

Planning Committee

Meeting held on Thursday, 18 May 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 Ian Parker, Leila Ben-Hassel, Chris Clark, Sean Fitzsimons,
Mark Johnson, Humayun Kabir, Joseph Lee and Luke Shortland

Also Present: Councillors Danielle Denton and Helen Redfern

Apologies: Councillors Simon Brew, Lara Fish, Mohammed Islam and Appu Srinivasan.

PART A

9/23 **Minutes of Previous Meeting**

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meetings held on 27 April 2023 be signed as a correct record

10/23 **Disclosure of Interest**

There were no disclosures of a pecuniary interest not already registered.

11/23 **Urgent Business (if any)**

The Committee was asked to consider discuss one item of Urgent Business, Political Balance Review and Appointments.

RESOLVED TO:

1. Review the representation of different political groups on the Planning SubCommittee.
2. Agree the allocation of seats on the Planning Sub-Committee, by applying the political balance rules, to the Conservative and Labour groups.
3. Appoint to the Planning Sub-Committee, in accordance with the wishes of the relevant political group, the 6 Members and 6 substitutes.

4. Note that the Planning Sub-Committee will appoint a Chair, Deputy-Chair (who will deputise in the absence of the Chair) and Vice-Chair when it next meets consistent with the arrangements agreed at the Annual Council Meeting for this Committee.

12/23 **Development presentations**

There were none.

13/23 **22/01580/PRE - Royal Russell School, Coombe Lane, Croydon, CR9 5BX**

Demolition of the existing Junior School and replacement on the same site with a new Junior School, associated outdoor areas and landscaping.

Ward: South Croydon

Neil Cufley, Howard Pye and Helen Kent attended to give a presentation and respond to Members' questions and issues raised for further consideration prior to submission of a planning application.

The main issues raised at this meeting were as follows:

Principle of the Scale of the Development along the green belt

- There was a belief that the proposal was special circumstance to build along the green belt as the school was an important education establishment in the area and the development would improve the facilities of the school and there would be more children educated locally.
- The local plan stated that the investment in school expansion should be supported.
- The viability of the school could be threatened if the expansion to the junior school was denied.
- There were concerns about a potential issue with traffic management given the proximity of the tram stop to the school entrance.
- Members felt as though the proposed development would provide a significant increase in the building's dimensions.
- There was a belief that the developers should look to mitigate the environmental impact of the construction work carried out on the site.
- The proposed development should add the green belt and the plan to increase the biodiversity in the area was encouraged.
- Members acknowledged that the school would open their grounds to the wider public once the development had been completed and asked for clarification on the activities that the school intended to host on their site.

Location, development and massing

- Members were pleased with the massing of the proposed development, and they approved of the additional trees that would be introduced near the entrance of the site.

Design, appearance and materiality of the building

- Members stated that they would prefer a more traditional design of red brick for school buildings.
- Members proposed the recycling of rainwater and asked the developers to make better use of their flat roof space.
- Members felt as though it was important to reflect the design of the main school building in the junior school design.
- However, it was also noted that trying to mimic the design of another building would be tough to execute and having the building be a complimentary colour to the main school building would be a clever alternative.
- There was some concern over the wood within the design of the building, the use of wood for the connection between the buildings was appreciated however the contrast between the wood and the colour of the building would not be as complimentary in future as the colour of the wood may change slightly.
- Members expressed concern at the lack of window space in the proposed development.
- Members felt that the design was quite bland and stated that a stronger colour would bring more life to the development.
- There was a belief that the pink tone of the building was too light and a darker colour would be more appropriate.
- However, it was also acknowledged that the site was located near woodland and a stronger darker red brick colour would not complement the surroundings.
- Members also noted that there was a lack of timber on site at present and they would appreciate the inclusion of wood on the development.
- Members noted that the chapel consisted of red brick with white bricks along the corners, and queried whether this design could be reflected within the design of the school building.

Landscape and Ecological Gain

- There was a suggestion that the developer could introduce green walls which would allow the building to blend into the green belt, however this sentiment was not shared by all of the Members.
- Members suggested that the developers could implement a cluster of trees to give a mini forest appearance on the site.
- Members proposed that there be facilities for children to learn how to plant and harvest produce.
- Members felt as though there should be consideration to sensory approaches to the design to provide the children with different textures, colours, smells etc.

- There was the belief that more people would be able to enjoy the green belt as the proposed development would allow more children to attend the school.
- Members asked whether the developers could do more planting in the surrounding area of the site.

Other Matters

- Members asked when the application was presented to the committee, would the applicant be able to evidence that because of the proposed development the school would be able to do more to help the more disadvantaged members of the community.
- Members queried whether developers would use local builders and whether the building supplies would be sourced locally.
- Members believed that there would be a high percentage of parents who would drive their children to the school and the increase in capacity of the school would result in more cars in the surrounding area.
- Members enquired whether the developer could introduce a more direct access path to the school.
- Members believed that the developers should explore the implementation of a travel plan.

Councillor Denton addressed the Committee with her view on the Pre-Application. The below gives a summary:

- There was sensitivity regarding the encroachment on the protected green belt land and there was a fundamental requirement to prevent urban sprawl.
- The site was located in the designated metropolitan green belt.
- The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) stated that plans should define boundaries clearly using physical features that were readily recognisable and unlikely to be permanent.
- She would expect the proposed development to not breach the existing permanent boundaries to protect the green belt land for future generations.
- The developer should be able to demonstrate that there were no other alternatives to contain the scheme within the existing footprint.
- Consideration should be given to the migratory of bats and developers should ensure that no undue harm or loss of habitat was caused by the soft felling of trees.
- Any removal of badger habitats should be resisted in the first instance.
- To facilitate the development three trees had been identified for removal. If this was explored, then officers should provide the percentage risk of losing mature specimen trees should they not take to their relocated designated areas.
- The scheme should choose an alternative palette of materials rather than light brick masonry.

- The choice of material palette should be chosen regardless of cost, should draw from the green belt setting and should not be too audacious in design.

14/23 **Planning applications for decision**

15/23 **22/04130/FUL - 34A, 34B And Rear Of 34 Arkwright Road, CR2 0LL**

Demolition of existing dwellinghouses at 34a and 34b Arkwright Road and the construction of 9 dwellinghouses 3-4 storeys in height together with associated parking, access and landscaping.

Ward: Sanderstead

The officer presented details of the planning application and in response to members' questions explained that:

- The properties on site would be dual rather than triple aspect.
- There had been a number of amendments to the application since it was last presented to the committee. There were minor amendments to relocate the cycle and the waste storage and there were also amendments to increase the distance between the detached and the terraced dwellings.
- Linear biodiversity included natural structures such as hedges.
- Highways officers have not detected any potential issues for larger refuse vehicles when accessing and egressing the site.
- Under building regulations all properties had to be M41, however if officers applied a condition, then when a developer applied for their building regulations, they would have to meet a higher standard within those regulations. Officers have pushed for a provision for units on the site to be M43 or M43 adaptable.
- Building control officers, either from the council or an improved inspector, would provide guidance on how the developer to create and M42 o M43 unit on the site.
- A management plan could be introduced to the areas with hedging and planting to prevent encroachment into the access path.
- The introduction of no parking signs and road markings to indicate no parking would prevent obstruction of the turning circle.
- Three trees at the front of the access road will be felled and another two further along the path.
- The access road was not designed for two vehicles to pass each other; however, the entrance was wide enough to allow a vehicle to wait as another passed by.
- The condition of the preoccupation, wildlife sensitive lighting design scheme could be extended to the pathway.

Patroulla Lorke spoke in objection to the application, James McConnell spoke in support of the application and the ward Member Councillor Helen Redfern

addressed the Committee with her view on the application. After the speakers had finished, the committee began the deliberation, during which they raised the following points:

- There was a concern about the number of people walking along the access road with no designated pathway area.
- Neighbouring properties would be overlooked by the proposed development.
- The proposed development was an improvement on the development form the previous application which was considered too bulky.
- The proposed development was unlikely to create a sense of community in future.
- There would be a number of windows overlooking the properties at 78 and 80 Ridge Langley impacting negatively on privacy.
- The development was too large for the size of the plot.
- The access road could not be widened sufficiently to service a development of this size.
- There were concerns about the number of parking spaces on the site especially given the PTAL rating of the area.
- The proposed development was too high and dense for the site.

The substantive motion to GRANT the application based on the officer's recommendation was proposed by Councillor Fraser. This was seconded by Councillor Clark.

The motion to grant the application was taken to a vote and fell with four Members voting in favour, five voting against and one Member abstaining their vote.

The motion to refuse the application was proposed by Councillor Parker on the basis that the development was out of keeping with the character of the local area especially the lack of space between the terraced properties and the layout of the properties on the site; an overdevelopment by height, scale and massing and the potential overlooking onto neighbouring properties. This was seconded by Councillor Johnson.

The motion to refuse the application was taken to a vote and carried with six Members voting in favour and four Members voting against.

The Committee RESOLVED to REFUSE the application for the development at 34A, 34B And Rear Of 34 Arkwright Road, CR2 0LL.

16/23 **Items referred by Planning Sub-Committee**

There were none.

17/23 **Other planning matters**

There were none.

18/23 **Weekly Planning Decisions**

RESOLVED to note the weekly Planning decisions as contained within the report.

The meeting ended at 8.57 pm

Signed:

Date:

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