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Planning Committee

Meeting held on Thursday, 3 August 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, Simon Brew, Lara Fish,
Sean Fitzsimons, Mark Johnson, Humayun Kabir and Appu Srinivasan

Also Present: Councillor Samir Dwesar

Apologies: Councillors Mohammed Islam, Leila Ben-Hassel (Lateness)

PART A

29/23 **Minutes of Previous Meeting**

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meetings held on Thursday, 9 March 2023 and Thursday, 6 April 2023 as accurate records.

30/23 **Disclosure of Interest**

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

31/23 **Urgent Business (if any)**

There was none.

32/23 **Development presentations**

33/23 **23/00486/PRE - 50 High Street (Purley Leisure Centre, Car Park and Former Sainsbury Supermarket), Purley**

Demolition of the existing buildings and erection of 4 buildings of 5-13 storeys to provide a leisure centre, commercial unit, approximately 246 age-restricted and care units (Use Classes C2 and C3) with associated facilities, public square and route through the site, and car park.

Ward: Purley and Woodcote

Nicholas Alston and Tom Banfield attended to give a presentation. They then responded to Members' questions and the issues raised for further consideration.

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

- The proposed development would provide a pool and leisure centre for the local residents, and has the potential to revitalise the district centre.
- This would create more footfall in the local area as there would be more desirable shops and cafes present. Support the inclusion of a public square, route through the site, bistro and soft play.
- Many of the plans for the proposed development were in line with the Purley strategic framework.
- There were concerns that one of the buildings, which would sit at 12 storeys, was too high and was not policy compliant.
- There was a suggestion that buildings C and D be separated as together they led to greater massing.
- The parking proposed was not acceptable, he recognised that the multi-storey car park would need to be removed for the project to be viable. However, he believed that 44 public car parking spaces and 34 parking spaces for residents was not workable.
- He asked officers and Polaska to provide more data on parking as the final plans would need to be informed by evidence and more parking would need to be provided.
- He wanted to see more 2- and 3-bedroom units and the inclusion of schemes for first time buyers. Suggested some accommodation for younger people.
- He would also like the developers to provide some garden space for residents.
- The 246 units proposed would place additional stress on the existing social care and health infrastructure.
- Encouraged by the initial concepts.

Councillor Ben Hassel joined the meeting at 6.40pm

Land Use

Parking

- Members explained that as the site was located near to a route into central London, the parking spaces could potentially be occupied by commuters. There was a concern that the developers had not considered the number of people using the swimming pool who would also need parking spaces.

- Members noted that the developer had mentioned that there were four car parks in the town centre and enquired where they were located and who had ownership of them.
- Members felt as though the proposed cycling enhancements did not offer much encouragement. There was also a belief that cycle storage was an issue as it was not ideal for bikes to be left outside.
- Members were concerned whether there were any electrical charging points for residents.
- Members asked if there any scope to deal with an increased demand for parking.
- Members stated that the British rail carpark was under a current application and the number of spaces may decrease which would put further strain on the proposed car park.
- Members queried whether the car parking survey had been shared with the Council transport officers.
- Members suggested that there is increased research on parking needs.

Integrated Retirement Community and Commercial uses

- A Member declared an interest as he was a resident of Purley and a Councillor for Coulsdon, as the Coulsdon residents would also benefit from the introduction of the pool.
- Members asked whether there was a case to be made to introduce a number of units that were suitable for individuals under the age of 50.
- Members highlighted that there was already a number of care homes in Purley and there was concern on the impact of having an influx of older residents would have on local transport services, medical services, public social services etc.
- Members queried why the developer chose to propose an Integrated Retirement Community (IRC) rather than a more conventional residential development with affordable housing or a build to rent scheme for example.
- Members enquired about how the Council would assess the demand for this type of development in the area and would adult social services be involved to ensure that the demands were being met.
- Members also queried about the process in which a resident could change the type of unit they were living in as they aged and required more support from carers. This also covered the finances and who gets priority.
- Members stated that they would have liked to see some family units included to create a more diverse community for the residents.
- Members enquired whether the introduction of an integrated care facility be supported in Purley as there were already 35 care homes in the local area.
- Members queried how the need for a care facility would be considered.
- Members highlighted that planning policy required more three-bedroom units to be included on a development of this size than what had been proposed and queried whether there would there be any intent to increase the number of 2-bedroom homes and reduce the number of studio flats. Suggested creating bigger units for intergenerational use.

- Members queried whether there would be an increase in the number of dual aspect homes.
- Members asked developers to explain how natural daylight would reach the pool.
- Members queried on how easy would access be to the pool, for maintenance etc.
- Members enquired whether the leisure centre managed to incorporate gyms, café, shops etc. to maximise income.
- Members queried the use of the facility by schools and what spaces they would need.
- Members asked whether the proposals for the pool were based on a brief provided by the Council and did the brief have an underlying business plan and has this been signed off by the Council corporately.

Design

- Members queried where coaches would be able to stop to drop school children off at the site, and how large groups would be managed.
- Members suggested a small communal area for kids within the leisure centre
- Members explained that the Croydon Local Plan limited the height of developments within Purley, and some felt as though 12 storeys was too high for the development and hoped that there was some flexibility in the scale of the development - noting the pool was needed in the local area.
- Members queried how the public square would function in terms of use, how well would it be overlooked in terms of active frontages and whether there would be any private space for residents.
- Members suggested making the public route clearer and to give consideration to lighting. They also queried how accessible and legible the route would be.
- Members encouraged the developer to make the development exciting with clear public and private spaces.
- Members raised that the Place Review Panel stated that if the building was to remain at 12 storeys it would have to be of a high architectural quality and enquired where developers saw their development in terms of quality.
- Members queried whether the height of the development would be better suited within the middle of the site.
- Members suggested that there was a small communal play area for children to play.
- Members asked whether the developers could incorporate a water feature.
- There was concern about the potential excessive shadows which would be caused by the high-rise buildings in the proposed development, and a proper sunlight assessment would need to be carried out.
- Members queried where the two lifts would be located.
- Members enquired about the colour palette being considered for the buildings.

- Members suggested the servicing points be rationalised to minimise traffic and access points.

Affordable Housing

- Members queried whether there were any discounted properties on the site for residents who were less financially able to afford a property.
- Members queried how important was it for the developers to make the scheme inclusive of all residents with different financial capabilities.
- Members asked whether the developer had any discussions with housing associations who provide housing for the elderly and whether there had been any discussions with the Greater London Authority (GLA) about the availability of funding.
- Members queried whether the developer would consider identifying partners who may want to contribute to the funding of the pool. Members enquired whether affordable housing would be provided off site and wanted to see further exploration of on or off-site affordable housing.
- Some members stated that if the developer did move away from an IRC development, then they would like to see some first-time buyer initiatives introduced.
- Some members emphasised the need for an affordable housing policy compliant scheme, and how important is it for the developer to make the scheme inclusive and mixed/balanced.

Other Matters

- Members highlighted that the project would involve knocking down existing buildings before building new developments which was not eco-friendly.
- Members sought reassurance that there was a low carbon energy scheme for the development and that there would be a natural ventilation in the sports areas and questioned how these issues had been factored into the plans for the development.
- Members noted the potential heating cost of the swimming pool, and suggested that the energy source for the leisure centre should be separate to the remainder of the development.
- Members enquired about the Councils corporate response to the proposed development.

34/23 **Other planning matters**

There were none.

The meeting ended at 8.17 pm

Signed:

Date:

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