which border the site. The nearest cottage is No.1 which is 17.5m away. The south facing side elevation of the building faces the front elevation of this building. The south facing side elevation of the building is glazed, however, there is no likelihood of loss of privacy to No.1 due to the significant

separation distance, nor is there the likelihood of significant light pollution to No.1 due to the presence of mature tree planting along the boundary within the front garden of No.1. Therefore, the proposal would not result in an adverse impact to the amenity of neighbouring properties and as such would comply with Policy DM D2 of the Sites and Policies Plan.

7.6 Car and Cycle Parking

- 7.61 Section 9 of the NPPF states that transport issues should be considered from the earliest stages of development proposals so that opportunities to promote walking, cycling and public transport use are identified and pursued. Strategic objective 7, Policy CS 18 of the Core Strategy and Policy DM T1 also seek to promote sustainable transport.
- 7.62 Policy T6.2 of the London Plan is specifically about office car parking provision.
- 7.63 The site has a low PTAL of 1b because despite the close proximity of Wimbledon Park underground station and bus stops when looking on a map, the site is difficult to access from these transport hubs.
- 7.64 Policy T5 of the London Plan states that developments should provide cycle parking at least in accordance with the minimum standards set out in Table 10.2 and Figure 10.3, ensuring that a minimum of two short-stay and two long-stay cycle parking spaces are provided where the application of the minimum standards would result in a lower provision. For use class B1 (business offices) now included in class E, the long-stay cycle parking requirement in areas with higher cycle parking standards which is applicable to Merton is 1 space per 75 sqm and for short-stay 1 space per 500sqm for the first 5,000sqm. The proposed floor area of the building is 210sqm, therefore, the cycle parking requirement is 2 long-stay spaces and no short-stay spaces, but given that this below the minimum of two short-stay spaces, these should be provided, making a total requirement of 4 spaces. The applicant has provided the required provision which is 4 spaces .
- 7.65 Policy T6.2 states that maximum parking standards set out in Table 10.4 should be applied to new office development and in well-connected parts of outer London, including town centres, in close proximity to stations and in Opportunity Areas, office developments are encouraged to be car-free.
- 7.65 The required maximum car parking requirement for outer London office developments is 1 space per 100m² (GIA). The proposed development has a GIA of 210m² therefore, the parking requirement is 3 spaces. The Applicant has proposed 3 parking spaces which complies with the parking standards.

9. CONCLUSION

- 9.1 The proposal is acceptable in principle and the design of the proposed building is appropriate for its context and does not adversely impact on visual

amenity or on neighbouring residential amenity. Also provision has been made for the required amount of cycle space and car parking. Overall, the proposal, is considered to make a good use of a vacant brownfield site with an acceptable commercial use. As such planning permission is recommended to be granted, subject to conditions.

RECOMMENDATION

GRANT planning permission subject to the following conditions:

- 1 The development to which this permission relates shall be commenced not later than the expiration of 3 years from the date of this permission.

Reason: To comply with Section 91 (as amended) of the Town & Country Planning Act 1990.

- 2 The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: Design & Access Statement; Site Location Plan; P01; P02 Rev A; P03.

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.

- 3 The facing materials to be used for the development hereby permitted shall be those specified in the application form unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure a satisfactory appearance of the development and to comply with the following Development Plan policies for Merton: policies D4 and D8 of the London Plan 2021, policy CS14 of Merton's Core Planning Strategy 2011 and policies DM D2 and D3 of Merton's Sites and Policies Plan 2014.

- 4 No development shall commence until details of secure cycle parking facilities for the occupants of, and visitors to, the development have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved facilities shall be fully implemented and made available for use prior to the first occupation of the development and thereafter retained for use at all times.

Reason: To ensure satisfactory facilities for cycle parking are provided and to comply with the following Development Plan policies for Merton: policy T5 of the London Plan 2021, policy CS18 of Merton's Core Planning Strategy 2011 and policy DM T1 of Merton's Sites and Policies Plan 2014.

- 5 No development shall take place until a scheme for the storage of refuse and recycling has been submitted in writing for approval to the Local Planning Authority. No works which are the subject of this condition shall be carried out until the scheme has been approved, and the development shall not be occupied until the scheme has been approved and has been carried out in full. Those facilities and measures shall thereafter be retained for use at all times from the date of first occupation.

Reason: To ensure the provision of satisfactory facilities for the storage of refuse and recycling material and to comply with the following Development Plan policies for Merton: policies SI 7 and D6 of the London Plan 2016, policy CS17 of Merton's Core Planning Strategy 2011 and policy DM D2 of Merton's Sites and Policies Plan 2014

- 6 Within 6 months of the planning permission hereby granted, an electric vehicle charging point shall be installed and made available for use on site and thereafter maintained.

Reason: In accordance with sustainability objectives and to comply with Policy T6.1 of the London Plan 2021.

- 7 The premises shall only be used for Class E (c) and for no other purpose, (including any other purpose within Class E of the Schedule to the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended) or in any provision equivalent to that Class in any statutory instrument revoking and re-enacting that Order with or without modification.

Reason: The Local Planning Authority would wish to retain control over any further change of use of these premises in the interests of safeguarding the amenities of the area and to ensure compliance with the following Development Plan policies for Merton: policy D4 of the London Plan 2021, policy CS14 of Merton's Core Planning Strategy 2011 and policy DM D2 of Merton's Sites and Policies Plan 2014.

