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PLANNING SUB-COMMITTEE AGENDA

14 July 2016

PART 6: Planning Applications for Decision

Item 6.1

1 APPLICATION DETAILS

Ref: [16/02023/P](#)
Location: 23 Melville Avenue, South Croydon, CR2 7HZ
Ward: Croham
Description: Alterations; use of building as 5 two bedroom flats; erection of two/three storey rear extension with accommodation in roofspace and first floor side extension including balconies; erection of rear raised patio with pergola; formation of vehicular access and provision of associated parking, boundary wall railings and gate and cycle and refuse store
Drawing Nos: Design & Access Statement, 100, 101, 102, 103, 104, 105, 110, 111, 115, 116, 120, 121, 122, 123, 124, 125, 126, 2020, 2021, PS 1045
Applicant: Ultra Green Developments Ltd
Case Officer: Louise Tucker

- 1.1 This application is being reported to committee because the ward councillor (Cllr Maria Gatland) made representations in accordance with the Committee Consideration Criteria and requested committee consideration and Chair of Planning Committee (Cllr Paul Scott) has requested Committee Consideration.

2 SUMMARY OF KEY REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

- The principle of the conversion and extensions of the building is acceptable.
- The proposed development would not have a detrimental impact on the character of the dwelling or the surrounding area.
- The development would not have a detrimental impact to the amenity of adjoining occupiers.
- The development would provide an acceptable standard of living for future occupiers.
- The development would not significantly impact on parking, traffic generation and highway safety.

3 RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 That the Committee resolve to GRANT planning permission.

- 3.2 That the Director of Planning is delegated authority to issue the planning permission and impose conditions and informatives to secure the following matters:

Conditions

- 1) In accordance with submitted drawings
- 2) Materials to match existing property
- 3) Details to be submitted: visibility splays, privacy screens, boundary treatments, amenity space
- 4) Submission of a hard/soft landscaping scheme
- 5) Ground floor windows in the south-western and north-eastern elevations shall be obscure glazed
- 6) No windows in the south-western and north-eastern elevations other than as specified
- 7) Development should be carried out in accordance with Tree Protection Plan ref. PS 1045
- 8) Development to commence within 3 years
- 9) Any other planning condition(s) considered necessary by the Director of Planning

Informatives

- 1) Removal of Site Notice
- 2) Community Infrastructure Levy
- 3) Any other informative(s) considered necessary by the Director of Planning

4 PROPOSAL AND LOCATION DETAILS

Proposal

- 4.1 Full planning permission is sought for the erection of a two/three storey rear extension with accommodation in the roofspace and a first floor side extension and the conversion of the extended building into 5 two bedroom flats.
- 4.2 The existing crossover and vehicular access would be retained, with the erection of front boundary railings and gates and a parking area for 5 spaces created to the front. Cycle and refuse storage would be provided to the side, in place of an existing single storey extension to be demolished. A raised communal seating area with a pergola would be erected in the rear garden.

Site and Surroundings

- 4.3 The application site comprises a large detached building on the western side of Melville Avenue in South Croydon. The building was last used as a residential care home for people with learning disabilities, but is now vacant. To the front is a parking area with soft landscaping to the front/side, with a low front boundary wall. Land levels fall gradually towards the rear. The surrounding area is mostly

residential in character, made up of predominantly detached buildings of varying size and appearance set in generous plots. Old Palace of John Whitgift Junior School lies opposite the site. There are no policy constraints on the site, although it does neighbour a Locally Listed Building (no 25 Melville Avenue), as designated in the Croydon Local Plan: Strategic Policies (2013).

Planning History

- 4.4 94/02200/P – Continued use as residential care home for up to 12 people with learning difficulties who have no severe behaviour problems – without compliance with condition 3 (2) – provision and retention of communal facilities – attached to planning permission 92/1055/P – Permission granted

92/01055/P – Alterations; use as residential care home for up to 12 people with learning difficulties who have no severe behaviour problems; provision of 4 parking spaces and erection of 1.8m high boundary fence to rear garden – Permission granted

84/01608/P – Erection of summer house at rear – Permission granted

83/01375/P – Use of garage as ancillary store and office and installation of velux window on roof of main building – Permission granted

5 CONSULTATION RESPONSE

- 5.1 The views of the Planning Service are expressed in the Material Planning Considerations section below.

6 LOCAL REPRESENTATION

- 6.1 The application has been publicised by way of one or more site notices displayed in the vicinity of the application site. The number of representations received from neighbours, local groups etc. in response to notification and publicity of the application were as follows:

No of individual responses: 4 Objecting: 4 Supporting: 0 Comment: 0

- 6.2 The following Councillors made representations:

- Councillor Maria Gatland [objecting]
- Councillor Paul Scott [requested Committee Consideration]

- 6.3 The following residents association made representations:

- Croham Valley Residents Association [objecting]

6.4 The following issues were raised in representations that are material to the determination of the application, and they are addressed in substance in the next section of this report:

Objections

- Extending beyond normal building line
- Loss of light
- Size and bulk of extension excessive
- Overdevelopment of the site
- Inadequate landscaping to parking area
- Inadequate parking provision
- Out of keeping with streetscene
- Loss of privacy

6.5 The following issues were raised in representations, but they are not material to the determination of the application:

- Application does not specify details for safe removal of asbestos (OFFICER COMMENT: This is not required with the planning application and is covered under separate legislation)

7 MATERIAL PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

7.1 The main planning issues raised by the application that the committee must consider are:

- 1) The principle of development
- 2) The design and appearance of the development and its effect upon the character and appearance of the area
- 3) The impact of the development upon the residential amenities of the adjoining occupiers
- 4) Living conditions of future occupiers
- 5) Parking and highways
- 6) Trees and landscaping

Principle of development

7.2 Croydon Local Plan: Strategic Policy SP2.1 applies a presumption in favour of development of new homes. Croydon Plan Saved Policy H2 states housing development will be permitted within the existing built-up area provided it does not conflict with the Council's aim of respecting the character of residential areas and there is no loss of other protected uses. The site is located within an established residential area. The conversion would not result in the loss of any protected uses on the site. The principle of the proposed use is considered to be acceptable, subject to other material considerations addressed below.

The design and appearance of the development

- 7.3 London Plan Policies 7.4 Local Character and 7.6 Architecture state that development should have regard to the character of the area, and that architecture should make a positive contribution to the public realm. Policies SP4.1 and SP4.2 of the Croydon Local Plan: Strategic Policies (2013) (CLP) reiterate this and state that development should be of high quality design, enhance Croydon's varied character and be informed by the Places of Croydon. Furthermore, the relevant Croydon Replacement Unitary Development Plan (The Croydon Plan 2006) Saved Policies 2013 (the UDP) include UD2 which covers "the layout and siting of new development", UD3 which covers "the scale and design of new buildings" and UC9 which covers "buildings on the Local List". Supplementary Planning Document No. 2 (SPD2) on Residential Extensions and Alterations provides detailed guidance on the design of household extensions. Policy UD13 states that "car and cycle parking must be designed as an integral part of a scheme and not be allowed to dominate or determine the urban form". Policy UD15 seeks to safeguard the street scene and neighbouring occupiers in respect of the siting and appearance of refuse facilities.
- 7.4 SPD2 states that "two storey extensions are not usually permitted at the rear of a house because of the dominance, visual intrusion and overshadowing which would be caused to neighbouring properties." However, it goes on to state that "each case will be considered on its merits, where it can be demonstrated that there is no harm". The proposal would see the erection of a two/three storey extension at the rear, with a maximum depth of 8.2m (7m on the south western side of the building). Whilst this would be a large addition, the building and plot itself is substantial and the area is generally characterised by large detached properties in generous plots of varying styles. There is no consistent rear building line and a varied front building line. The extension would replicate the appearance of the existing building with a hipped roof and matching eaves level. Whilst the extension would result in an area of flat roof, this would have limited visibility in the streetscene. No. 25 is set further back in its plot than the application building, largely screening the extension in views to the south west. There would be some visibility of the extension roof in views above the neighbouring bungalow (no.21), but it is not considered the impact on the area would be significant considering the context of the area and size and variation in surrounding properties. Overall it is considered the extension would be sufficiently in keeping with the character of the area and would not result in harm.
- 7.5 SPD2 states that first floor side extensions should have a 1.5m setback from the main front wall of the building, a reduced ridge line and a width no more than half of the width of the original building. The proposed extension to the north eastern side of the building would be minimal in size, and fully compliant with SPD2 guidance, adjoining an existing side projection of the same appearance and height. This is considered to be acceptable in terms of its impact on the character of the building and the streetscene.

- 7.6 The building lies nearby to Locally Listed Buildings at nos 5 and 25 Melville Avenue (direct neighbour). Policy UC9 of the Croydon UDP states that substantial weight will be given to the benefit of protecting and conserving the particular interest that accounts for the designation of the Locally Listed Building. Policy SP4.13 of the Croydon Local Plan: Strategic Policies (2013) requires the Council to strengthen the protection of and promote improvements to Locally Listed Buildings and their settings. The development in the main is to the rear of the property, and would not be readily visible in views of no 25. Whilst the first floor side extension would be visible from limited vantage points, this development is in accordance with design guidance (as discussed above) and as such it is not felt this extension would impact harmfully on the setting of the heritage asset. No 5 is well spaced from the development beyond no 21, so the development would not result in harm to the setting of this building. The works are considered to be acceptable with regard to impact on the surrounding Locally Listed Buildings.
- 7.7 The existing front parking area would be resurfaced with permeable block paving and tarmac to provide 5 spaces. The amount of hardstanding is considered acceptable given this would reflect the existing arrangement, and existing planting would be retained to the front and side boundaries. Communal refuse and cycle storage would be sited to the side of the building, set back in line with the building front and largely screened by the presence of the proposed front boundary treatment. The existing brick boundary wall would be retained, with a new gated pedestrian access and railing style fencing introduced above the wall. There are a variety of forms and heights of boundary treatments along Melville Avenue and as such it is not considered the type and height proposed would appear significantly out of keeping with surrounding properties.
- 7.8 Given the above considerations, the proposed works including alterations to the building are not considered to cause sufficient undue harm to the host property or the character of the surrounding area, in accordance with policies UD2 and UD3 of the UDP and SPD2.

The residential amenities of the adjoining occupiers

- 7.9 The London Plan (consolidated with amendments since 2011) Policy 7.6 states that amongst others that development should “not cause unacceptable harm to the amenity of surrounding land and buildings, particularly residential buildings, in relation to privacy, overshadowing, wind and microclimate”. Policy UD8 of the Croydon UDP concerns “privacy and amenity of occupiers of surrounding buildings ensuring that both new and existing occupiers are protected from undue visual intrusion and loss of privacy...” and will have regard to the “maintenance of sunlight or daylight amenities for occupiers of adjacent properties”. Supplementary Planning Document No. 2 (SPD2) on Residential Extensions and Alterations is also of relevance.

- 7.10 No 25, a large detached two/three storey property, is set behind no 23 in the streetscene. The proposed extension would project approximately 4m beyond the main rear wall of no 25 (approximately 3.25m beyond a rear bay window). However the extension steps gradually down in height towards the rear from a maximum height of 11.5-12m to 7-7.5m at the rear of the extension. There is a separation distance between the flank walls of the buildings of around 2.5m. The main flank of the extension would be set away from the side of no 25 by around 3.5m, stepping in by another metre towards the rear of the extension. There is a bay window on the rear of no 25 which would be nearest the extension. Representations received on this application suggest these windows serve a living room at ground floor, and a bedroom at first floor. The applicant has provided a plan showing that the extension would not cut in at a 45 degree angle from the south eastern corner of no 25, and thus would not cut in at a 45 degree angle from the rear windows. There are ground and first floor side windows to no 25 facing the proposed rear extension; these appear to be secondary windows with outlook and light also provided to these rooms from windows in the rear elevation. Given the considerations above including the separation distance and design of the extension, it is not considered the proposed rear or first floor side extension would result in severe detrimental harm to the neighbouring property at no 25 through loss of light and outlook.
- 7.11 No 21 Melville Avenue to the south of the application site is a bungalow. The proposed extension would project around 3.5m in depth beyond the rear wall of no 21, but would be separated from the side wall of this bungalow by around 5m. Therefore the rear windows of the bungalow would not experience substantial loss of light or outlook as a result of the extension. There are a number of north facing windows in the side of no 21. A search of the planning history for this site indicates these are a secondary window and door serving a kitchen, and windows serving a WC and bathroom. There is also a side facing bedroom window, however this is towards the front of the building and level with the existing building and as such it is not considered the extension would result in substantial additional impact from loss of light or outlook to this window, compared to the existing situation. It is therefore considered the proposed development would not harm the light and outlook of adjoining occupiers to an unacceptable degree.
- 7.12 In terms of privacy, there are rear balcony areas proposed for the first and second floor flats. These have been set back into the building at second floor level, with side screening provided at first floor level. This will prevent side views into neighbouring gardens and as such the privacy of adjoining occupiers would be retained in this respect. It is recommended a condition be imposed securing details of the proposed screens, to ensure they are adequate for their purpose and can be retained for the lifetime of the development. Views to the rear from the balcony to neighbouring gardens would be comparable with that from a rear window, which is a common and accepted relationship in a residential area. The ground floor windows serving Unit 2 could reasonably be obscure glazed by condition, to retain the privacy of no 25.

- 7.13 A rear seating area is proposed for communal use by the occupiers of the flats, which would be raised from ground level by a maximum of 0.5m in height. Ground levels gradually fall to the rear of the site and the patio area would be set away from the rear of the building by a minimum of 22.5m and would be well screened by shrubbery along the boundary, so it is not considered this would result in any harmful loss of privacy to adjoining occupiers. It is not considered the inclusion of the decked area would result in any undue noise or disturbance to surrounding occupiers as this will not give rise to any activities or uses which could not already be carried out within the remainder of the communal garden.
- 7.14 For the above reasons, it is considered the impact on the residential amenities of neighbouring properties is acceptable and in accordance with policy EP1, UD8 and SPD2.

Living conditions of future occupiers

- 7.15 The Nationally Described Space Standards (NDSS) provide minimum technical requirements for new dwellings, including minimum space standards for proposed dwellings. The minimum floorspace requirement for a two bedroom four person unit as set out in the NDSS is 70sqm. All the units comfortably exceed these standards, with adequate light and outlook provided. The master bedroom to Unit 5 is only served by a rooflight, however given the large floor area of the unit, the size of the living space and the provision of a rear terrace, this is considered acceptable.
- 7.16 With regard to amenity space, the London Housing SPG states that a minimum of 5sqm of private outdoor space should be provided for 1 person dwellings, increasing by 1m² per occupant and Croydon Plan Policy UD8 requires development proposals to provide residential amenity space that is considered as an integral part of the design of the overall development concept. An area of private amenity space has been provided to the rear of each of the ground floor units and a small private terrace area has been provided for each of the remaining upper floor units. The large rear garden would provide adequate communal space accessible for all occupiers via a side access, including the proposed seating area at the rear. A condition is recommended to determine the arrangement of the amenity space in the rear garden, including proposed boundary treatments. This is considered to be acceptable in terms of living conditions of future occupiers.
- 7.17 In terms of accessibility, level access would be provided to the front door and there is scope for one vehicular parking space to be provided as a disabled space if necessary.

Parking and highways

- 7.18 SP8.17 of the Croydon Local Plan: Strategic Policies seeks to ensure that there is an appropriate level of car parking. Policies T2 and T8 of the Croydon Plan concerns traffic generation and parking standards.
- 7.19 The site is located within an area with a PTAL rating of 2 which indicates a moderately poor level of accessibility to public transport links. Five parking spaces are proposed on the property frontage, which would be in accordance with the Council's maximum standards set out in policy T2 of the UDP and is considered acceptable given the low PTAL rating. 10 cycle parking spaces have been provided, which is in accordance with standards in Table 6.3 of the London Plan (consolidated with amendments since 2011).
- 7.20 The existing access would be utilised but given the re-arrangement of the parking area it is considered necessary to attach a condition requiring the applicant to submit details of adequate pedestrian visibility splays, to ensure highway safety is maintained. Vehicular spaces would be provided around 8m apart, allowing satisfactory turning space for vehicles to safely enter and exit the site in a forward gear. With conditions, the development is considered to be acceptable from a parking and highways perspective.

Trees and landscaping

- 7.21 Chapter 11 of the NPPF seeks to conserve and enhance the natural environment. Saved Croydon Plan Policy UD14 states that landscape design should be considered as an integral part of any development proposals. London Plan Policy 7.21 states that existing trees of value should be retained and any loss as a result of the development should be replaced following the principle of 'right place, right tree'.
- 7.22 The site is not covered by a Tree Preservation Order, nor is the site within a Conservation Area so trees on the site are not subject to planning controls. A Tree Protection Plan has been submitted with the application. It is recommended a condition be imposed to ensure the development be implemented in accordance with this to ensure existing trees to be retained on site are protected during construction. It is recommended a landscaping scheme be conditioned to ascertain details of the proposed new trees and planting, hard landscaping materials and boundary treatments.

Conclusions

- 7.23 All other relevant policies and considerations, including equalities, have been taken into account. Planning permission should be granted for the reasons set out above. The details of the decision are set out in the RECOMMENDATION.