

## PART 6: Planning Applications for Decision

## Item 6.1

## 1 SUMMARY OF APPLICATION DETAILS

Ref:	18/06140/FUL
Location:	Leon House, 233 High Street, Croydon CR0 1FW
Ward:	Fairfield
Description:	Demolition of existing retail and office units. Redevelopment of the site to provide a mixed use development within three buildings up to 31 storeys, providing up to 357 residential units (Use Class C3) and flexible units for retail, professional service and food and drink uses (Use Class A1-A5). Creation of a new public square, landscaped communal gardens, and associated highway works; basement car parking; cycle parking; waste storage; and associated works.
Approved Documents:	<p><b>Existing Plans:</b> 2274_AE(04)500 - Location Plan; 2274_AE(04)501 - Existing Level 00 - High Street; 2274_AE(04)502 - Existing Level 01 - Masons Avenue; 2274_AE(04)503 - Existing Level 02 - Edridge Road; 2274_AE(04)510 - Demolition Plans; 2274_AE(05)501 - Existing Elevations &amp; Sections.</p> <p><b>Proposed Plans:</b> 2274_AA(06)A501 RevB - Typical Balcony-Facade Study; 2274_AG(04)500 RevC- Proposed Site Plan; 2274_AG(04)501 RevC - Level 00 Plan - High Street; 2274_AG(04)502 RevD- Level 01 Plan - Masons Avenue; 2274_AG(04)503 RevC- Level 02 Plan - Edridge Road; 2274_AG(04)504 RevC- Level 03 Plan; 2274_AG(04)505 RevC- Levels Typical Upper Level Plans; 2274_AG(04)506 RevC - Roof Level Plan; 2274_AG(04)507 RevB- Wheelchair User Dwellings; 2274_AG(04)A500 RevB - Levels 01 &amp; 02; 2274_AG(04)A501 RevB - Levels 03-06; 2274_AG(04)A502 RevB - Levels 07-25; 2274_AG(04)A503 RevA - Levels 26-30 Roof; 2274_AG(04)B500 RevB - Levels 00 &amp; 01; 2274_AG(04)B501 RevB - Levels 02-19 &amp; Roof; 2274_AG(04)C500 RevB - Levels 00 &amp; 01; 2274_AG(04)C501 RevB - Levels 02-05; 2274_AG(05)500 RevB - Proposed High Street Elevation; 2274_AG(05)501 RevB - Proposed North Elevation; 2274_AG(05)502 RevB - Proposed Edridge Road Elevation; 2274_AG(05)503 RevB - Proposed East Elevation A; 2274_AG(05)504 RevB - Proposed West Elevation B; 2274_AG(05)505 RevB - Proposed Masons Avenue Elevation; 2274_AG(05)506 RevB - Proposed Sectional Elevation 1; 2274_AG(05)507 RevB - Proposed Sectional Elevation 2; 2274_AG(05)508 RevB - Proposed Sectional Elevation 3; 2274_AG(05)509 RevB - Proposed Sectional Elevation 4; 2274_AG(05)510 RevB - Proposed Sectional Elevation 5; 2274_AG(05)511 RevB - Northern Boundary Elevations; 17.514 - 100 - High Street General Arrangement Rev P3; 17.514 - 101 - Edridge Road Level General Arrangement Rev P1; 17.514 - 102 - Soft landscape Rev P1; 17.514 - 103 - Lighting strategy Rev P1; 17.514 - 104 - Street Furniture Rev P1; 17.514 - 105 - A - Site</p>

sections Rev P1; 17.514 - 105 - B - Site sections Rev P1; 17.514 - 105 - C - Site sections Rev P1.

**Documents:** Outline Construction Logistics Plan A101004 Version F2 (WYG, December 2018); Refuse Strategy A101004 Version F2 (WYG, December 2018); Residential Travel Plan A101004 Version F2 (WYG, December 2018); Transport Assessment A101004 Version F2 (WYG, December 2018); Workplace Travel Plan A101004 Version F2 (WYG, December 2018); Air Quality Assessment A101004 (WYG, 12th September 2018); Noise Assessment A101004 (WYG, 19th December 2018); SITE WASTE MANAGEMENT PLAN Ref: A101004 Leon House\_V1 (WYG, 12th December 2018); Phase 1 Geo-Environmental Desk Top Study A101004 (WYG, August 2018); Phase 2 Interpretative Ground Investigation Report A101004 (WYG, September 2018); Energy Statement A101004 Rev.D (WYG, 30/11/2018); Rapid Health Impact Assessment (Deloitte, December 2018); Stage 1 Utility Impact Assessment A101004 (WYG, 10/08/18); Flood Risk & Drainage Assessment A101004 V2 (WYG, 10.06.2018); Sustainability Statement A101004 (WYG, 14th November 2018); Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment A101104 rev.V0 (WYG, October 2018); Television and Radio Signal Survey & Television and Radio Reception Impact Assessment (Gtech Surveys Limited, 07/09/2018); REPORT on the DAYLIGHT & SUNLIGHT within THE PROPOSED DWELLINGS and SUNLIGHT TO PROPOSED AMENITY SPACES at LEON HOUSE, BLOCKS A, B AND C REF: GO/KW/ROL7668 (Anstey Horne); DAYLIGHT & SUNLIGHT REPORT for PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT at LEON HOUSE, CROYDON REF MC/GO/ROL7668 (Anstey Horne, 15 August 2018); Townscape & Visual Appraisal Project Ref 00239A (Landscape Collective, December 2018) including Appendix 1 Accurate Visual Representations ref. LDC\_034-01-A (November 2018); Housing Delivery & Viability Statement (Quod, December 2018); Cover Letter (Deloitte, 19 December 2018); Leon Quarter Planning Statement (Deloitte, December 2018); Leon Quarter Design and Access Statement 2274 Rev 05 (18th December 2018); Heritage Statement 3985 v.1 (Heritage Collective, 02/10/2018); Leon Quarter Design Development 2274 3rd June 2019; Fire and Life Safety Technical Note Leon House Blocks A, B and C A101004 rev.1 (WYG, 15/05/2018); (ROL7668) Leon House, Croydon – Light Within Analysis ref: CS/EK/ROL7668 (Anstey Horne, 28 May 2019); Leon Quarter DESIGN ADDENDUM 2274 21st June 2019; A101004 Leon House Technical Note Wind (WYG, 21.06.19); Energy Statement Addendum A101004 (WYG, 20.06.19); Leon House 2 – Wind Microclimate Assessment P113457-1000 Issue:3 (BRE, 05 July 2019).

Applicant: FI Facilities Management Ltd  
Agent: Deloitte LLP  
Case Officer: Jan Slominski

	1 bed	2 bed	3 bed	4 bed	Total
<b>Market Housing</b>	124	125	10	0	259
<b>Affordable Rent</b>	7	14	12	1	34
<b>Intermediate</b>	25	38	1	0	64
<b>All Tenures</b>	160	176	22	1	357

Type of floorspace	Amount proposed (GIA)	Existing Amount (GIA)	Net change (GIA)
Residential	25,260 sqm	0 sqm	+ 25,260 sqm
Commercial	1,202 sqm	1,922 sqm	- 720 sqm

Number of car parking spaces	Number of cycle parking spaces
22 Blue Badge / 1-3 Car Club	734

- 1.1 This application is being reported to the Planning Committee because the recommendation is for approval of a residential development containing 200 or more new dwellings and objections above the threshold in the Committee Consideration Criteria have been received.

## 2 BACKGROUND

### Pre-Application Advice

- 2.1 An earlier version of the proposal was presented to the Planning Committee at pre-application stage on 7th June 2018. The following comments were raised:

- The site needs to deliver the maximum viable amount of affordable housing.
- The proposed neighbourhood garden is welcomed, but must be accessible to all.
- The public spaces and proposed units need to provide a high standard of accommodation, including good daylight and sunlight.
- The heritage impacts resulting from additional height may be justified by the provision of increased affordable housing.
- A podium is recommended, in addition to further articulation to the proposed towers to result in a slender appearance.
- Family sized units should be prioritised.
- The proposed balconies and homes should be useable.
- Single aspect homes should be minimised, and well designed.
- Provision needs to be made for electric vehicle charging points, cycle storage and disabled parking.
- Food and drink uses are supported at the commercial units, as an extension to the restaurant quarter on South End. Engagement with local business as potential tenants would be welcomed.

### Place Review Panel

- 2.2 The proposal was presented to the Place Review Panel on two occasions, most recently on Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> June 2018. The Panel's observations are summarised as follows:

- The changes to the architecture and the various elements of the design were seen as generally positive.

- The improvements to the design of Block A were considered positive, with the cut-in elements and proposed podium being supported. The design of Block C was also supported. The Panel raised no objection to the heights of Blocks A (at 28 storeys) and C (at 5 storeys), and felt that Block C could be taller. The Panel however had concerns about the density of the scheme and the quality of the public spaces, and felt that Block B (at 23 storeys) should be reduced in height, and the spaces between buildings should be increased.
- In longer views, the height of Block B was considered harmful to views of Croydon Minster along Rectory Grove, further supporting the Panel's view that it should be reduced in height.
- The proposed public spaces were supported by the Panel, subject to good quality design. The separation of spaces was also welcomed. Assessment of the sunlight and microclimate at the public space was recommended to ensure comfortable environments.
- The Panel had some concerns about the comfort levels of projecting balconies on the upper storeys of the buildings.

2.3 The design of the proposal has been amended, with Block B reduced in height to 20 storeys, and the spaces between buildings increased. The top floor balconies were removed from Block A (replaced with winter gardens or additional internal space), and further improvements were made to the detailed design of the proposed buildings and the landscaped areas.

### 3 SUMMARY OF KEY REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 The site is allocated in the Local Plan for residential development, and is in an area where tall buildings are acceptable. The proposed 357 new homes would make a significant contribution to housing delivery in a well-connected location, within the Croydon Metropolitan Centre and Croydon Opportunity Area, in addition to a new public square and commercial units, and publicly accessible communal gardens.
- 3.2 30% of the proposed homes (by habitable room) would be affordable housing, of which 34 would be a separate London Affordable Rent block (Block C). The remainder would be intermediate housing, with 64 homes mixed with the market housing in Block B.
- 3.3 The development is considered acceptable in design terms, subject to high quality materials and detailing which are to be secured by planning conditions. The heights of the proposed buildings would result in some harm to the surrounding heritage assets: Croydon Minster; Wrencote; and the Central Croydon Conservation Area. The harm caused would be "less than substantial" and with regard to the relevant legislation, policies and guidance, the harm is considered to be accompanied by clear and convincing justification, and outweighed by the public benefits provided in the form of new housing, affordable housing, and public open spaces in the form of a new pedestrianised public square and landscaped gardens.
- 3.4 The new dwellings would provide good quality accommodation. The impacts to neighbours would be limited, and the proposal would comply with the Council's policies with regard to transport, environmental impacts and sustainability, subject to the recommended planning conditions and s.106 obligations.

## 4 RECOMMENDATION

4.1 That the Planning Committee resolve to GRANT planning permission subject to:

- A. Any direction by the London Mayor pursuant to the Mayor of London Order
- B. The prior completion of a legal agreement to secure the following planning obligations:
  - 1) 30% Affordable Housing provision (35% London Affordable Rent: 65% shared ownership)
  - 2) Affordable Housing review mechanism and nominations agreement
  - 3) Air quality contribution of £45,900
  - 4) Local employment procurement and training strategy (construction phase) including a financial contribution of £236,665.
  - 5) Local employment and training strategy (operational) including a financial contribution of £24,135;
  - 6) Zero Carbon off-set contribution (£546,300, dependant on energy strategy)
  - 7) Future connection to planned district energy scheme
  - 8) Sustainable transport contribution (prioritised for highway safety works) and public realm improvements on High Street
  - 9) Car parking permit free restriction for future residents
  - 10) Travel Plan and monitoring;
  - 11) Car club including membership for new residents;
  - 12) Highway works
  - 13) Loss of revenue for removal of on-street parking bays
  - 14) TV signal mitigation
  - 15) Retention of scheme architects (or suitably qualified alternative architect);
  - 16) Monitoring fees and payment of Legal fees
  - 17) Any other planning obligation(s) considered necessary by the Director of Planning and Strategic Transport

4.2 That the Director of Planning and Strategic Transport has delegated authority to negotiate the legal agreement indicated above.

4.3 That the Director of Planning and Strategic Transport has delegated authority to issue the planning permission and impose conditions and informatives to secure the following matters:

### Conditions

- 1) Commencement within three years (compliance)
- 2) Approved Plans (compliance)
- 3) SUDS and Flood Risk (prior to commencement)
- 4) Energy Strategy and carbon reduction (prior to commencement)
- 5) Construction and Environmental Management Plan (prior to commencement)
- 6) Archaeology (prior to commencement)
- 7) Contamination (prior to commencement)
- 8) Materials and Detailing (prior to superstructure)
- 9) Sample panels on site (prior to superstructure)
- 10) Balcony design (prior to superstructure)
- 11) Outdoor seating (prior to occupation)

- 12) Flues and Ventilation (prior to occupation)
- 13) Hard Landscaping (prior to occupation)
- 14) Façade maintenance and cleaning strategy (prior to occupation)
- 15) Soft Landscaping (prior to occupation)
- 16) Public art (prior to occupation)
- 17) Public space management plan (prior to occupation)
- 18) Biodiversity (prior to occupation)
- 19) Playspace (prior to occupation)
- 20) External Lighting (prior to occupation)
- 21) Delivery and Servicing (prior to occupation)
- 22) Car Park management plan (prior to occupation)
- 23) Cycle storage and end of trip facilities (commercial) (prior to occupation)
- 24) Refuse storage (prior to occupation)
- 25) Wind Mitigation (prior to occupation)
- 26) Public Realm (prior to occupation)
- 27) Piling (prior to specific works)
- 28) Commercial fit-out (within 6 months of practical completion)
- 29) Water use (compliance)
- 30) Use Classes (compliance)
- 31) Hot Food Takeaways (compliance)
- 32) Opening Hours (compliance)
- 33) Noise limits (plant) (compliance)
- 34) No obscuring of shopfronts (compliance)
- 35) Secured by design (compliance)
- 36) Accessible design (commercial) (compliance)
- 37) Accessible Homes (M4) (compliance)
- 38) Lifts (compliance)
- 39) Electric charging (compliance)
- 40) Cycle Storage (residential) (compliance)
- 41) BREEAM (compliance)
- 42) Any other planning condition(s) considered necessary by the Director of Planning and Strategic Transport, and

### **Informatives**

- 1) Community Infrastructure Levy
- 2) Subject to legal agreement
- 3) Construction Logistics Plans
- 4) Flood Risk
- 5) Thames Water
- 6) Site notice removal
- 7) Any other informative(s) considered necessary by the Director of Planning and Strategic Transport.

4.4 That the Planning Committee confirms that it has had special regard to the desirability of preserving the settings of (including views of) listed buildings and features of special architectural or historic interest as required by Section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

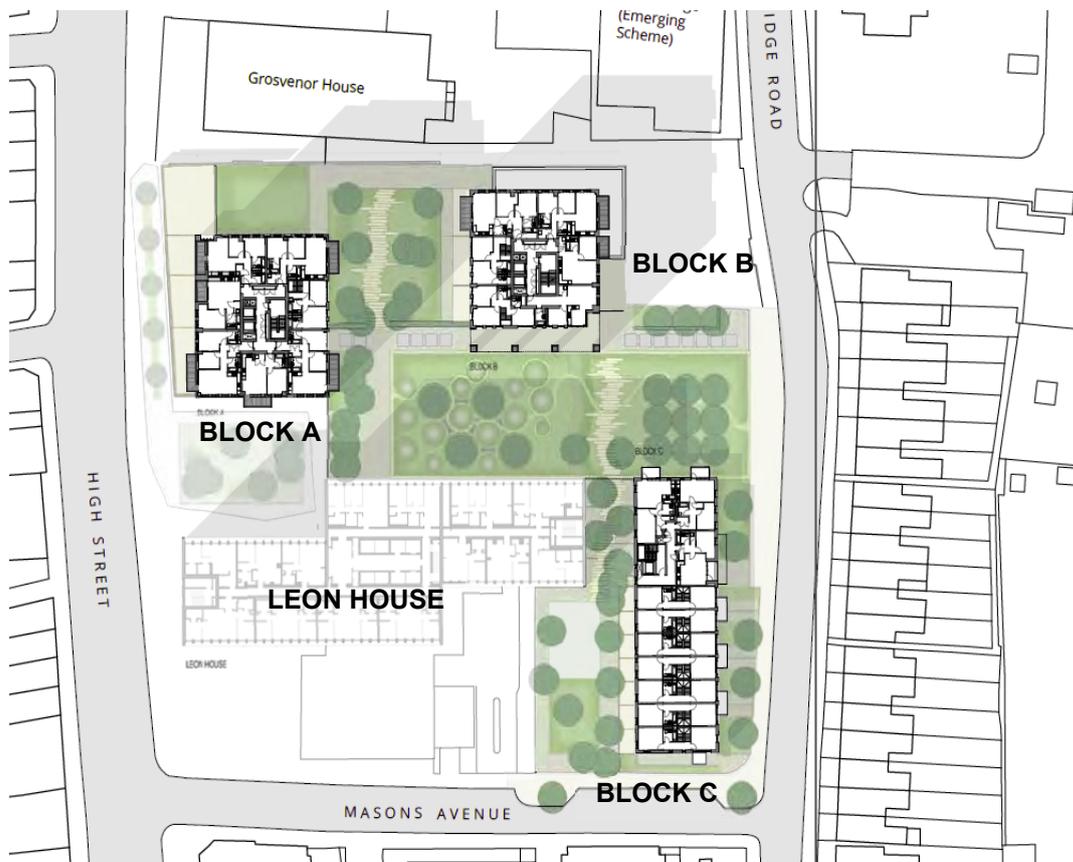
4.5 That the Planning Committee confirms that it has paid special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character and appearance of the settings (including views of) of the Central Croydon Conservation Area, the Croydon Minster

Conservation Area and the Chatsworth Road Conservation Area as required by Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

- 4.6 That the Planning Committee confirms that adequate provision has been made, by the imposition of conditions, for the preservation or planting of trees as required by Section 197 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.
- 4.7 That, if by within 3 months of the planning committee meeting date, the legal agreement has not been completed, the Director of Planning and Strategic Transport has delegated authority to refuse planning permission.

## 5 PROPOSAL AND LOCATION DETAILS

### Proposal



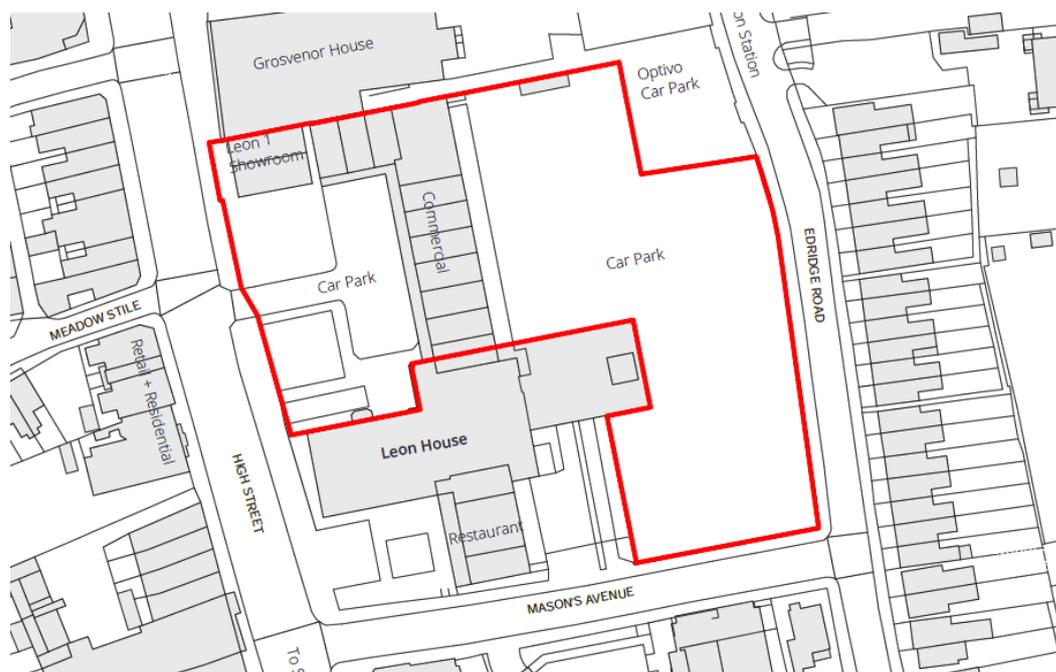
*Proposed Site Plan*

- 5.1 A mixed use development is proposed on the land to the north and east of Leon House, at 233 High Street, Croydon. On the west side of the site, a 31 storey mixed use tower is proposed (Block A), with a 2-storey podium facing High Street, and a 2 storey row of commercial units facing a new public square. A 20 storey residential building is proposed to the north of the site (Block B), and a 6 storey block (Block C) is proposed east of Leon House as shown in the proposed site plan. The residential units would be arranged around communal gardens.
- 5.2 357 residential units are proposed in total, of which 98 units would be affordable housing (30% by habitable room). 65% of the affordable housing would be intermediate (e.g. shared ownership), and 35% would be London Affordable Rent.

- 5.3 The proposed buildings would be related in design to the grid-like facades of Leon House, using a palette of brick to result in a modern, contextual appearance. The site is suitable for tall buildings, but the proposal would have impacts on the settings of the nearby heritage assets, as considered below in this report.
- 5.4 The development would be car-free except for blue badge spaces, with cycle and bin storage provided on-site. There would be 22 blue badge parking spaces on-site, with a loading bay and car club bays on Edridge Road.
- 5.5 The proposal has been amended since it was originally submitted, with the removal of 2no. 1-bedroom residential units (in Blocks B and C) and changes to adjacent units, which resulted in improved entrances and more family sized homes; improvements to the façade designs, and additional cycle parking and blue badge parking spaces.

### Site and Surroundings

- 5.6 Leon House is a 21 storey former office building on High Street, recently converted for residential use. Although the site's address is "Leon House", the site comprises the parking area and 1,922 sqm (GIA) of commercial (office and retail) floorspace attached to Leon House. The site's area is 0.66ha.



### Location Plan

- 5.7 The site is in the Croydon Opportunity Area and the Croydon Metropolitan Centre, and to the south of the Town Centre's Main Retail Frontage. It is allocated for residential use by the Croydon Local Plan 2018 ("Local Plan").
- 5.8 The site's Public Transport Accessibility Level (PTAL) is 6a and 6b.
- 5.9 The site slopes steeply, with a level change of approximately 7m or 2 storeys rising up to Edridge Road, and frontages on High Street, Masons Avenue, and Edridge Road.
- 5.10 The site is within Flood Zone 1 and there is potential for groundwater at the surface.

- 5.11 The whole borough is an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA).
- 5.12 The surrounding area is very mixed in character. To the north along High Street is the southern end of the Town Centre's Main Retail Frontage, and further to the south is the Restaurant Quarter on South End. Edridge Road (to the east) is a quieter residential street, with a mix of modest 2-storey houses and larger buildings.
- 5.13 The site is in an Archaeological Priority Area (APA). It is not in a Conservation Area and there are no heritage assets on the site, nor directly adjoining.
- 5.14 Chatsworth Road Conservation Area lies approximately 100m east of the Site and the Laud Street Local Heritage Area lies approximately 60m west, beyond the west side of the High Street.
- 5.15 The nearest listed building is Wrencote House (Grade II\*), 50m north on High Street. Tall buildings on the site would potentially be visible from the setting of a number of heritage assets, including St. Andrew's Church (Grade II), Whitgift Hospital (Almshouses) on North End (Grade I) and Croydon Minster (Grade I).
- 5.16 The adjacent site at 4-20 Edridge Road is also allocated for residential development, and is currently subject to a planning application (see para 5.20).

## **Planning History**

### Leon House

- 5.17 Leon House was recently converted (predominantly from offices) to residential use with the following planning history:
- Prior approval **granted** for use of floors 1-7 and 9-20 as 249 flats (applications 15/02926/GDPO, 15/02927/GDPO, and 15/02928/GDPO).
  - Planning permission **granted** for external alterations (including replacement/additional glazing, of new entrances, communal roof terrace, landscaping and associated works) (applications 16/01467/P and 16/06157/FUL)
  - Planning permission **granted** for alterations and use of floor 8 as 9 residential units (application 16/01467/P)
  - Planning permission **granted** for change of use of the eighth floor of Leon House from Class D1 use to 14 no. residential units (17/04817/FUL)

### Bauhaus / Centrillion Point, Mason's Avenue

- 5.18 04/03575 "Alterations and erection of extensions to provide a community/retail unit on part of ground floor, 100 two bedroom, 78 one bedroom, 6 three bedroom flats in the remainder of building and erection of 5 two bedroom mews houses; formation of vehicular access and provision of associated parking." **Approved** 29 Sep 2005 and implemented.

### Impact House, 2 Edridge Road

- 5.19 Impact House is currently being converted to residential units, following applications 16/04750/FUL, 16/02182/P and 15/02723/GPDO which were **granted** for change of use from offices to residential units, and external alterations.

### 4-20 Edridge Road

- 5.20 18/06069/FUL “The erection of a part 35 storey, part 11 storey and part single storey building providing 242 residential units (Use Class C3); ancillary residents’ gym; communal roof terraces and amenity spaces; new vehicular access; car parking; cycle parking; waste storage, and associated works.” **Pending Consideration.**

## 6 **CONSULTATION RESPONSES**

- 6.1 The views of the Planning Service are expressed in the MATERIAL PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS section below.

- 6.2 The following were consulted regarding the application:

### **Mayor of London (GLA) (Statutory Consultee)**

- 6.3 The GLA (referred due to the proposal being more than 30m high, including more than 150 flats, and having a total floorspace of more than 15,000 square metres) made the following comments:

- The principle of the development is strongly supported, and whilst the proposal is broadly supported in strategic planning terms, resolution of detailed matters is required for the proposal to comply with the London Plan and the draft London Plan.
- The viability information should be robustly scrutinised to ensure the maximisation of affordable housing delivery. Early and late stage review mechanisms are required. (OFFICER COMMENT: The financial viability information has been independently scrutinised, as explained in the AFFORDABLE HOUSING section of this report, and review mechanisms are required by the s.106 agreement.)
- The proposal will result in less than substantial harm to the surrounding heritage assets, which is outweighed by its public benefits. Further details on the public realm, residential amenity spaces and waste storage should be provided. (OFFICER COMMENT: The impacts on heritage assets are considered in full in the HERITAGE IMPACTS section of this report. Details of landscaping and waste are required by planning conditions)
- Further information is required to ensure compliance with the London Plan’s requirements on sustainability and surface water drainage. (OFFICER COMMENT: Further information has been provided on the proposal’s energy strategy have been provided, complying with the London Plan and Local Plan requirements and prioritising connection to the forthcoming energy network. Sustainable drainage measures have also been incorporated, with reductions in surface water run-off.)

- Further transport measures and cycle parking are required. A contribution towards public transport infrastructure is required. (OFFICER COMMENT: The amount of cycle parking has been increased to comply with the draft New London Plan, and a financial contribution is required as a s.106 contribution.)

#### **Historic England (Statutory Consultee)**

- 6.4 The proposal will have a range of impacts on the historic environment. Whilst detailed comments are not made on the full range of impacts, the proposals will encroach on views of the Grade I listed Croydon Minster from Rectory Grove causing less than substantial harm to the significance of the Minster, which must be taken into consideration as part of the overall planning balance. (OFFICER COMMENT: The impacts on heritage assets are considered in full in the HERITAGE IMPACTS section of this report)

#### **Greater London Archaeology Advisory Service (GLAAS)**

- 6.5 The planning application lies in an area of archaeological interest. No objection subject to a condition. (OFFICER COMMENT: A condition is recommended)

#### **Transport for London (TFL) (Statutory Consultee)**

- 6.6 In general, the proposal is supported subject to sustainable transport measures being secured. Concerns were raised about informal pedestrian crossing activity at the junction between Edridge Road and the A232, which was highlighted as a potential safety concern; minor concerns about cycle routes in the vicinity were raised, which could be addressed through off-site works; increased cycle parking was requested; and a sustainable transport contribution is proposed. (OFFICER COMMENT: S.106 obligations and planning conditions are recommended to secure TFL's requirements. The amount of cycle parking proposed was increased to comply with the draft New London Plan. The transport impacts are further considered in the TRANSPORT, PARKING AND HIGHWAYS section of this report.)

#### **Local Lead Flood Authority (LLFA) (Statutory Consultee)**

- 6.7 No objection subject to a pre-commencement condition requiring detailed design drawings, agreement with Thames Water, and maintenance details (OFFICER COMMENT: A condition is recommended)

#### **Designing Out Crime Officer**

- 6.8 No objection subject to Secured by Design accreditation (OFFICER COMMENT: A condition is recommended)

#### **Thames Water**

- 6.9 No objection. Informatives recommended (OFFICER COMMENT: The recommendation includes the Thames Water informatives)

### **7 LOCAL REPRESENTATION**

- 7.1 The application has been publicised by six site notices, a local press notice, and letters to neighbours. The number of representations received from neighbours,

local groups etc. in response to notification and publicity of the application were as follows:

- 7.2 No of individual responses: 19 Objecting: 19 Supporting: 0
- 7.3 All of the representations were from neighbours who have moved into the recently converted Leon House, adjacent to the site.
- 7.4 The following issues were raised in representations. Those that are material to the determination of the application, are addressed in substance in the MATERIAL PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS section of this report:

Summary of objections	Response
Principle of Development	
The development is unnecessary when not all of the flats in Leon House have sold. There is enough development in Croydon.	The site is allocated for residential development by the Croydon Local Plan, and will support the delivery of housing, in particular family sized and affordable homes in a sustainable location which is well served by local facilities and transport.
Scale and massing	
The buildings would be too tall and will make the area unattractive.	The site is located in an area suitable for tall buildings.  The proposal in terms of scale, massing and external appearance creates an acceptable transition in scale between taller buildings to the north and lower scale residential development to the south.
Daylight and sunlight	
The proposed buildings will overlook Leon House and result in loss of daylight and sunlight	Blocks A and B would be to the north of Leon House and would not harm sunlight to Leon House. A sunlight and daylight assessment was submitted which demonstrates acceptable impacts on Leon House. The proposed windows would be further from the directly opposite windows than the minimum 18m guidance in the London Housing SPG, thereby limiting loss of privacy to acceptable levels.
Noise	
The building works will be noisy and affect residents at Leon House.	The building works will be temporary, and subject to conditions to limit inconvenience to neighbours and the highway network.
Noise from the proposed green space will affect residents at Leon House.	The proposed green space is an outdoor space for residential use, with noise levels commensurate with a park or garden. The noise impact is considered acceptable.

Non-material issues	
The development will harm views of central London from the roof terrace at Leon House	The view from the roof terrace is not a designated view, and is not a material planning consideration. In any case, views will still be available from the roof terrace (to the north between blocks A and B, and unrestricted to the south).

## 8 RELEVANT PLANNING POLICIES AND GUIDANCE

8.1 In determining any planning application, the Council is required to have regard to the provisions of its Development Plan and any other material considerations. Details of the relevant policies and guidance notes are attached in Appendix 1.

### National Guidance

8.2 The National Planning Policy Framework 2019 (NPPF) and online Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) are material considerations which set out the Government's priorities for planning and a presumption in favour of sustainable development.

8.3 The following NPPF key issues are relevant to this case:

- Delivering a sufficient supply of homes
- Building a strong, competitive economy
- Ensuring the vitality of town centres
- Promoting healthy and safe communities
- Promoting sustainable transport
- Making effective use of land
- Achieving well-designed places
- Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change
- Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

### Development Plan

8.4 The Development Plan comprises the London Plan 2016 ("London Plan"), the Croydon Local Plan 2018 ("Local Plan"), and the South London Waste Plan 2012.

8.5 A replacement draft New London Plan has been subject to public consultation and Examination in Public. The draft New London Plan is not part of the Development Plan but it is a material consideration.

8.6 The relevant Development Plan policies are listed in Appendix 1.

### Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) / Document (SPD)

8.7 The relevant SPGs and/or SPDs are listed in Appendix 1.

## 9 MATERIAL PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

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

- Principle of development
- Affordable housing
- Housing tenure, types and quality
- Character and appearance
- Heritage
- Impacts on neighbours
- Impacts on the surrounding environment
- Transport, parking and highways
- Sustainable design

### **Principle of development**

- 9.2 The Local Plan supports the delivery of new homes across the borough, and identifies that at least 10,760 additional homes will be delivered on allocated sites in the Croydon Opportunity Area by 2036. The site is allocated by the Local Plan (Site Allocations 190 and 195) for new housing, indicatively for 82 to 307 units (including the conversion of Leon House, which has already taken place).
- 9.3 The site is within the Croydon Opportunity Area (“Opportunity Area”). The Opportunity Area Planning Framework (2013) encourages new homes, the revival of the high street, and improved streets and amenity spaces.
- 9.4 The site is also within Croydon Metropolitan Centre, where Local Plan Policy SP3.10 sets out a flexible approach to office, housing and retail uses.
- 9.5 Local Plan Policy SP4.5 encourages tall buildings in the Opportunity Area, subject to compliance with the Local Plan’s detailed policies and the Opportunity Area Planning Framework, which supports tall buildings on the site in principle subject to good design and any negative impacts being limited.
- 9.6 The site has good access to public transport, local shops and services within the town centre, and is therefore well placed for high density residential-led development.
- 9.7 The proposal is for three residential-led buildings of 6 to 31 storeys high, providing 357 residential units. In addition to new homes, the proposed development would replace the existing retail and business units on the site with 1,202 sqm flexible commercial floorspace (A1-A5 uses). As a result, the existing retail floorspace would be re-provided by the scheme, and there would be a loss of 720 sqm of B1(a) floorspace. The new commercial units would be located around a new public square facing the high street, which would accord with the revival of the high street and amenity spaces advocated by the Opportunity Area Planning Framework. The overall loss of B1(a) floorspace and provision of replacement retail units complies with Local Plan Policy SP3.10.
- 9.8 Local Plan Policy DM4.2 seeks to avoid overconcentration of hot food takeaways by preventing two or more adjoining units at ground floor; a planning condition is recommended limiting hot food takeaway use to one unit.

- 9.9 Local Plan Policy DM4.3 requires mixed use proposals outside of Main and Secondary Retail Frontages, but within centres, to either demonstrate that a specific end user will be occupying the ground floor unit upon completion; or provide a free fitting out of all ground floor units for the eventual end occupier to ensure that the unit is capable of occupation. A planning condition is recommended requiring details of fit-out for units which are not occupied on completion, in order to comply with Policy DM4.3.
- 9.10 The erection of a high density residential-led development, including tall buildings and a flexible mix of town centre uses at ground level is acceptable in principle, subject to compliance with the other Local Plan policies.

### **Affordable Housing**

- 9.11 The Local Plan requires the Council to seek a minimum of 30% affordable housing, but negotiate to achieve up to 50% affordable housing (subject to viability), and seek a 60:40 split between affordable rented homes and intermediate homes.
- 9.12 At pre-application stage, the Planning Committee were presented with two potential options, which had been viability tested and independently scrutinised. A lower scheme was presented, providing 294 units of which 16.8% could be affordable housing (60% rent and 40% intermediate). The Committee expressed a preference for the taller option with 372 units of which 21.5% could be affordable (60% rent and 40% intermediate).
- 9.13 Since then, officers negotiated amendments to the scheme, including reduced heritage impacts and an increase in the size of Block C (informed by the daylight and sunlight impacts considered later in this report), to maximise the amount of affordable rent units. Those amendments have also resulted in a significant increase in affordable housing to 30% (by habitable room) or 98 units, of which 64 would be intermediate homes and 34 would be London Affordable Rent (a low cost form of affordable rent, supported by the Mayor of London).
- 9.14 The tenure split is informed by the sizes of the buildings, with Block C being 100% affordable rent, and the remainder of the affordable housing provided as intermediate units within Block B. The result would be a well-planned mix of housing tenures.
- 9.15 The application was subject to a viability appraisal at pre-application and application stage, which were scrutinised independently by Gerald Eve for the Council. The results of the viability appraisal is that there would be a viability deficit, and it would not be viable to provide an increased amount of affordable housing.
- 9.16 The Mayor of London's Affordable Housing and Viability SPG states that where developments meet or exceed 35% affordable housing without public subsidy (subject to the tenure mix being to the satisfaction of both the LPA and GLA), such schemes can follow the 'fast track route', whereby they are not required to submit viability information and will only be subject to an early viability review. Public subsidy is available for developments providing at least 35% affordable housing, with the amount of subsidy significantly increased for development with more than 40% affordable housing. The development was tested to determine whether the public subsidy would improve viability, but due to the significant viability deficit, increased affordable housing (even with grant funding) was found to be unviable.

- 9.17 The proposed affordable housing is therefore accepted as no additional affordable housing could be viably provided, with early stage and late stage review mechanisms recommended in the s.106 agreement to capture any changes (for example, increases in house prices) which may result in increased affordable housing provision.

## **Housing Tenure, Types and Quality**

### Housing Mix

- 9.18 Policy DM1 requires appropriate housing choice for sustainable communities and within central areas of high public transport accessibility, states that at least 20% of units should have three or more bedrooms, although some of those homes can be provided as 2 bedroom 4 person homes during the first three years of the Local Plan subject to viability. The strategic borough wide target is 30% 3-bedroom units.
- 9.19 As outlined by the table below, 7% of units would have 3+ bedrooms. The viability appraisal demonstrates that a reduction in units to facilitate an increase in the proportion of 3 bedroom homes would not be financially viable and given that 53.8% of the units would accommodate 4 or more people, the proposal would exceed the requirement of Policy DM1. Furthermore, 38.2% of the London Affordable Rent units in Block C would have 3 or more bedrooms in line with the priority needs for family sized homes and affordable rent units.

1 bedroom (1 person)	1 bedroom (2 person)	2 bedroom (3 person)	2 bedroom (4 person)	3 bedroom (4+ person)	4 bedroom (5+ person)
4	152	9	167	24	1
1.1%	42.6%	2.5%	46.7%	6.7%	0.3%

### Housing Density

- 9.20 London Plan Policy 3.2 states that development should optimise housing output for different types of location within the relevant density range shown in Table 3.2. Table 3.2 sets out an indicative 650–1,100 habitable rooms per hectare for sites in central settings with high Public Transport Accessibility Levels.
- 9.21 The proposed density is 1,433 habitable rooms per hectare (excluding Leon House), which exceeds the guidance range and would make efficient use of an urban site. Sites of higher densities are subject to increased scrutiny to ensure that symptoms of overdevelopment are avoided and this has been fully assessed by both Council and GLA officers, finding the scheme acceptable. See the CHARACTER AND APPEARANCE and IMPACTS ON NEIGHBOURS sections later in this report for further detail.

### Quality of Accommodation

- 9.22 Policy SP2.8 of the Croydon Local Plan 2018 indicates that housing should cater for residents' changing needs over their lifetime and contribute to creating sustainable communities. Individual units should meet the standards set out in the London Housing SPG and Nationally Described Space Standards.

- 9.23 The proposed blocks would have legible and well-designed entrances, with overlooked and attractive frontages. Blocks A and B would face High Street and Edridge Road respectively, and Block B would have a generous colonnade at the ground levels, with a double height entrance space which would be clearly visible from the street. Internally, the communal spaces would have sensible layouts, generous entrances, wide corridors, and spaces for internal letterboxes. Within the taller blocks (A and B), no flat would be more than 8m from the nearest lift. All of the blocks would have no more than 7 units per corridor, and Block C (the affordable rent block) would have natural light to the corridors and staircases. There would be easy access for residents to bin stores and cycle storage, and level access to the loading bay on Edridge Road for deliveries.
- 9.24 All units would comply with the Nationally Described Space Standards, with sensible layouts, storage space and well-proportioned rooms. The majority would be dual aspect. There would be some single aspect units, which would mostly be one-bedroom flats, and all of which would be wider than they are deep thereby allowing good access to natural light. No north facing single aspect units are proposed.
- 9.25 A daylighting assessment was undertaken for a sample of the proposed units on the lower floors of the building (up to the 7<sup>th</sup> floor), demonstrating that that the majority of rooms tested (approximately 82%) would benefit from high daylight levels in accordance or in exceedance of BRE guidelines on Average Daylight Factor targets. All of the rooms tested achieve more than 50% of the BRE Average Daylight Factor targets.
- 9.26 Given the good levels of internal daylight through the development and the recognised constraints for developments such as this in achieving high internal sunlight levels, the daylight and sunlight levels afforded to future occupiers of the development would be acceptable.
- 9.27 A noise assessment was submitted, considering internal noise limits. The proposed double glazing would be sufficient to avoid unacceptable internal noise from plant or traffic, and no further mitigation is required.
- 9.28 The proposed units would also experience good levels of privacy, with all windows being at least 22.2m from the directly opposite windows, and the closest distance between facing balconies at Blocks A and B of 21.2m. Due to the positioning of the blocks, the spaces between them, and the wide layouts of the single aspect units, all units would benefit from acceptable levels of privacy and outlook.

#### Accessible Housing

- 9.29 The site has a substantial level change which poses potential challenges for accessibility. As a result the proposal has been designed on two levels. Block A, with its residential units and commercial units, would be at the High Street Level (Level 00), enabling completely level access to High Street, the residential units, the commercial units, and the public square.
- 9.30 Blocks B and C, and the communal garden, would be at the level of Edridge Road (Level 02), which is approximately 7m or 2 storeys higher than high street. There would again be level access from Edridge Road, throughout the communal garden and to the entrances to Blocks B and C. There would also be level access to a

second entrance at Block A, which would be visible from Edridge Road via a generous 2-storey colonnade at the base of Block B, enabling those residents level access to the communal spaces and Edridge Road.

- 9.31 All of the communal lobbies and entrances to homes would be step free with, with all of the buildings having lifts.
- 9.32 13% of the proposed units are designed to be accessible 'wheelchair user' dwellings, which exceeds the Local Plan requirement for at least 10% of new homes to comply with Building Regulation Part M4(3) (Wheelchair User Dwellings). There would be some duplex units with internal staircases (in Blocks B and C), however all units would have level entrances. Planning conditions are recommended securing compliance with Parts M4(2) and M4(3) of the Building Regulations. The site offers level access routes to wheelchair accessible public transport (including buses, trams and trains), therefore wheelchair users would not be wholly car dependent. Twenty accessible parking spaces are proposed at level 01, which will be allocated to future occupiers who are blue badge permit holders.

#### Outdoor Amenity Space and Playspace

- 9.33 All units are required to have access to private and communal amenity space which meets the requirements of the London Housing SPG in terms of size.
- 9.34 In Block A, all units up to 26<sup>th</sup> floor would have a private terrace, balcony or winter garden. At the 27<sup>th</sup> to 30<sup>th</sup> floors, two units on each floor would have no separate outdoor space. Those units would be 2 bedroom 4 person flats, and at 89sqm they would each provide 19sqm of additional internal space instead of private outdoor space (in excess of the minimum floorspace requirement of 70sqm). Those units would be dual aspect with almost fully glazed elevations, allowing extensive views over London, and providing very high levels of daylight and internal amenity.
- 9.35 In Blocks B and C, all units would have a private garden, roof terrace or balcony.
- 9.36 A substantial amount of communal amenity space is also proposed, arranged as a 3,618 sqm communal landscaped garden (just over 10sqm per home), in addition to 482 sqm of additional pedestrian areas, and a 780 sqm public square adjacent to High Street. 1,149 sqm of play space is proposed within the communal garden, in accordance with the Mayor of London's Play and Informal Recreation SPG.
- 9.37 The amenity spaces would face east and west, and therefore various areas will receive direct sunlight throughout the day. A sunlight test was carried out for those spaces. At least 2 hours of sunlight is likely to be achieved on 98.8% of the public square on 21<sup>st</sup> June each year, and 40.5% on 21<sup>st</sup> March (with the sunniest area outside the proposed commercial units, and therefore suitable for outdoor seating). The communal garden was also tested, and at least 2 hours of sunlight is likely to be achieved on 94% of its area on 21<sup>st</sup> June each year, and 57.4% on 21<sup>st</sup> March. In addition to being attractively landscaped, the communal spaces will therefore also benefit from direct sunlight.

#### Housing Tenure, Types and Quality Summary

- 9.38 Overall, the proposed development would provide well-designed homes which would offer a sense of arrival and place of retreat, in line with the aspirations of the London Housing SPG. The homes themselves would offer each resident a

combination of good outlook, privacy, sunlight and daylight, internal spaces (with over-sized units in some cases), private amenity spaces, and sensible internal layouts. There would also be well-designed communal landscaped gardens and playspace. Overall, the proposed units would all offer an acceptable standard of accommodation.

## Character and Appearance

### Layout

- 9.39 The site slopes dramatically, with a level change of 7m from east to west and includes a partially underground car park (which formerly served the offices at Leon House). To address the site's topography and constraints, the proposed is broadly arranged in two parts; mixed use "public facing" buildings on the lower part of the site facing High Street; and residential buildings and communal gardens on the upper part of the site adjacent to Edridge Road.



### *Proposed Section through level change*

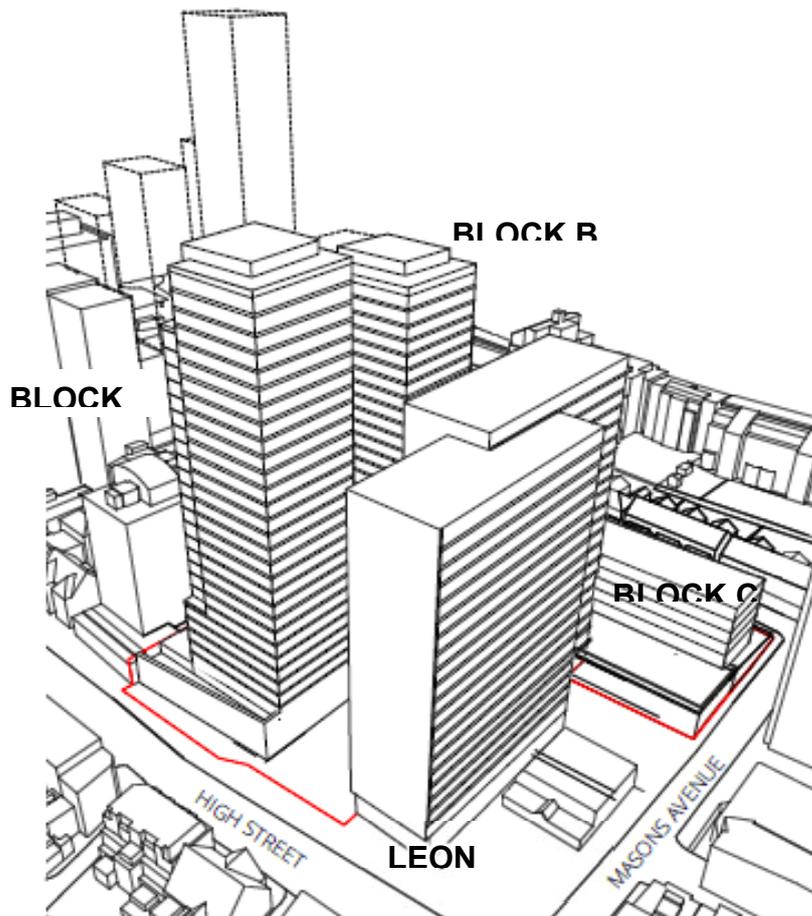
- 9.40 Block A would be a 31 storey mixed use tower, set back from High Street behind a 2 storey podium. At ground level there would be new flexible commercial units with active frontages facing High Street, and a residential entrance for the homes above. Block A would be attached to the existing (partially underground) car park, which would be wrapped with a two storey frontage incorporating two commercial units. Those units would face a new 780 sqm pedestrianised public square, giving it an active frontage. The northern side of the square, which would receive the most sunlight, would be adjacent to the commercial units and would be suitable for outdoor seating, and the more sheltered southern side would continue to provide access for Leon House which provides natural surveillance.
- 9.41 The residential units at Block A would be primarily served by a new entrance onto High Street. There would be a second entrance at second floor giving access to the communal amenity space (which is at the same ground level as Edridge Road).
- 9.42 The entrances to Blocks B and C would be also located at the upper level of the site. Block B would be a 20 storey tower, and Block C would be a 6 storey building.
- 9.43 Block B would be located centrally within the site, with a double storey colonnade entrance providing good visibility and legibility when approached from Edridge Road. The colonnade entrance would assist with providing an active frontage to the building, and the residential units at ground floor would be duplex units with gardens on the west elevation to provide their residents with good levels of privacy.

- 9.44 Block C would be located parallel to Edridge Road, behind front gardens. Again, all of the ground floor units would be duplex with private garden spaces. There would be a communal entrance to the upper floors, which would face Edridge Road and provide a welcoming and well-designed entrance.
- 9.45 Between Block B (to the north of the site), and Leon House and Block C (to the south), there would be a long east-to-west communal garden, offering long views towards High Street. The communal gardens would provide various spaces, including a large well overlooked central space, and smaller spaces behind the buildings, which would be less public but still overlooked by residential windows.
- 9.46 Overall, the site layout would relate well to the street layout on High Street, introducing a new public square and good opportunities for passive surveillance. The communal gardens would provide generous spaces between the existing and proposed buildings, and the development's layout would relate well to the public facing frontages on the busy High Street, and the quieter residential environment on Edridge Road. The layout would providing a high quality environment whilst maximising the delivery of housing on the site.

#### Height, Scale and Massing

- 9.47 The site is in the 'Edge Area' of the Croydon Opportunity Area, where Local Plan Policy DM38 allows tall buildings as long as negative impacts on sensitive locations are limited, and they are of high quality form, height, and design.
- 9.48 The surrounding buildings vary wildly in height, from the two storey buildings on Edridge Road (to the rear), to the 21 storey Leon House. Planning permission has been granted for buildings up to 35 storeys at the former Taberner House site, and 25 storeys at Wandle Road Car Park (which are both under construction).
- 9.49 The site is described in the Croydon Opportunity Area Framework as part of a cluster of tall buildings around the Croydon Flyover. Officers and the Place Review Panel are of the view that the Croydon Flyover presents a natural delineation between higher density development to the north and lower densities to the south, and the proposed heights are lower than the Taberner House development to reflect a transition.
- 9.50 In order to respond to the site's context, a stepped approach to the distribution of massing is proposed.
- 9.51 To the north of the site, two point blocks (A and B) are proposed, along with a mansion block style building (Block C) at the south east corner of the site.
- 9.52 Block A would be a 31 storey building, with a 2 storey podium facing High Street.
- 9.53 Block B would be 20 storeys, and therefore a similar height to the 21 storey Leon House. Block B would be set back from Edridge Road by 25-28m, and in several surrounding views would be substantially obscured by Leon House and Block A. It would be very visible in views from the north along Edridge Road, although future development on Edridge Road (at 4-20 Edridge Road, and the Grosvenor House car park) may reduce the visibility of Block B from the nearby streets.

- 9.54 Block C would be 5-6 storeys high and located on the corner of Mason's Avenue and Edridge Road. Its massing would mediate between the 2 storey buildings to the east and the 21 storey Leon House to the west.



*Massing of the proposed blocks*

- 9.55 The 2 storey podium facing High Street would reflect the massing of the 2-storey buildings to the north, to transition well between the human scale development at ground level, and the overall height. The podium would wrap around the new public square, giving a consistent and well-designed frontage, and neatly addressing the level change across the site.
- 9.56 Blocks A and B would be differentiated in height by approximately 9 storeys (taking the site's 2-storey level change into account), which would allow Block A to read as a focal point (appropriate to its mix of commercial and residential uses, and public facing High Street setting). The lower height of Block B would reflect the aspiration to balance intensification with a transition to lower heights. It would also result in an appropriately scaled residential environment surrounding the central communal gardens.
- 9.57 The point block typology used for Blocks A and B would result in a high density development whilst allowing for generous amenity space at ground level, and providing sufficient "breathing space" between buildings to avoid visual coalescence and offer residents good access to daylight, sunlight and outlook.
- 9.58 To the south of the site are a 2-storey house on Mason's Avenue, adjacent to the 13 storey Centrillion Point. Block C would be located to the east of Leon House, and

at 5-6 storeys it would sensitively mediate between the various scales and designs of buildings around it. In particular, the 2-storey maisonettes on the lower floors would reflect the scale of the two storey houses opposite.

- 9.59 Verified views were provided with the application, explaining the visual impact of the proposal on its wider surroundings. The verified views were provided for both the existing skyline, and including developments which have been approved or are under consideration. The difference in height between Blocks A and B would successfully avoid visual coalescence, and the taller nature of Block A would avoid a squat appearance (when viewed alongside Leon House and Block B). The arrangement of buildings across the site would also allow some “breathing space” between the development and the proposal at 4-20 Edridge Road, resulting in a coherent and varied skyline which steps down from the central area of the Croydon Opportunity Area to the lower density development in the south. As a result, the proposal would contribute positively to Croydon’s skyline.
- 9.60 There is a designated view of the Croydon Town Hall Clock Tower along North End, which looks towards the site. The proposal would not be harmful to the designated view.
- 9.61 The heights of the buildings were also informed by the heritage impacts (discussed further in the HERITAGE section of this report). In terms of the townscape and public realm impacts, the proposed height, scale and massing would successfully introduce a high density residential development to the site, contributing positively to the overall skyline and respecting the site’s varied surroundings.

#### Articulation, Materials and Detailing

- 9.62 The site is heavily dominated by the appearance of Leon House, which is a large monolithic block, with attractive and well-articulated detailing but a poor relationship to its surroundings. As the buildings would be on the same site as Leon House, they would be closely related, and their detailed design is influenced by the positive aspects of Leon House whilst seeking to improve upon the relationship with the pedestrian environment. The architectural language of the buildings is informed by the simple, grid-like design of Leon House, but with a particular focus on the building entrances and pedestrian environment.
- 9.63 The detailed design of the buildings and architectural approach is led by the use of brick as a high quality and attractive material which is the predominant building material on the surrounding streets.
- 9.64 The 2 storey plinth of Block A and the attached commercial units reflects the scale of the lower buildings on High Street and Edridge Road. The lower floors of Block A would use contrasting brick to frame large square shopfront openings, providing an active frontage onto the new pedestrian square and establishing a clearly expressed pedestrian scale “base” to the building.
- 9.65 Block A would be stepped in at 7<sup>th</sup> floor level to give it a slender appearance, with further steps higher up. There would be a mix of recessed and projecting balconies, with one vertical drop of projecting balconies on each of the “public facing” west and south elevations, and most of the balconies on the high street elevation being recessed resulting in a tidy appearance. There would be further projecting balconies on the east elevation, facing Block B, and none on the north elevation. The top 5

storeys and the roof overrun would be treated in glass curtain walling on the north elevation, with recessed panels vertically linking the windows on the top 4 floors to create a well-articulated and elegant top to the building.



*Block A, with 2 storey plinth and public square*



*Block B with contrasting 2-storey colonnade entrance*

- 9.66 The design language of the expressed 2-storey base would be carried through to Blocks B. The lowest two storeys would use contrasting brick, and to enliven the residential frontage (and provide an attractive route through the site towards Block A) a double height colonnade is proposed. Block B would have simpler elevations, as a wholly residential block with no street frontage. There would be projecting balconies on the west, south and east elevations, and recessed panels would vertically link the windows on the top 4 floors, echoing the detailing of Block A.
- 9.67 Block C would be a mansion block style building, with 2 storey maisonettes on the lower floors and flats above. Again, the lower two storeys would be treated in contrasting brick with the entrances to the maisonettes providing active frontages and front gardens, reflecting the residential scale and character of the houses on Edridge Road. There would be windows on all elevations, with a mixture of inset and projecting balconies enlivening the elevations. The top storey would be

recessed to allow daylight and sunlight penetration to the houses opposite, and resulting in a simply articulated form, again with a “top, middle and bottom” reflecting the design approach to the other blocks albeit within a different typology.



*Block C (with Block B and Leon House in the background)*

- 9.68 The buildings would be simply articulated, with deep window reveals and recessed brick panels providing visual interest whilst responding well to the grid like design of Leon House. Particular attention has been paid to the tops of the buildings (most visible in longer views) and their bases (which have the greatest impact on the pedestrian experience). In order to ensure that the proposed openings and the details of their reveals, including depth, headers and sills, provide sufficiently rich modelling and texture to the buildings’ facades, a condition is recommended securing further design detailing.
- 9.69 The palette of bricks proposed is a mixture of buff, red and brown bricks, which would introduce warmth and contrast, whilst complementing the muted grey concrete of Leon House. In particular, in longer views, the contrast between the reddish brown brick at Block B, and the buff brick at Block A will avoid visual coalescence, and will maintain the prominence of Block A as the public facing, taller building, and allow Block B to read as a darker, background building. The development under construction at Wandle Road car park is a red brick tower, and in order to contribute to a consistent and co-ordinated palette of materials across the skyline, a more muted or variegated red brick is appropriate for Block B. Given the simple nature of the elevations, the texture, tone, bond and mortar used will be key to achieving successful high quality design (similar to how the varied tones and

textures of the concrete at Leon House contribute significantly to its architectural merit) . The exact materials and detailing are therefore recommended to be secured by planning conditions, including sample panels and detailed drawings.

- 9.70 The articulation, materials and detailing of the proposed buildings would successfully mediate between the varied heights and typologies of the surrounding buildings. The balance of consistent design features running through the blocks (including the design approach to the 2 storey “base” of each building, the proportions of the openings, and the shared materials) would allow each building its own identity whilst introducing a “family” of buildings as part of a coherent residential environment.
- 9.71 The buildings include varied balcony types, with recessed balconies, winter gardens and projecting balconies. A balcony study was submitted with the application, demonstrating how variations across the balcony types, with railings of varied density and depth across the buildings will provide visual interest, movement and a degree of privacy to the proposed balconies and railings. There would also be metalwork at ground level, with entrance doors and discreetly positioned gates and entrances to bin, cycle and service areas. To ensure a well-designed environment with robust and easily maintained materials, a condition is recommended to secure design details (including physical models and/or samples where appropriate).
- 9.72 Subject to the recommended conditions, the proposed buildings would result in a high quality design which contributes positively to the skyline and surrounding townscape, provides a set of high quality environments, reflects the materiality and richness of detailing within its local context, and successfully balance intensification with high quality active frontages and pedestrian design features. The development would therefore result in a high quality environment which contribute positively to the character and appearance of its setting.

#### Designing Out Crime

- 9.73 The proposal was considered by the Metropolitan Police Service’s Designing Out Crime Officer who advised that the site is in a high crime area, and identified potential concerns which will require additional detail to be provided (for example, CCTV, and compartmentalisation of cycle storage spaces), which could be addressed through planning conditions. In order to ensure a safe, inclusive and accessible development where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life, Secured by Design accreditation is recommended to be secured by a planning condition.

#### Public Realm and Landscaping

- 9.74 The proposed development includes two substantial areas of public realm. The proposed public square adjacent to High Street would be a new public space surrounded by commercial units. The space would be landscaped with paving, planting and trees, and would receive good levels of sunlight; in particular in the late afternoon from the west.



*Landscaping layout, with public square at lower level, and gardens at upper level*

- 9.75 The communal gardens at the upper level would introduce several new trees, and would be separated into different areas. The large central area would allow views through the site, and would be soft landscaped with paths, seating areas and planting. To the rear of Block C there would be a more formal play area, and to the north of Block A would be a smaller residents' garden. The communal gardens and new trees would enhance the setting of the buildings and the appearance of the public realm when viewed from Edridge Road and High Street.
- 9.76 Transport for London raised concerns about the potential visual impact of parking on Edridge Road. As the proposal would result in an improvement to the appearance of Edridge Road, including substantial landscaping, and front gardens to the maisonettes at Block C, officers are of the view that the overall impact would be an improvement to the street scene on Edridge Road.
- 9.77 Provisions for further improvements to the surrounding public realm on High Street are to be included in the s.106 agreement and recommended conditions.
- 9.78 A condition is recommended to ensure that the details of the landscaping (planting species, materials, furniture, etc.) result in high quality landscape design.
- 9.79 No existing trees would be affected, but new trees and soft landscaping are proposed which would result in an improvement to biodiversity. The proposed trees would be within the site boundary and would not create a maintenance liability for the Council. The site does not have biodiversity importance, and a condition is recommended requiring biodiversity gains within the proposed development.

#### Public Art

- 9.80 Local Plan Policy DM14 requires the inclusion of public art, which is to be secured by a planning condition.

#### **Heritage**

- 9.81 The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires (at section 66) with respect to listed buildings, that special regard is paid to the

desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possess. With regard to conservation areas (at section 72), it requires special attention to be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing their character or appearance.

- 9.82 The NPPF places strong emphasis on the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets, and affords great weight to the asset's conservation. At paragraph 193 it states that:

*“great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be)... irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm”*

- 9.83 Any harm to a designated heritage asset, including from development within its setting requires “clear and convincing justification” (paragraph 194), with less than substantial harm weighed against the public benefits delivered by the proposed development (paragraph 196).
- 9.84 Policy DM18 of the Local Plan permits development affecting heritage assets where the significance of the asset is preserved or enhanced. Policy SP4 requires developments to respect and enhance heritage assets, and Policy DM15 permits tall buildings which relate positively to nearby heritage assets.
- 9.85 The setting of a building is usually considered to be its immediate vicinity, however it has been defined as ‘the surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced’ (The Setting of Heritage Assets, English Heritage, 2011) and therefore can also include views of the building and its positioning within the wider townscape.
- 9.86 The site is not within a Conservation Area and there are no designated heritage assets either on or immediately adjacent to the site. However, due to its height, design and prominence, it would interact with views of a nearby heritage assets.
- 9.87 A heritage assessment was submitted with the application, which comprehensively assessed the impacts of the proposal on a full range of nearby heritage assets. The assessment was accompanied by verified views which were agreed with Council officers at pre-application stage. The proposal was considered by the Council's Conservation Officer and Historic England, who are of the view that the following heritage assets would be negatively affected.

### Croydon Minster

- 9.88 The Minster is a Grade I listed building of extremely high historic interest and community value, being the medieval parish church for Croydon. It marks the historic core of the old town and has strong associations with the Archbishop of Canterbury and George Gilbert Scott who was responsible for its extensive rebuilding after a fire in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. The Minster is prominent in its locality, and in key long views. There are two main views where the full elevation of the tower can be appreciated. One is from Rectory Grove which is a residential street laid out specifically to align with the Minster and forms an important part of the Minster' setting. The view along Rectory Grove allows the full tower elevation and an uninterrupted silhouette to be appreciated. The view is identified as a key view in the Conservation Area Appraisal and contributes to the setting of the listed building.

- 9.89 The presence of existing development (including the existing Leon House and Ryland House) and consented development (Wandle Road Car Park) within the Rectory Grove view is acknowledged. The proposed development will also be visible, and will detract from the setting of the Minster by introducing further development in close proximity to the tower in that view.
- 9.90 The heights of the proposed towers (Blocks A and B) were amended through pre-application discussion to minimise direct impacts on the silhouette of the Minster. In the Rectory Grove views, Block B (20 storeys) would appear closest to the Minster, with the taller Block A (31 storeys) further away, avoiding visual coalescence and minimising visual crowding. The proposed towers would increase in height as they step away from the Minster, and are set lower and further away than the existing Wandle Road Car Park consent.



*View of Croydon Minster along Rectory Grove*

- 9.91 The proposal would cause less than substantial harm to the setting of Croydon Minster.

#### Central Croydon Conservation Area

- 9.92 Central Croydon Conservation Area is the commercial and civic heart of Croydon. Its street layout is largely medieval in origin and it retains much of its plan form and historic fabric. Surrey Street forms an important market street with buildings from the 17<sup>th</sup>, 18<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. North End and the High Street form part of an historic route with Roman origins. Key views are identified along its length including a designated view of the Town Hall clock tower (Grade II listed).
- 9.93 Verified Views demonstrate that the impact of the proposal on views from North End are minimal and are not of significant concern.
- 9.94 Leon House is already visible in views along Surrey Street to the south. The proposed development will result in a much greater level of development, the scale of which is dominant in relation to the surrounding historic fabric and thus detracts from the setting of the conservation area.

9.95 The proposed is considered to cause less than substantial harm to the setting of the Central Croydon Conservation Area.

#### Wrencote

9.96 Wrencote is a Grade II\* listed building on the High Street in close proximity to the site. Its relationship with the historic north-south route survives, however it is now largely surrounded by modern development of much greater scale which detracts from its setting.

9.97 The provision of a podium to Block A is welcomed to ensure a human-scale element to the streetscape which relates to the scale of Wrencote. The height of Block A at 31 storeys however is of a scale much greater the existing modern context to Wrencote and further detracts from its setting.

9.98 The proposed is considered to cause less than substantial harm to the setting of Wrencote.

#### Harm and Public Benefits

9.99 No direct harm to the fabric of any heritage assets would occur as a result of the proposal, however it would have a detrimental impact on the settings of three key heritage assets as set out above.

9.100 As well as concluding that the scheme causes “less than substantial harm”, alternatives to the scheme have been considered. At pre-application stage, the Planning Committee reviewed a lower scheme (Block A at 21 storeys and Block B at 20 storeys) which could provide a reduced amount of affordable housing. The harm caused by a taller scheme (Block A at 28 storeys and Block B at 23 storeys) was considered to be justified by the additional affordable housing. Since then, officers have worked with the developer to further increase the amount of affordable housing, and the building heights were amended to remove 3 storeys from the proposed Block B to 20 storeys and increase Block A by 3, to 31 storeys. The result is that the lower height of Block B minimises the impact on views of the Minster, with Block A still appearing lower than the approved Wandle Road Car Park scheme in the Rectory Grove views.

9.101 It is possible that a much smaller development (or no development) may avoid harm to heritage assets, but that would not deliver the scheme’s benefits in terms of housing, and specifically, affordable housing. Officers are of the view that the benefits of the proposal could not be achieved, without that level of harm. Those benefits, accompanied by the minimisation of the accompanying harm, offer clear and convincing justification for the harm to heritage assets identified above.

9.102 Having concluded that the scheme gives rise to “less than substantial harm” it is necessary to weigh that harm against the public benefits. As set out above, a reduced scheme in the various scenarios described above would be less beneficial in terms of affordable housing delivery. Therefore, the public benefits weighed against the scheme are as follows:

- the delivery of a significant quantum of housing, exceeding the site allocation and contributing positively to the borough’s housing stock; and

- a significant proportion of affordable housing, including 34 units at London Affordable Rent; and
- the opportunity to make use of land which is currently underutilised; and
- delivery of improved public realm in the form of a new public square, and publicly accessible communal gardens.

9.103 Officers are of the view that those public benefits would outweigh the harm caused to the various heritage assets. Officers are satisfied that the approach adopted by the applicant in terms of design, heritage and townscape is sound and can be supported.

9.104 The planning application lies in an area of archaeological interest. A planning condition is recommended requiring a written scheme of investigation to safeguard the archaeological interest on the site.

### **Impacts on Neighbours: Daylight and Sunlight Impacts**

9.105 A sunlight and daylight assessment was submitted with the application. It considers the impacts of the proposed development on the adjacent residential neighbours in accordance with the 2011 Building Research Establishment (BRE) guidelines. The neighbouring residential properties facing the site were tested for daylight impacts. Those residential windows which were also within 90 degrees of south (i.e. those receiving sunlight) were also tested for sunlight impacts.

#### BRE Guidance: Daylight to existing buildings

9.106 The BRE Guidelines stipulate that the diffuse daylighting of the existing building may be adversely affected if either:

- the vertical sky component (VSC) measured at the centre of an existing main window is less than 27%, and less than 0.8 times its former value (or reduced by more than 20%), known as “the VSC test” or
- the area of the working plane in a room which can receive direct skylight is reduced to less than 0.8 times its former value known as the “daylight distribution” test.

#### BRE Guidance: Sunlight to existing buildings

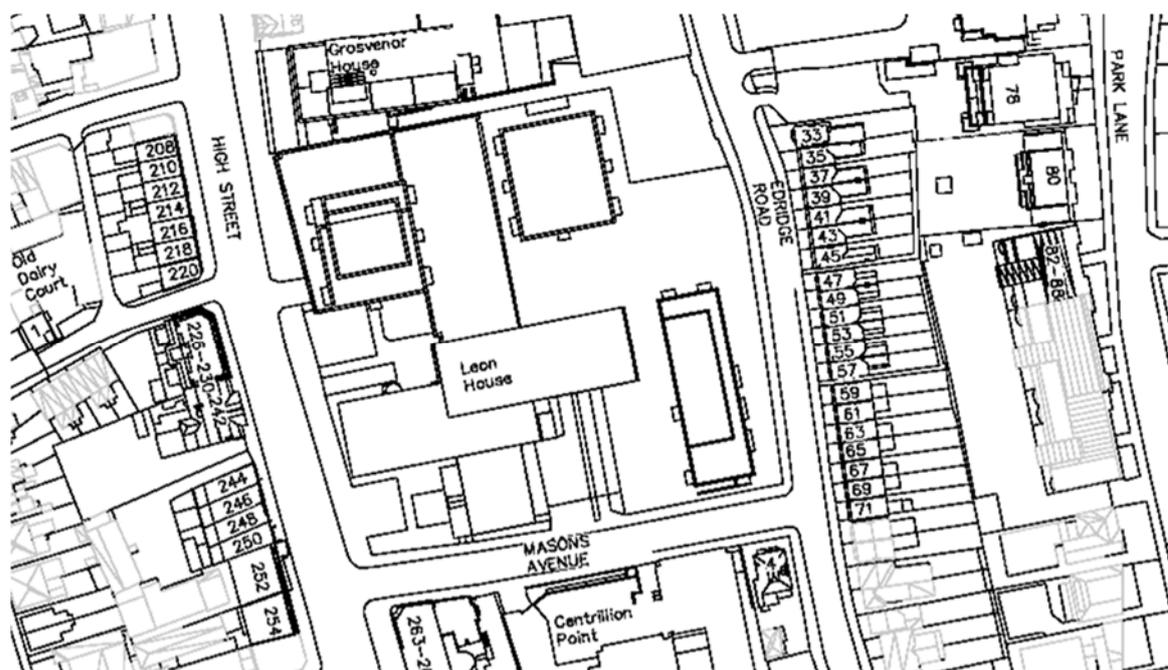
9.107 The BRE Guidelines stipulate that the sunlight of an existing window may be adversely affected if the centre of the window:

- receives less than 25% of annual probable sunlight hours (APSH), or less than 5% of annual winter probable sunlight hours between 21 September and 21 March (WPSH); and
- receives less than 0.8 times its former sunlight hours (or a 20% reduction) during either period; and
- has a reduction in sunlight received over the whole year greater than 4% of annual probable sunlight hours.

9.108 If one of the above tests is met, the dwelling is not considered to be adversely affected.

## Applying the BRE Guidance

9.109 The following diagram identifies the neighbouring properties tested for sunlight and daylight.



*Diagram showing locations of neighbouring properties*

9.110 The BRE guidelines state that the “planning authority may wish to use different target values. For example, in a historic city centre, or in an area with modern high rise buildings, a higher degree of obstruction may be unavoidable.”

9.111 Although BRE compliance would result in no adverse impact, limited impacts to neighbours may still be acceptable if they maintain acceptable living conditions overall.

9.112 With regard to daylight, given the site’s built up context, officers have described reductions in vertical sky component or daylight distribution which will still achieve at least 0.6 times the former value, as noticeable, but “minor” reductions in the following assessment. Officers have described reductions in sunlight hours which still achieve at least 15% of annual probable sunlight hours, or 0.6 times the former sunlight hours, as noticeable but “minor” impacts which still maintain adequate sunlight.

### 208-220 High Street

9.113 208-220 High Street is a row of similar buildings on the west side of High Street. There are commercial properties at ground floor, with residential units on the first, second and third floors above.

9.114 At 208-220 High Street, no rooms would be affected by loss of sunlight. 20 rooms facing the site were tested for loss of daylight. 3 of those rooms would comply with the BRE guidelines (achieving at least 0.8 times their former daylight distribution value), meaning the reduction will not be noticeable to the building’s occupants. A further 16 rooms would achieve between 0.6 and 0.8 times their former daylight distribution value which means there would be a noticeable, but minor reduction in

daylight. Given the urban context of the site, the minor nature of the daylight reductions, and that those rooms would not experience loss of sunlight, the impact on living conditions at those properties is considered acceptable. The remaining second floor room at no.220 would achieve 0.57 times its former value, which is more significant. However, that is a dual aspect room with a south east facing window providing direct sunlight (and there is a further south facing window to another room at the second floor), therefore following the development, that room would still offer acceptable living conditions.

- 9.115 The daylight and sunlight impact on the residents at 208-220 High Street would overall be limited, and would retain acceptable living conditions for residents.

#### 1 Old Dairy Court

- 9.116 1 Old Dairy Court is a two storey home to the west of High Street. 3 potentially affected rooms were tested for daylight, none of which would experience noticeable reductions. There would also be no noticeable impact on sunlight. The development would therefore not harm daylight and sunlight at 1 Old Dairy Court.

#### 226-230 High Street

- 9.117 226-230 High Street is a four storey building on the west side of High Street, with commercial properties at ground floor and residential units above.
- 9.118 11 out of 14 rooms tested would not experience noticeable reductions in daylight. The 3 remaining rooms would achieve between 0.71 and 0.75 times their former daylight distribution value which means there would be a noticeable, but minor reduction in daylight. There would also be no noticeable impact on sunlight. The impacts on daylight and sunlight overall at 226-230 High Street would be very minor, and would retain acceptable living conditions for residents.

#### 244-250 High Street

- 9.119 244-250 High Street is a row of three storey buildings with commercial uses at ground floor level, and residential accommodation above.
- 9.120 3 out of 8 rooms tested would not experience noticeable reductions in daylight. The 5 remaining rooms would achieve between 0.66 and 0.79 times their former daylight distribution value which means there would be a noticeable, but minor reduction in daylight. There would also be no noticeable impact on sunlight. The impacts on daylight and sunlight overall at 244-250 High Street would therefore be minor, and acceptable living conditions for residents would be retained.

#### 263-265 High Street

- 9.121 263-265 High Street are two storey buildings on the east side of High Street (to the south of Leon House) with commercial uses at ground floor level, and residential accommodation at first floor.
- 9.122 All of the windows and rooms tested adhere to the BRE guidelines, and as a result there would be no noticeable impact on either sunlight or daylight for existing residents.

### Centrillion Point

- 9.123 Centrillion Point is 13 storey block of flats on the south side of Mason's Avenue. The lowest four floors were tested for daylight. 65 out of the 67 rooms tested would not experience noticeable reductions in daylight, with the 2 remaining rooms achieving between 0.66 and 0.79 times their former daylight distribution value, which are considered minor impacts. All of the rooms on the third and fourth floor level would adhere to the BRE guidelines, and it follows that all of the rooms on the floors above would also comply. Furthermore, there would be no noticeable impact on sunlight (as the affected rooms all face north).
- 9.124 The impacts on daylight and sunlight overall at Centrillion Point would therefore be very minor, and acceptable living conditions for residents would be retained.

### Edridge Road

- 9.125 33 to 71 Edridge Road is a row of two storey residential houses on the east side of Edridge Road.
- 9.126 33-39 Edridge Road will adhere to the BRE guidelines for daylight and sunlight and therefore the residents of those houses will not be noticeably affected.
- 9.127 41-45 Edridge Road will comply with the BRE guidelines for daylight. The rear elevation rooms, and the front elevation upstairs rooms will also comply with the guidelines for sunlight, but the ground floor rooms on the front elevations will experience noticeable reductions in sunlight. Those rooms will achieve 17 to 24% of annual probable sunlight hours (against a target of 25%) and 0.61 to 0.68 times their former annual probable sunlight hours (against a target of 0.8). The reduction in sunlight is considered minor, given the site's urban location, and due to the limited impacts combined with no noticeable reductions in daylight, acceptable living conditions would be maintained.
- 9.128 The seven houses at 47-59 Edridge Road directly face the proposed (6 storey) Block C, and will therefore be more affected than their neighbours. Block C has however been deliberately designed with a set-back top storey, and significantly set back from the street, to seek to minimise the sunlight and daylight impacts to its neighbours
- 9.129 The windows on the front elevations of 47-59 Edridge Road will achieve between 0.41 and 0.6 times their former daylight distribution values, which is a significant reduction. It is noted that where rooms fall below the BRE guidelines, the existing daylight distribution levels show that the majority of rooms currently receive between 92-100% daylight, i.e. they are almost fully lit. This is uncharacteristic for an inner city location, and is because the houses are opposite a surface level car park (unlike most residential streets, where there are usually houses on both sides of the road). Significant reductions in daylight are therefore expected.
- 9.130 However, those rooms will all achieve at least 22% of annual probable sunlight hours (against a target of 25%) and 0.63 to 0.69 times their former annual probable sunlight hours (against a target of 0.8). Those reductions in sunlight are minor, especially given the site's urban location and the lack of houses opposite, and the actual amount of sunlight received would be good.

- 9.131 The rear elevation windows at 47-59 Edridge Road will be unaffected, therefore only two out of six habitable rooms at each of those houses are likely to experience noticeable reductions in daylight (but retaining good levels of sunlight).
- 9.132 The effect on living conditions at 47-59 Edridge Road is acceptable, in particular given the comparison to their existing setting opposite a surface level car park.
- 9.133 61 and 63 Edridge Road also face the proposed Block C. The front elevation windows will achieve between 0.61 and 0.74 times their former daylight distribution values, which is a minor reduction in daylight to those rooms. No.61 will comply with the BRE sunlight guidance, and the front rooms at no.63 will achieve at least 23% of annual probable sunlight hours (against a target of 25%) and 0.79 times their former annual probable sunlight hours (against a target of 0.8) which is almost BRE compliant. The impacts on 61 and 63 Edridge Road would be very minor, and would result in acceptable living conditions for their residents.
- 9.134 At 65 to 71 Edridge Road all of the rooms will adhere to the BRE guidelines for daylight and sunlight and will therefore the residents of those houses will not be noticeably affected.

74 Park Lane (Skyline Court), 78 Park Lane and 80 Park Lane and 82-88 Park Lane

- 9.135 74 Park Lane (Skyline Court), 78 Park Lane and 80 Park Lane and 82-88 Park Lane are blocks of flats located on Park Lane (to the east of Edridge Road).
- 9.136 All of the 65 rooms tested adhere to the BRE guidelines for daylight distribution. 110 out of 114 windows tested for sunlight comply with the guidance, with the remaining 4 windows achieving between 0.71 and 0.79 times their former annual probable sunlight hours (against a target of 0.8) which is a minor reduction.
- 9.137 The overall impacts on the residents at 74 Park Lane (Skyline Court), 78 Park Lane and 80 Park Lane and 82-88 Park Lane would be very minor, and would not unacceptably harm living conditions for their residents.

Leon House

- 9.138 Leon House has recently been converted to residential use (by the same developer as the current proposal), with not all units yet occupied. There are therefore no pre-existing levels of daylight to the residential units.
- 9.139 For new homes, the BRE Guidance specifies different tests, requiring that the "average daylight factor" test is used. For bedrooms, 1% of average daylight factor is required; for living rooms 1.5% is required, and for separate kitchens 2% is required. Where non-daylit kitchens are provided, they should link directly to a well daylit living room. As the converted units are open-plan (the kitchens directly link to living rooms), the kitchen areas were excluded from the calculation, and the 1.5% target was used for the living room areas.
- 9.140 The first to fourth floors were tested (as the upper floors will have better levels of daylight). All of the bedrooms achieve the average daylight factor target of 1%, and 46 of the 49 living rooms tested achieve the target of 1.5%.
- 9.141 The three other living rooms are within one-bedroom units at first and second floor, achieving 1.17%, 1.21% and 1.39% (falling short of the 1.5% target) with their

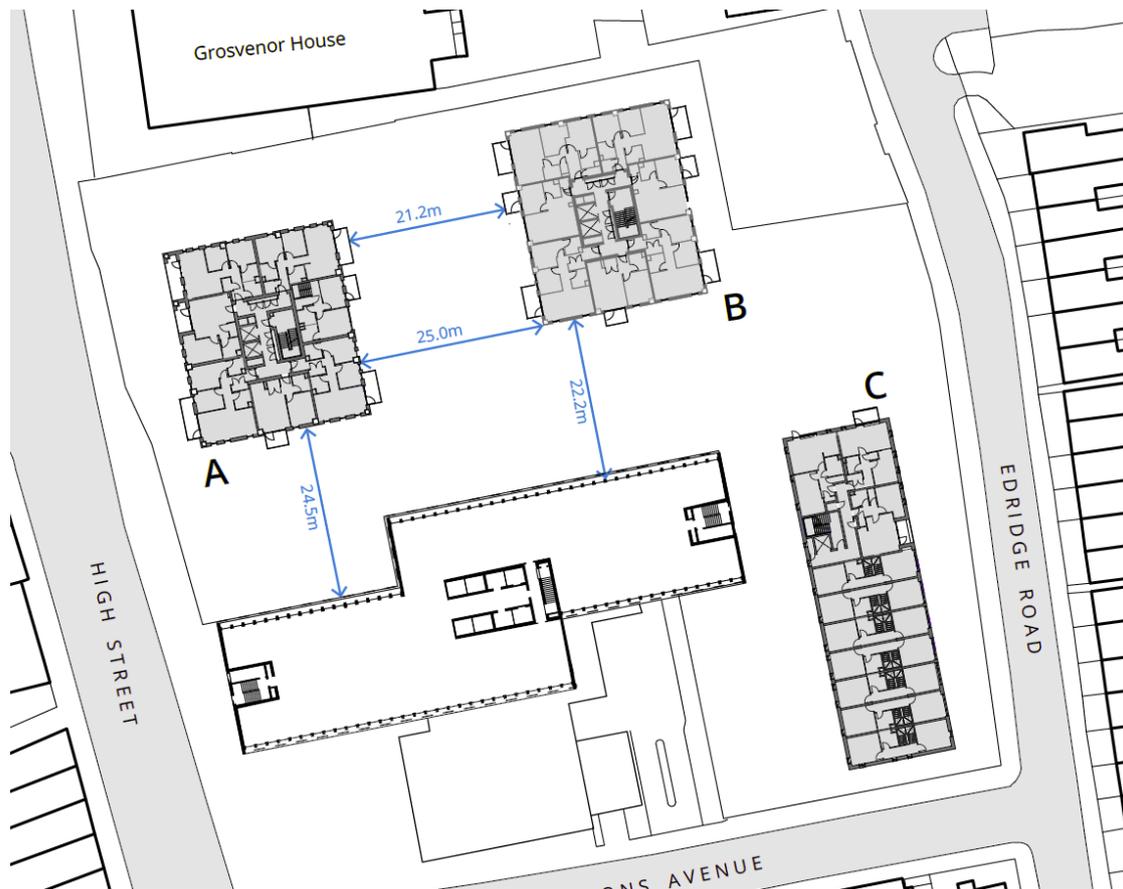
bedrooms achieving 2.76%, 2.81% and 2.43% respectively (exceeding the target of 1%). The residents at those units would therefore still have good access to daylight overall, and the impact on daylight at those units would not result in unacceptable harm to living conditions.

#### 4-20 Edridge Road

- 9.142 4-20 Edridge Road is currently a surface car park, but it is allocated in the Local Plan for residential development. Planning application 18/06069/FUL is currently under consideration for a residential development. The developers of both sites were asked to work together when designing their proposals, to ensure good quality accommodation.
- 9.143 A façade study was carried out showing the potential impact on the proposed development at 4-20 Edridge Road.
- 9.144 The façade study for daylight results show that over 50% of the façade areas tested would achieve a Vertical Sky Component of 27% which is the BRE target. 93% of the façade areas tested will receive 15% or higher Vertical Sky Component, which means that either conventional window or larger windows will provide adequate daylight.
- 9.145 The façade study for sunlight results (for the facades within 90 degrees of south) shows that 88% of the façade areas will be able to receive 25% of Annual Probable Sunlight Hours (which is the BRE target), and 95% will receive 15% of Annual Probable Sunlight Hours or more. 20% of the façade will receive less than 2% of Winter Probable Sunlight Hours (against a target of 5%) but that area will receive good levels of annual sunlight overall.
- 9.146 It would therefore be possible for a development at 4-20 Edridge Road to be designed with windows that provide the occupants with good levels of sunlight and daylight. The developers at 4-20 Edridge Road are responsible for designing a development which provides their residents with high quality accommodation, but the assessment submitted shows that the Leon House development proposal would not prevent high quality accommodation at 4-20 Edridge Road.

#### **Impacts on Neighbours: Outlook, Privacy, Noise and Disturbance**

- 9.147 The proposed development would mostly be located on the opposite side of a road from its residential neighbours across High Street, Mason's Avenue, or Edridge Road. Views across towards those neighbouring properties are therefore available from public areas. Many of the homes at Leon House already overlook the publicly accessible car park on the site, which will be replaced by the proposed public square, and will experience similar levels of privacy. The proposed buildings would be a least 22m from the nearest directly opposite window at Leon House. The closest distance between the windows at Block A and Leon House would be 16m, but those views would be at an angle and would not result in unacceptable overlooking. The proposal would not result in unacceptable loss of privacy.



*Site Plan showing distances between buildings*

- 9.148 Some of the new homes at Leon House have views north towards central Croydon and London. The proposed development would retain outlook to those units, with at least 22m separation distance directly opposite each of the affected windows. Although private views are not a material planning consideration, the “point block” design of Blocks A and B will allow views between the blocks. The proposal would not result in unacceptable loss of outlook to neighbours.
- 9.149 The ground floor of Block A (adjacent to High Street) includes three flexible A1-A5 use spaces, replacing existing commercial units with new ones. These uses are likely to give rise to footfall from visitors or customers but due to the floor areas involved (which are a reduction from the existing floorspace), would not result in inappropriate disturbance to local residents. The new public square would allow opportunities for outdoor seating associated with the commercial uses. Due to the residential uses proposed on the site, a condition is recommended limiting opening hours. As a result, noise and disturbance will be limited and no more harmful than the existing commercial units and surface car park.
- 9.150 The communal gardens or “neighbourhood garden” would also be publicly accessible. The areas behind Blocks A and C would be gated at night. The other areas would be highly overlooked, with external lighting and a management strategy to be secured by planning conditions.
- 9.151 Conditions are recommended regarding control of odours from any cooking processes to avoid unacceptable noise and odour impacts on residential amenity.

- 9.152 Overall the proposal would have a significant impact on residential amenity subject to the recommended planning conditions.
- 9.153 Servicing to the proposed commercial units will be from High Street, in line with the current restrictions, and subject to Delivery and Servicing Plans which will be secured by planning conditions..

## **Impact on the Surrounding Environment**

### Microclimate

- 9.154 A wind tunnel assessment of the impact on the local microclimate has been undertaken, with the current baseline assessment showing that the windiest areas are currently at the entrance to Leon House, and to the west of Leon House. The proposed development, with the new commercial units near the entrance of Leon House, and Block C to the west, would mostly improve upon those impacts. However, there would be additional impacts as a result of the proposal.
- 9.155 Wind conditions on High Street, Edridge Road and the proposed public square and communal gardens would generally be suitable for any pedestrian activity (including sitting, building entrances, and walking). Some areas (mostly to the north of Block A and south of Leon House) would not be suitable for sitting in all weather conditions, but would be suitable for standing for short periods or walking.
- 9.156 The wind tunnel assessment showed that without wind mitigation there would be potentially uncomfortable conditions in the worst weather conditions at three locations: the main entrance to Block B; the rear entrance to Block C; and to the pavement on Mason's Avenue. Outside entrances lower wind tolerances are usually applied, because people leaving a building (with no wind internally) into even a very light wind will feel the change in conditions more than those who are already outdoors. Planted screens on-site are proposed as part of the landscaping design, which would provide wind mitigation measures in those locations. Those screens were tested in the wind tunnel and found to result in all areas of the site and adjacent pavements having suitable comfort levels for their intended purposes, even during the worst weather conditions.
- 9.157 Notwithstanding the comfort levels identified by the wind tunnel assessment, no safety concerns arose from any part of the wind testing results.

### Contamination

- 9.158 The submitted contaminated land report concluded that as surrounding sites were previously in potentially contaminating uses, the site has a low/moderate risk of contamination. A ground investigation was undertaken, identifying potential risks arising from piling, which can be managed by appropriate mitigation (potentially including pipework upgrades or replacement of contaminated soil). A condition is recommended to ensure appropriate management and remediation.

### Air Quality

- 9.159 The site is in an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA). The submitted air quality assessment demonstrates that the development would be air quality neutral in terms of construction and transport impacts in accordance with London Plan Policy 7.14. The site is in a busy urban location, with the potential for some of the units on

the 1<sup>st</sup> to 7<sup>th</sup> floors to increase exposure to poor air quality, and the mechanical ventilation to those units will be fitted with a filtration system to remove particulates. No further mitigation is required during the operation of the building. A contribution of £45,900 towards air quality improvements to mitigate against non-road transport emissions will be secured via the S.106 agreement, and a condition is recommended to ensure that the construction impacts on air pollution are mitigated.

#### Flood Risk and Sustainable Drainage

- 9.160 No objection was raised by Thames Water, although as the proposed development is located within 15m of a strategic water main, a condition is recommended requiring details of any piling to avoid harm to underground water infrastructure.
- 9.161 The Local Lead Flood Authority assessed the proposed scheme and raised no objection, subject to a condition securing detailed design (which has been recommended).
- 9.162 The Flood Risk Statement specified the proposed drainage strategy. The site is heavily constrained by the presence of the underground car park (below the proposed landscaped garden) and it is in an area at risk of groundwater flooding and a groundwater Source Protection Zone. It is suitable in principle for small areas of permeable paving which will be used. However, given the risk of groundwater flooding and to avoid oversaturation (which may result in increased flood risk and ground instability) infiltration drainage is not recommended, and a combination of drainage measures are proposed which will significantly reduce surface water run-off. Water from the buildings and upper level landscaping will be collected via porous paving and landscaping, naturally slowed and cleaned and collected in the proposed attenuation tanks. Water will then be discharged to the separated surface water sewer on High Street. Overall the surface water run-off from the site will be cleaner and reduced in volume from the existing 15.2l/s to 1.5l/s which is a significant improvement. Further to the drainage strategy, the finished floor levels will be 150mm above ground level with no bedrooms at ground level, minimising the risk from a 1 in 100 year weather event (with a climate change buffer). Subject to the recommended condition, the proposal would be acceptable in terms of drainage and flood risk

#### Construction Impacts

- 9.163 A Construction Environmental Management Plan is to be secured by a condition, to ensure adequate control of noise, dust and pollution from construction and demolition activities, and to minimise highway impacts during the construction phase.

#### Ventilation

- 9.164 Prior to any food and drink uses commencing on site, details of ventilation will be required by a planning condition.

#### Light Pollution

- 9.165 To avoid excessive light pollution, a condition is recommended requiring details of external lighting, including details of how it would minimise light pollution.

## **Transport, Parking and Highways**

9.166 The site has a Public Transport Accessibility Level (PTAL) of 6a and 6b (excellent) (on a scale of 0-6b, where 6b is the most accessible). The site is well served by public transport, and the PTAL reports show it within walking distance of George Street tram stop, South Croydon station, East Croydon station (with direct trains to central London, Brighton, and two international airports) and 18 bus routes. High Street and Edridge Road are both Classified Roads, and Edridge Road joins Park Lane (the flyover) which is part of the Transport for London (TFL) Strategic Road Network.

### Parking

- 9.167 Policy DM30 requires that the impacts of car parking are reduced and the Opportunity Area Planning Framework also seeks to manage a reduction in the number of parking spaces. There would be a reduction in car parking spaces overall, due to the replacement of the car park on High Street with a pedestrianised square. The existing spaces serve the retail units and do not serve a strategic function, and no objection was raised by the Council's Planning and Strategic Transport officer.
- 9.168 The site is within a Controlled Parking Zone. Following the overall reduction in parking spaces, and in light of the site's good access to public transport and the provision of car club bays, the proposed development would be car free, with residents' eligibility for parking permits restricted by the s.106 agreement.
- 9.169 No new residents or business parking is proposed, except for disabled spaces and car club spaces.
- 9.170 20 parking spaces in the existing basement would be allocated for residential disabled parking spaces, with a Car Park Management Plan relating to the allocation of spaces to be secured through a planning condition. Following the removal of the car park on High Street, the retention of 2 spaces for blue badge holders (re-using the existing crossover) was recommended by the Council's Accessibility Officer and Planning and Strategic Transport officer, enabling easy access to the proposed commercial units on High Street.
- 9.171 Up to three car club spaces are to be provided. Initially, one space will be provided on-street, with further spaces to be secured through the s.106 agreement subject to monitoring of uptake and demand through the travel plan. Given the competition for spaces on Edridge Road, and the availability of car club bays on the nearby streets (including Council spaces which are available for residents outside working hours), this approach was supported by the Council's Planning and Strategic Transport officer.
- 9.172 A condition is also recommended requiring electric charging infrastructure to be provided for the internal spaces, and the planning obligation regarding car club bays includes electric charging infrastructure.
- 9.173 No objection was raised by Transport for London or the council's Planning and Strategic Transport officer to the overall approach to parking, subject to the recommended conditions and s.106 obligations.

### Cycle Parking

- 9.174 635 long stay cycle parking spaces and 10 short stay cycle parking spaces are proposed for the residential development. For the retail units, 9 long stay cycle parking spaces and 62 short stay cycle parking spaces are to be provided. Each residential block would have its own cycle storage. The cycle storage for Block C would be in Leon House, with easy access from the rear entrance door to Block C. The proposed cycle parking would comply with the current and draft New London Plan and would be acceptable.

### Deliveries and Servicing

- 9.175 Delivery and Servicing are proposed to take place from the street, reflecting the existing arrangements. Servicing for the commercial units will take place from High Street (restricted to hours outside the operation of the bus lane), and a new loading bay is proposed on Edridge Road, to accommodate deliveries for the residential units at Blocks A, B and C.
- 9.176 Delivery and Servicing Plans for each commercial unit are to be secured by conditions (to be approved once the end user is known) so that delivery and servicing activities can be conducted in a safe and efficient manner whilst minimising impacts on the local environment.

### Bin Storage

- 9.177 The proposal includes bin storage in the basements of Blocks A and B, and the ground floor of Leon House (adjacent to Block C), with a collection point near Edridge Road to the east of Block B and access on-site for collection by refuse vehicles. The proposed arrangements would provide sufficient capacity for food, mixed dry recycling and landfill waste, and would be accessible for easy collection (within 20m of the proposed loading bay on Edridge Road)

### Sustainable Transport

- 9.178 Given that the development would be car-free, increased walking, cycling and public transport use is expected. The impact of additional development within the Croydon Opportunity Area, including the proposed development, is expected to require upgrades to existing services and therefore a sustainable transport contribution is to be secured in the s.106 agreement to mitigate the impacts of the development and secure improvements to include highway, tram or bus infrastructure.
- 9.179 Officers have identified that given the increase in footfall to and from the development, the scale of the development, and its impact on the wider townscape, upgrades to the surrounding pavements are a priority infrastructure item. Improved footways will improve the pedestrian environment and accommodate the additional expected footfall. TFL also identified potential highway safety risks arising from informal crossing activity at the junction of Edridge Road and the Flyover; and the potential removal or redesign of a potential barrier to cycling to and from the site (on the corner of High Street and Katherine Street). The sustainable transport contribution will therefore prioritising footway works, highway safety measures at the Flyover, and cycling improvements.

- 9.180 Transport for London confirmed that the proposed development is considered to be in accordance with the Healthy Streets approach.
- 9.181 In order to ensure that the identified modal shift is adequately supported, and barriers to uptake of more sustainable transport modes can be addressed, a Travel Plan and monitoring for three years is to be secured through the s.106 agreement.

## **Sustainable Design**

### Carbon Emissions

- 9.182 Policy SP6.2 requires new development to minimise carbon dioxide emissions, including that new dwellings (in major development proposals) must be zero carbon. As a minimum a 35% reduction in regulated carbon emissions over Part L 2013 is required, with the remaining CO2 emissions to be offset through a financial contribution.
- 9.183 The policy also requires the development to incorporate a site wide communal heating system and to be enabled for district energy connection.
- 9.184 The scheme is expected to achieve at least a 35% reduction in regulated carbon emissions and up to 40% through a combination of energy demand reduction measures and the heat network. The remaining regulated CO2 emissions shortfall would be covered by a carbon offset payment which would be secured through the S.106 agreement.
- 9.185 Whilst no existing district heating networks currently exist, the site is within an area where one is planned. The use of a CHP (Combined Heat and Power) was discouraged by the GLA in favour of alternative low carbon heating methods, such as an air source heat pump. However, such a system would not be compatible with a District Heating System, and as the Council is currently undertaking the business case work on the heat network, the preference of officers is for the building to be able to connect to the planned network. Space has been allowed in the plant room for the incoming pipe services from a future District Heating System and the proposed use of plate heat exchangers would allow future connection. A s.106 obligation is also recommended requiring connection to the District Heating System if the council has appointed an operator before commencement on site, or a feasibility into connection to a future system on first replacement of the heating plant. On that basis, as the proposal complies with the above requirements regarding carbon reduction and a CO2 offset payment, subject to a condition requiring an updated energy strategy, the proposal is considered acceptable.
- 9.186 The commercial units have been subject to a BREEAM pre-assessment, and an "Excellent" rating is expected to be achieved, to be secured by a planning condition.
- 9.187 Policy SP6.3 requires a high standard of sustainable design and construction. The sustainability statement outlines a range of measures, such as the selection of high life span, low maintenance bricks, maximising the use of materials with a high recycling content, ensuring water usage is minimised, and designing the scheme to reduce overheating levels.
- 9.188 In order to ensure that the above measures are secured conditions are recommended. In addition S.106 obligations, in the form of a carbon offsetting

payment and the requirement to connect in the future to the planned district heating network shall also be secured.

### Water Use

- 9.189 A planning condition is recommended to secure compliance with the domestic water consumption target of 110 litre/person/day, to ensure sustainable use of resources.

### **Other Planning Issues**

- 9.190 A health impact assessment was submitted which identifies that the proposal will improve housing quality, has good access to health, social and retail facilities, open space, and would be environmentally sustainable. Planning obligations and conditions are recommended restricting car use, noise and disturbance from commercial units, and hot food takeaways to avoid unacceptable health impacts.
- 9.191 Although fire safety is predominantly a building regulations issue, fire safety measures may have planning implications (for example, influencing design and layouts) and London Plan Policy 7.13 states that developments should minimise risks. Blocks A and B (the proposed towers) will have sprinkler systems, wet rising mains, and all residential units will be within 15m of the fire escape stair with ventilated lobbies and smoke shafts. Block C is a longer, less tall block with mechanical ventilation at both ends of the corridors, and sprinklers are to be considered as part of the Fire Strategy. The commercial units will be separated from the residential units with fire escape routes and ventilated lobbies, and all building entrances will be within 18m of fire appliance access. The submitted details are sufficient to demonstrate that the development's fire safety implications have been through the design process from a planning perspective.
- 9.192 The development is liable for a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) payment to ensure that development contributes to meeting the need for physical and social infrastructure, including educational and healthcare facilities.
- 9.193 A TV and Radio signal impact assessment was submitted which identified minor potential loss of digital satellite reception to the north-west of Block A, and through the use of taller construction cranes, both of which could be mitigated by repositioned satellite dishes (to be secured by the s.106 agreement).
- 9.194 In order to ensure that the benefits of the proposed development (including those required to mitigate the harm caused) reach local residents who may be impacted indirectly or directly by the proposal's impacts, a skills, training and employment strategy (both operational and construction phases) and a contribution towards training are to be secured by s.106 obligations.

## **10 CONCLUSIONS**

- 10.1 The proposed development would introduce a significant amount of new housing, including a mix of unit sizes and genuinely affordable housing. The proposed development would be well designed, and would ensure a good standard of accommodation for new residents and their neighbours. There would be harm to heritage assets, but that harm is considered to be minimised and necessary to deliver the development's benefits (and therefore is justified), and the harm caused would be outweighed by the development's public benefits. The development would be a car-free, environmentally sustainable development and would comply with the

aspirations of the Development Plan. The residual planning impacts would be adequately mitigated by the recommended s.106 obligations and planning conditions.

- 10.2 All other relevant policies and considerations, including equalities, have been taken into account.
- 10.3 It is recommended that planning permission is granted in line with the officer recommendation for the reasons summarised in this report.

## **Appendix 1: Planning Policies and Guidance**

The following lists set out the most relevant policies and guidance, although they are not exhaustive and the provisions of the whole Development Plan apply (in addition to further material considerations).

### **London Plan (2016)**

- Policy 1.1 Delivering the strategic vision and objectives for London
- Policy 2.1 London in its global, European and United Kingdom context
- Policy 2.2 London and the wider metropolitan area
- Policy 2.3 Growth areas and co-ordination corridors
- Policy 2.6 Outer London: vision and strategy
- Policy 2.7 Outer London: economy
- Policy 2.8 Outer London: transport
- Policy 2.15 Town centres
- Policy 2.18 Green Infrastructure
- Policy 3.1 Ensuring equal life chances for all
- Policy 3.2 Improving health and addressing health inequalities
- Policy 3.3 Increasing housing supply
- Policy 3.4 Optimising housing potential
- Policy 3.5 Quality and design of housing developments
- Policy 3.6 Children and young people's play and informal recreation facilities
- Policy 3.7 Large residential developments
- Policy 3.8 Housing choice
- Policy 3.9 Mixed and balanced communities
- Policy 3.10 Definition of affordable housing
- Policy 3.11 Affordable housing targets
- Policy 3.12 Negotiating affordable housing on individual private residential and mixed use schemes
- Policy 3.13 Affordable housing thresholds
- Policy 3.15 Co-ordination of housing development and investment
- Policy 4.1 Developing London's economy
- Policy 4.7 Retail and town centre development
- Policy 4.8 Supporting a successful and diverse retail sector and related facilities and services
- Policy 4.12 Improving opportunities for all
- Policy 5.1 Climate change mitigation
- Policy 5.2 Minimising emissions
- Policy 5.3 Sustainable design & construction
- Policy 5.7 Renewable energy
- Policy 5.8 Innovative energy technologies
- Policy 5.9 Overheating and cooling
- Policy 5.10 Urban greening
- Policy 5.11 Green roofs and development site environs
- Policy 5.12 Flood risk management
- Policy 5.13 Sustainable drainage
- Policy 5.14 Water quality and wastewater infrastructure
- Policy 5.15 Water use and supplies
- Policy 5.16 Waste net self-sufficiency

- Policy 5.17 Waste capacity
- Policy 5.18 Construction, excavation and demolition waste
- Policy 5.21 Contaminated land
- Policy 6.1 Strategic approach
- Policy 6.2 Providing public transport capacity and safeguarding land for transport
- Policy 6.3 Assessing effects of development on transport capacity
- Policy 6.4 Enhancing connectivity
- Policy 6.5 Funding Crossrail and other strategically important transport infrastructure
- Policy 6.7 Better streets and surface transport
- Policy 6.9 Cycling
- Policy 6.10 Walking
- Policy 6.11 Smoothing traffic flow and tackling congestion
- Policy 6.12 Road network capacity
- Policy 6.13 Parking
- Policy 7.1 Lifetime neighbourhoods
- Policy 7.2 An inclusive environment
- Policy 7.3 Designing out crime
- Policy 7.4 Local character
- Policy 7.5 Public realm
- Policy 7.6 Architecture
- Policy 7.13 Safety, security and resilience to emergency
- Policy 7.14 Improving air quality
- Policy 7.15 Reducing noise and enhancing soundscapes
- Policy 7.19 Biodiversity and access to nature
- Policy 7.21 Trees and woodlands
- Policy 8.1 Implementation
- Policy 8.2 Planning obligations
- Policy 8.3 Community infrastructure levy

## **Croydon Local Plan (2018)**

### Strategic Policies

- Policy SP1: The Places of Croydon
- Policy SP2: Homes
- Policy SP3: Employment
- Policy SP4: Urban Design and Local Character
- Policy SP6: Environment and Climate Change
- Policy SP7: Green Grid
- Policy SP8: Transport and Communication

### Development Management Policies

- Policy DM1: Housing choice for sustainable communities
- Policy DM4: Development in Croydon Metropolitan Centre, District and Local Centres
- Policy DM8: Development in edge of centre and out of centre locations

- Policy DM10: Design and character
- Policy DM11: Shop front design and security
- Policy DM13: Refuse and recycling
- Policy DM14: Public Art
- Policy DM15: Tall and Large Buildings
- Policy DM16: Promoting Healthy Communities
- Policy DM17: Views and Landmarks
- Policy DM18: Heritage assets and conservation
- Policy DM23: Development and construction
- Policy DM24: Land contamination
- Policy DM25: Sustainable Drainage Systems and Reducing Flood Risk
- Policy DM27: Protecting and enhancing our biodiversity
- Policy DM28: Trees
- Policy DM29: Promoting sustainable travel and reducing congestion
- Policy DM30: Car and cycle parking in new development
- Policy DM33: Telecommunications

#### Place-specific policies

- Policy DM38: Croydon Opportunity Area

### **Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) / and Documents (SPD)**

#### London Plan

- Culture and Night-Time Economy (November 2017)
- Affordable Housing & Viability (August 2017)
- Crossrail Funding (March 2016)
- Housing (March 2016)
- Accessible London: Achieving an Inclusive Environment (October 2014)
- The control of dust and emissions during construction and demolition (July 2014)
- Town Centres (July 2014)
- Character and Context (June 2014)
- London Planning Statement (May 2014)
- Sustainable Design and Construction (April 2014)
- Play and Informal Recreation (September 2012)
- All London Green Grid (March 2012)
- London View Management Framework (March 2012)
- London's Foundations (March 2012)
- Planning for Equality and Diversity in London (October 2007)

#### Croydon Development Plan

- Suburban Design Guide 2019 SPD
- Designing for community safety SPD
- SPG 1: Shop fronts and signs
- SPG 12: Landscape design