

## **Planning Committee**

Meeting held on Thursday, 22 June 2023 at 6.00 pm in Council Chamber, Town Hall, Katharine Street, Croydon CR0 1NX

### **MINUTES**

**Present:** Councillor Michael Neal (Chair);  
Councillor Clive Fraser (Vice-Chair);  
Councillors Chris Clark, Danielle Denton, Lara Fish, Sean Fitzsimons,  
Mohammed Islam, Mark Johnson, Humayun Kabir and Luke Shortland

**Apologies:** Councillor Ian Parker, Simon Brew and Appu Srinivasan

### **PART A**

1/23 **Disclosure of Interest**

Councillor Fraser declared a previous working relationship with Martin Scholar, who spoke for the 32-44 Keeley Road development. They worked together at Lambeth Council over a decade ago and were both involved in work on the Vauxhall Nine Elms and Battersea Opportunity Area Planning Framework.

2/23 **Urgent Business (if any)**

There was none.

3/23 **Appointments**

**RESOLVED**, to:

- Appoint Councillor Fish to replace Councillor Lee on the Committee; and,
- Councillor Brew would become a reserve member.

4/23 **Development presentations**

There were none.

5/23 **Planning applications for decision**

6/23 **23/00155/FUL - 198 Harrington Road, South Norwood, SE25 4NE**

Ward: Woodside

To demolish the existing end of terrace dwelling and other structures on site. To be replaced with seven 3-bed family housing with associated external works including access, parking, amenity space, landscaping, refuse and cycle storage.

Barry Valentine gave the presentation and to address questions and issues raised by Members.

The main issues raised at this meeting were as follows:

#### Design Layout

- Insufficient spacing between the proposed houses making the development closely condensed.
- Concerns were raised about the narrow access arc road and the impact this would have on accessibility to the site when considering highway safety.
- The Committee felt that the development disrupted the symmetry of existing houses and would impact the street's scene causing undue disturbance.

#### Daylight and Sunlight

- Concerns were raised about the layout of the buildings and the impact this may have on daylight and sunlight compliance.
- Some Councillors noted that BREEAM compliance may not be met due to the landscaping of the development and narrowness of buildings.
- Small windows were proposed for the first floor which would result in a lack of internal light to the dwellings.
- The previous application had failed due to a lack of natural light, but this was not addressed adequately in the updated plans. The

councillors requested to see more data and testing of trees shown in the CGI images, asked for an improved design, and a better scheme overall.

#### Potential impacts on neighbouring residential amenities in terms of outlook and privacy

- Footprint of the scheme dominated the site. It appeared to represent an overdevelopment in the area and was out of keeping and harsh.
- Development was likely to be intrusive on neighbouring residences as the properties were oriented to overlook gardens and there was no landscaping or screening to protect neighbours.

#### Biodiversity and drainage

- The site had little biodiversity and tree value.
- Flooding was a medium risk and a long-standing serious issue in the area. Regular flooding was cited as a recurring issue near a development located on Pottery Close. Upon reviewing the provided images, concerns were raised about this site experiencing similar issues.

#### Other issues

- The houses would serve a purpose for meeting housing need, which was needed in the borough, but this required demolition of a family home that was more in keeping with the neighbourhood.
- No proposal was provided for disabled units, although the Scheme included adaptive cycle spaces suitable for storage of mobility equipment.

Tim Cropper spoke in favour of the application advising that the proposed scheme would provide efficient and effective family homes. The houses would meet all relevant standards, demonstrate a good design solution, have no adverse impact on the amenity of neighbours, and would provide a resident benefit, which is access to South Norwood Country Park.

Councillor Mike Bonello spoke in opposition to the application noting that numerous residents in Woodside opposed the development. The construction

would result in the demolition of an older home which was in keeping with the character of the neighbourhood. The development was likely to create pressure on local services by increasing the density of the population and concerns had been raised by residents about their ability to be served properly with amenities and the knock-on effect of rubbish capacity and collection. The proposal had generated the greatest volume of communication in opposition.

After consideration of the officer's report, Councillor Fitzsimons proposed and Councillor Kabir seconded the officer's recommendation, and the Committee voted three in favour, six against, and one abstention, so the motion thereby fell.

A second motion for REFUSAL, on the grounds of the site layout and massing, quality of accommodation for the future occupiers, impacts on neighbouring amenity and highway safety concerns was proposed by Councillor Denton. This was seconded by Councillor Fraser with six in favour, three against and one abstention, so planning permission was **REFUSED** for development at 198 Harrington Road SE25.

7/23 **21/04380/FUL - 15 & R/O 17 Wattendon Road, Kenley, CR8 5LW**

This item was removed from the agenda due to conflicting information between the submission documents received, which was identified during the week leading up to committee.

8/23 **22/04309/FUL - 32-44 Keeley Road and 31-57 Drummond Road, Croydon, CR0 1TH**

Ward: Fairfield

To demolish existing buildings and structures to develop two new building blocks containing residential uses, basement, private and communal amenity space, associated car parking, cycle parking, refuse storage, plant, and other associated works. The development is to create 144 new homes.

Ross Gentry gave the presentation and addressed the questions and issues raised by Members.

The main issues raised through questions and debate at this meeting were as follows:

#### Impact on neighbouring property

- Discussion and debate around daylight and sunlight impacts to Keely House and Frith Road; officers summarised the impacts with some minor, moderate and major adverse impacts.
- Have to balance the harm against the benefits of the scheme.
- Discussion around the existing Citiscape building line and the proposed, in terms of impact to Frith Road.

#### Future occupier amenity

- Limited separation between Blocks A and B, impacting on the occupier's amenity and daylight and sunlight. Less than the 18-21m separation yardstick, at 10m gap, which is an important consideration.
- Discussion around play space on the site and routes to nearby parks. Play space contribution of £4,000 secured; possibility of use of part of the sustainable transport contribution to improve access for local children to nearby parks could be explored.
- Some members felt amount of green space was good.
- Some members felt the standard of accommodation worked well.
- Discussion around number of blue badge spaces.

#### Design issues

- Appropriate location for a tall building in the CMC and edge of OAPF.
- Stepped design appropriate and some members commented on positive aspects of the design and evolution since PRP.
- Concern from some members on tightness of the development, site layout and daylight and sunlight impacts.
- The building is three to four storeys too tall, and it should be built within the envelope of the existing buildings height.

- Discussion around public realm and what is secured as part of the scheme.
- Some members supported the design and Frith Road frontage.
- Discussion around the ground floor uses and active frontages.
- Need for commercial and office space in town centre.

#### Affordable housing

- There is a lack of affordable housing being proposed, considering the number of units offered. Does not meet the 50% requirement for affordable housing.
- Mayor of London has mentioned that there should be social renting products in schemes going forward. This scheme proposes shared ownership and London Affordable Rent rather than social rent.
- Discussion around viability matters.
- Although there are 144 homes, only 44 homes are two-bed accommodations whereas in the existing building, there are 73 two-bed apartments. Some concern over lack of family accommodation.
- The Croydon Council policy is that 5% of homes on the site should be dedicated family homes, 6% is proposed, therefore, the scheme is compliant with family accommodation requirements.
- Some members welcomed the number of homes and affordable housing offer.
- The development should include Keeley House site as the overall number of homes to be developed would be significantly higher. A joint venture could incorporate mansion block-type properties thus reducing the height of the buildings and allowing for the development of more units and family homes on the site.

#### Heritage Issues

- Mid-Croydon Conservation Area Advisory Panel and lack of Historic England representations discussed.
- Benefits need to be considered against the harm.
- Some members felt harm to heritage limited, some felt heritage harm unjustified.

- Discussion around colour of bricks – some members preferred the red brick, others preferred the previous iteration in grey.
- When taking a balanced view and considering benefits against the heritage harm, there was a lack of certainty that this scheme would deliver sufficient benefits to justify damage to heritage assets in the central Croydon area.

#### Other Issues

- Would have been better to have a comprehensive scheme for both this site and Keeley House, which could deliver more homes, but understood that they had this application to determine. Two tall buildings would be very difficult to deal with.

Jacquie Andrews attended to represent the position of the neighbouring property, Keeley House. Concern was raised about the scale, bulk and mass of the proposed buildings, closer to Keeley house and the impact on the flats and nursery. The proximity of the development may dominate and harm the quality of living for Keeley's residents causing loss of privacy, overbearing presence and loss of daylight and sunlight, and is an overdevelopment of the site. Redevelopment of the site should be sought with both Keeley House and Citiscape.

Martin Scholar spoke in support of the proposal and advised that extensive changes had been made to the design through pre-application discussions. In relation to consultation, a programme of community engagement was undertaken and extensive dialogue with the residents in Keeley House remained ongoing. Keeley House was in pursuit of their own pre-application development, independent of Citiscape. This scheme was a policy compliant proposal comprised of 22 homes, 16 shared ownership flats and, 6 affordable rent flats, in contrast to the zero affordable homes in the currently vacant building. The mentioned benefits included:

- 122 private homes, with 22 affordable homes
- a significantly improved design in comparison to the existing building
- improved pedestrian environment

- significant biodiversity net gain
- new open space for residents
- 56% reduction in carbon emissions
- around 300 jobs created during construction.

After consideration of the officer’s report and answers provided, the motion to **GRANT** the application based on the officer’s recommendation was proposed by Councillor Shortland and seconded by Councillor Denton.

The motion to grant the application was taken to a vote and carried with five Members voting in favour, four against, and one abstention.

The Committee **RESOLVED** to **GRANT** the application for the development at 32-44 Keeley Road and 31-57 Drummond Road, Croydon, CR0 1TH.

The item will need to be submitted to the GLA for Stage Two.

9/23 **Items referred by Planning Sub-Committee**

There were none.

10/23 **Other planning matters**

There were none.

11/23 **Weekly Planning Decisions**

The report was received for information.

The meeting ended at 9pm

**Signed:**

**Date:**

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