

1.0 APPLICATION DETAILS

Ref: 20/04952/FUL
 Location: 131 Woodcote Valley Road, Purley, CR8 3BN
 Ward: Purley and Woodcote
 Description: Demolition of existing dwelling and erection of a three storey building with roof accommodation comprising 8 flats with associated car parking, bike store, refuse store and landscaping.
 Drawing Nos: 4045/1B; 1.5E; 6F; 7E; 2E; 4A; 3E; 5A; 11A; 10A
 Agent: Lee Richardson, LPR Design
 Applicant: VITA Property Developments
 Case Officer: Yvette Ralston

	1 bed	2 bed	3 bed	4 bed (+)	Total
Existing	0	0	0	1	1
Proposed	3 (3x1b2p)	2 (1x2b3p 1x2b4p)	3 (1x3b4p 2x3b5p)	0	8

All units are proposed for private sale

Number of car parking spaces	Number of cycle parking spaces
4	16

1.1 This application is being reported to committee owing to the receipt of objection letters in excess of the threshold set out in the Croydon Constitution and referrals from Cllr Brew and Cllr Oviri.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION

2.1 That the Planning Committee resolve to GRANT planning permission subject to the completion of a legal agreement to secure financial contribution of £12,000 for sustainable transport improvements and enhancements.

2.2 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 time limit of 3 years
2. Development to be carried out in accordance with the approved drawings and reports

Pre-commencement conditions

3. Submission of Construction Management Plan and Construction Logistics Plan
4. Materials / details to be submitted
5. Submission of Biodiversity Method Statement
6. Submission of Biodiversity Enhancement Strategy
7. Landscaping Strategy

Pre-Occupation Conditions

8. Submission of details of EVCPs
9. Submission of a wildlife sensitive lighting design scheme

Compliance Conditions

10. Implementation of cycle and refuse storage as shown on plans prior to occupation
11. Implementation of car parking as shown on plans with no boundary treatments above 0.6m in the sightlines
12. Development in accordance with accessible homes requirements, including provision of a lift
13. Obscure glazing on first and second floor windows on flank elevations
14. In accordance with Tree Protection Plan
15. In accordance with Ecological Appraisal Recommendations
16. Implementation of SUDS details
17. Compliance with energy and water efficiency requirements
18. Any other planning condition(s) considered necessary by the Director of Planning and Strategic Transport

INFORMATIVES

1. Granted subject to a Section 106 Agreement
2. Community Infrastructure Levy
3. Code of practice for Construction Sites
4. Highways informative in relation to s278 and s38 works required
5. Compliance with Building/Fire Regulations
6. Construction Logistics Informative (in relation to condition 3)
7. Refuse and cycle storage Informative (in relation to condition 10)
8. Any other informative(s) considered necessary by the Director of Planning and Strategic Transport

3.0 PROPOSAL AND LOCATION DETAILS

Proposal

- 3.1 The applicant seeks full planning permission for the following:

- Demolition of the existing two storey detached dwelling
- Erection of a replacement three storey building plus accommodation in the roofspace to provide 8 flats (3 x 3 beds, 2 x 2 beds and 3 x 1 beds)
- Land level alterations including excavation at the rear and levelling at the front
- Communal and private amenity space, play space and hard and soft landscaping
- Retention and widening of the existing vehicle crossover and forecourt parking for 4 cars

3.2 During the assessment of the application amended plans and documents have been received as follows:

- Minor amendments to the details of the front forecourt shown on the site layout plan, for example to show hedging below 0.6m in height in the sightlines, a 2m wide path to the refuse store, etc
- Minor amendment to the front elevation to add some brick banding at lower levels
- Amended floorplans following inclusion of a lift
- Updated preliminary ecology assessment following completion of a bat endoscopy survey within the roof of the dwelling
- Updated highways note to consider the cumulative impact of nearby developments on on-street parking



Site and Surroundings

3.3 The site comprises a two storey 4-bed detached dwelling on the south side of Woodcote Valley Road, opposite the junction with Manor Road. The plot is rectangular, 17.5m in width and 60m in depth. Land levels rise fairly steeply from the front (north) to the rear (south) by approximately 6m.

- 3.4 The area is suburban and residential in character, comprising detached properties of predominantly 2 storeys. The properties along Woodcote Valley Road vary in their form, proportion and appearance.
- 3.5 The forecourt is currently landscaped and accommodates parking for 2 cars. There is an existing crossover close to the boundary with no.133 Woodcote Valley Road. There are mature trees on the southern boundary of the rear garden, plus one semi-mature tree in the rear part of the, none of which are protected by TPOs.
- 3.6 The site has a PTAL rating of 1a and Woodcote Valley Road is on a bus route. The site is at low risk of surface water flooding and within a critical drainage area.



Planning History

- 3.7 Site history is set out below
- 19/05928/FUL: Demolition of existing dwelling and erection of a three storey building with roof accommodation comprising of 6 x 2 bedroom and 3 x 3 bedroom flats together with car parking, internal bike store, internal refuse store and landscaping – application withdrawn 18/02/20

3.8 Two pre-applications also took place on the site

- 20/01454/PRE: Demolition of existing building and erection of new 2/3 storey building with accommodation in roof space with new access Road leading to rear development of 3 No terraced houses and associated parking and landscaping/alterations to land levels
- 19/04329/PRE: Demolition of existing dwelling and erection of a three storey building with roof accommodation comprising of 9 self-contained flats together with car parking, bike store, refuse store and landscaping.

4.0 SUMMARY OF KEY REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

- The principle of intensified residential development is acceptable given the residential character of the surrounding area.
- The design and appearance of the development is of a high quality and would not harm the character of the surrounding area.
- The unit size mix complies with the strategic target for provision of family sized 3 bed dwellings (37.5%) and provides a net increase in family sized accommodation
- The living conditions of adjoining occupiers would be protected from undue harm.
- The proposed quality of accommodation and amenity space is acceptable.
- The level of on-site parking has been justified and the impact upon highway safety and efficiency and would be acceptable
- Trees will be protected or replaced, new planting provided and biodiversity will be protected and enhanced.

5.0 CONSULTATIONS

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

6.0 LOCAL REPRESENTATION

6.1 The application was publicised by 13 letters of notification to neighbouring properties.

6.2 The number of representations received from in response to the initial notification and publicity of the application are as follows. It should be noted that there are instances of multiple / duplicate entries submitted by the same objectors and these have been counted individually.

6.3 No of individual responses: 634; Objecting: 627; Supporting: 7

6.4 The issues in the table below 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.

Objection	Officer comment
<i>Design and appearance</i>	
Overdevelopment of the site	Addressed in Paragraphs 8.5-8.13 of this report.
Size, height, width, footprint, bulk, density and massing would be dominating and detrimental to the streetscene	
Disproportionate in scale to surrounding homes. Properties on Woodcote Valley Road are mainly 2 storey detached family homes whereas this is a 4 storey building which is intrusive and significantly higher than other properties in the area.	
The separation distance on either side appears to be less than the 1m separation distance required by the Suburban Design Guide SPD.	
Architectural design has no merit. The massing, materials, detailing and lack of features is out of place and does nothing to enhance the street scene.	
Properties on Woodcote Valley Road reflect the Webb Estate heritage and flats are not in keeping.	The proposal is not considered to impact on the Webb Estate Conservation Area which backs onto the gardens of properties on the opposite side of Woodcote Valley Road to the north at a distance of over 100m.
<i>Impact on amenities of neighbouring properties</i>	
Overlooking and loss of privacy to adjoining occupiers with windows/balconies looking into neighbouring properties	Addressed in Paragraphs 8.20-8.27 of this report
Too close to the adjacent boundaries	
Building extends 11-12m further at the rear than adjacent properties and is 2.5m higher.	The building extends 6.8-9m beyond neighbouring properties. It is approximately 2.2m higher than number 129

	and 0.5m higher than number 133. The height and massing is considered to be appropriate. This is addressed in the 'character' and 'neighbouring amenity' sections of the report.
Does not meet the 25 degree and 45 degree rule to adjacent properties in plan.	Addressed in paragraphs 8.20-8.27 of this report
Concerns raised around impacts on specific properties as below: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loss of afternoon & evening sun to rear garden of 125 WVR • Side facing windows towards 133 WVR where there is a dining room – the side wall of the property would be 4.5m away • Overlooking towards rear garden of 135 WVR due to the rear projection • Overlooking towards The Rustlings 45 Woodside Road • windows/terraces/balconies overlooking 47 Woodside Road • Objections from Rights of Light Consulting regarding 2 neighbouring properties 	
Noise associated with more people living in the area	is not considered that noise from the proposed 8 residential units would be out of the ordinary in comparison to other residential uses in the area
<i>Highways impacts and parking</i>	
Insufficient parking provision (4 spaces for 8 flats)	Addressed in paragraphs 8.28-8.37 of this report
On street parking on the bend of the street and opposite Manor Road junction will cause hazards to traffic, pedestrians and school children and also to emergency services and the 434 bus which use the street.	
The sight line survey is flawed as vehicles regularly exceed the 20mph limit. Development is dangerous unless the sight lines are improved for vehicles leaving the site.	

The traffic survey was completed in 2019 so it now out of date. It also does not give regard to the cumulative effects of increased on-street parking as a result of other developments on the street.	
Environmental impacts of increased traffic	The increase in traffic from 8 residential units is considered to be minimal.
<i>Quality of accommodation</i>	
Cramped inadequate accommodation for residents and adequate outside play areas for children living in the block	Space standards are met and there is a large area of shared amenity space and play space proposed.
There is a 3.5m drop from the communal garden to the ground level with no safety barrier	Hedging is proposed. A barrier would not be appropriate but further details of this boundary treatment will be required by condition
<i>Landscape / Trees / Biodiversity</i>	
Removal of mature trees across the site is unacceptable	One tree is to be removed and replaced. Addressed in paragraphs 8.40-8.41
Impact on local wildlife - Concreting over garden space, loss of vegetation and habitat for bats, birds and badgers. Pheasants and 8 to 9 inch across Toads also inhabit this side of the road.	Addressed in paragraphs 8.42-8.46 of this report.
The Preliminary Ecological Appraisal states that the survey was carried out in January, which does not comply with the recognised field season outlined by The Joint Nature Conservation Committee.	The timing of the original survey was deemed acceptable by the Council's ecology advisors. Subsequent further assessment regarding protected species (bats) has been undertaken and the Council is now satisfied that we have sufficient information to determine the application and that the mitigation and enhancement measures proposed are acceptable.
<i>Flooding</i>	

Removal of green space and increased concreting increases the risk of flooding from surface water runoff	Addressed in paragraph 8.47 of this report
The site is within an area of 'low' risk of surface water flooding but is within an area of critical drainage flooding as identified by the Croydon plan.	
Detail on drainage is not provided	
<i>Sustainability</i>	
Increase in carbon footprint resulting from increased residents, use of water, electricity, gas and cars	8 residential units would not cause excessive levels of air pollution or carbon emissions. A CMP/CLP will be required to manage air pollution during construction. Standard conditions regarding energy efficiency and water usage will be applied.
Will lead to greater air pollution contrary to policies DM16 and DM23	
Demolishing an existing building is unsustainable. The council should encourage repair and renovation.	Repair and renovation is encouraged, alongside suburban intensification on some sites.
<i>Other matters</i>	
Oversaturation of flats in the area, many of which are not yet occupied or sold.	Flats provide alternative accommodation options in the area, contributing to mixed communities.
Loss of family homes. Need to protect stock of family homes of 4 beds+.	There will be a net increase of 2 family-sized (3 bed) homes
Lack of consideration of impact on local facilities and infrastructure including schools, GPs, dentists, drainage.	The development will make a CIL payment to contribute towards local infrastructure and services
Area is not identified for intensification in Croydon Local Plan. intensification is no longer justifiable following the reduction in the London Plan housing targets	Croydon's housing target set out in the London Plan is for 20,790 new homes between 2019/20-2028/29 with an aim for 6,410 of these to be on small sites below 0.25 ha in size, such as this.

	Gradual intensification is suitable throughout the borough in appropriate locations.
No social housing provided	Not a policy requirement on this site
Council should adopt a brownfield first policy	Development on brownfield or vacant sites is encouraged alongside gradual suburban intensification
Inadequate refuse bins allocation	Addressed in paragraph 8.39 of this report
Construction impacts	A construction management plan and logistics plan will be required by condition

6.5 Note that a number of non-planning related concerns (e.g. setting a precedent, loss of property value, conflict with land covenants, questioning the competency of the Council/Planning Officers) have also been raised.

6.6 The Purley and Woodcote Residents Association objects to the proposal on the following grounds:

- Loss of a family home, whilst the proposed development would not contribute to providing family accommodation in conflict with Local Plan policy SP2.7a, 3.8 of the London Plan
- Overdevelopment of the site with the proposed development significantly increasing the built area of the existing family home, and resulting in inadequate amenity space for potential occupiers
- The design is out of keeping with the locality and surrounding townscape as a result of its massing, form, and overall development layout and appearance, contrary to Local Plan policies SP4.1 and DM10, Suburban Design Guide (2019) and London Plan policies 7.4 and 7.6
- Detrimental to the amenity of occupiers of adjoining properties. Occupiers of neighbouring properties will suffer visual intrusion, increased noise and, for those adjacent to the proposed development, loss of privacy in conflict with Local Plan Policies DM10 and Policy 7.6 of the London Plan
- Inadequate car parking for a development of the size and scale proposed, resulting in additional on street parking, putting parking pressure on the surrounding area, and increased traffic movements so greatly endangering road safety contrary to Croydon Local Plan 2018 policies DM29 and DM30.

6.7 Councillor Simon Brew and Councillor Oni Oviri have objected to the application and referred it to committee.

6.8 Cllr Brew has objected on the following grounds:

- Unacceptable high density / over-development of the site, especially as it involves substantial loss of garden land, and the building is far too close to the boundaries on both sides.
- Insufficient amenity space, which will be detrimental to the amenities of occupiers of adjoining properties (due to visual intrusion and loss of privacy).
- Totally inadequate car parking space with reliance on on-street parking on a busy road & bus route
- Vehicle entry and access will be dangerous at this point because it's right on a road junction.

6.9 Cllr Oviri has objected on the following grounds:

- Unacceptably high density / over-development of the site, especially if it involves loss of garden land
- Insufficient amenity space, detrimental to the amenities of occupiers of adjoining properties (due to visual intrusion and loss of privacy),
- Inadequate car parking space with reliance on on-street parking on a busy road
- The development is not in keeping with the height of neighbouring properties

6.10 Cllr Badsha Quadir has objected on the following grounds:

- The scale of the proposed development is very overbearing and provides a loss of privacy for the surrounding properties.
- It is out of character within the local area.
- The proposed application is still 11 metres over the boundary. (*Officer note: It is assumed that this refers to the rear projection rather than any issues with landownership / oversailing of boundaries*)
- This application now contains 4 parking spaces, which is clearly not enough in such a busy road, so off street parking would cause a hazard for vehicles.

7.0 RELEVANT PLANNING POLICIES AND GUIDANCE

7.1 In determining any planning application, the Council is required to have regard to the provisions of its Development Plan so far as is material to the application and to any other material considerations and the determination shall be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The Council's adopted Development Plan consists of the New London Plan (2021), the Croydon Local Plan (2018) and the South London Waste Plan (2012).

7.2 Government Guidance is contained in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2019). The NPPF sets out a presumption in favour of sustainable development, requiring that development which accords with an up-to-date local plan should be approved without delay.

7.3 The main planning Policies relevant in the assessment of this application are:

London Plan (2021):

- D3 Optimising site capacity through the design-led approach
- D4 Delivering good design
- D5 Inclusive design
- D6 Housing quality and standards
- D7 Accessible housing
- H1 Increasing housing supply
- H2 Small sites
- H10 Housing size mix
- S4 Play and informal recreation
- G5 Urban Greening
- G6 Biodiversity and access to nature
- G7 Trees and woodlands
- S11 Improving air quality
- S12 Minimising greenhouse gas emissions
- S13 Energy infrastructure
- S112 Flood risk management
- S113 Sustainable drainage
- T4 Assessing and mitigating transport impacts
- T5 cycling
- T6 car parking
- T6.1 Residential parking
- T7 Deliveries, servicing and construction

Croydon Local Plan (2018):

- SP2 Homes
- DM1 Housing choice for sustainable communities
- SP4 Urban Design and Local Character
- DM10 Design and character
- DM13 Refuse and recycling
- SP6 Environment and Climate Change
- DM23 Development and construction
- DM25 Sustainable drainage systems and reducing floor risk
- DM27 Protecting and Enhancing our Biodiversity
- DM28 Trees
- SP8 Transport and communications
- DM29 Promoting sustainable travel and reducing congestion
- DM30 Car and cycle parking in new development

Supplementary Planning Documents/Guidance

- Croydon Suburban Design Guide SPD (2019)
- Section 106 Planning Obligations in Croydon and their Relationship to the Community Infrastructure Levy (2019)

- London Housing SPG (Mayor of London, 2016)
- Accessible London: Achieving an Inclusive Environment SPG (Mayor of London, 2014)
- Play and Informal Recreation SPG (Mayor of London, 2012)
- Character and Context SPG (Mayor of London, 2014)
- Sustainable Design and Construction SPG (Mayor of London, 2014)

8.0 MATERIAL PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

8.1 The main planning issues relevant in the assessment of this application are as follows:

- Principle of development
- Design of the proposal and the impact on the character of the area
- Quality of accommodation
- Impact on neighbouring residential amenity
- Access, parking and highways impacts
- Trees and landscaping
- Ecology
- Sustainability and Flood Risk

Principle of Development

- 8.2 The site's existing use is residential and as such the proposed redevelopment of the site for residential purposes is acceptable. Policy SP2.1 of the Croydon Local Plan (2018) applies a presumption in favour of development of new homes and Policy SP2.2 states that the Council will seek to deliver 32,890 homes between 2016 and 2036, with 10,060 of said homes being delivered across the borough on windfall sites. London Plan policy D3 encourages incremental densification to achieve a change in densities in the most appropriate way and policy H3 seeks to significantly increase the contribution of small sites to meeting London's housing needs. Given the policy context, the principle of intensifying the residential use of the existing site to provide a greater quantum of homes than existing is acceptable.
- 8.3 Policy DM1.2 seeks to prevent the net loss of small family homes by restricting the loss of three bedroom units and the loss of units that have a floor area of less than 130sqm. The existing property has 4 bedrooms and measures 230sqm. 3 x 3-bed units would be re-provided resulting in a net increase in family sized accommodation. This complies with policy DM1.2.
- 8.4 Policies SP2.7 and DM1.1 set a strategic target for 30% of all new homes over the plan period to have 3 or more bedrooms in order to meet the borough's need for family sized units and ensure that a choice of homes is available in the borough, and this target is normally applied to individual suburban intensification schemes. The proposal provides 3 x 3-bed units (37.5%) and therefore complies with policy SP2.7.

Design of the proposal and the impact on the character of the area

- 8.5 The existing building is a 2 storey detached property with a mock Tudor frontage and a hipped / catslide roof. It does not hold any significant architectural merit and there is no in principle objection to its demolition.
- 8.6 Policies SP4.1 and DM10.1 of the Local Plan state that the Council will require development of a high quality, which respects and enhances Croydon's varied local character and contributes positively to public realm, landscape and townscape to create sustainable communities. Proposals should seek to achieve a minimum height of 3 storeys, should respect the development pattern, layout and siting; the scale, height, massing, and density; and the appearance, existing materials and built and natural features of the surrounding area.
- 8.7 A robust character appraisal has been undertaken which assess the character of the immediate area. There is a wide variety of architectural features locally including different styles of roofs, windows, doors and materials. Appropriate elements have been incorporated into the proposed design in a simple but well executed contemporary reinterpretation approach. The proposed development is an asymmetrical design which appears sympathetic to the local context.
- 8.8 In terms of height and massing, the proposed building is 3 storeys plus accommodation in the roof space. The building appears as 3 storeys in the streetscene, which is supported. The Suburban Design Guide SPD indicates that where surrounding buildings are predominantly detached dwellings of 2 or more storeys, new developments may be three (3) storeys with an additional floor contained within the roof space or set back from the building envelope below.



Figure 2.10c: Where surrounding buildings are predominantly detached dwellings of two (2) or more storeys, new developments may be three (3) storeys with an additional floor contained within the roof space or set back from the building envelope below.

Extract from Suburban Design Guide SPD



Proposed massing / street elevation

- 8.9 The proposed building is 15.5m in width, which is the same as the existing property on the site. It is acknowledged that the existing property on the site is wider than the immediately adjacent properties. A gap of 1m is maintained to the site boundary on the west side and 1.3m to the boundary on the east side. The presence of single storey side garage extensions on the neighbouring properties helps to separate the development from the neighbouring dwellings and means that the building does not appear unduly prominent in the street scene. The front building line is in the same position as the existing, corresponding with the neighbouring properties and maintaining the generous front forecourt. The front building line is stepped (for example the front door and sides of the property are set back) which helps to break down the massing.
- 8.10 Towards the rear, the building steps in on both sides to respect the 45 degree sight lines from the closest ground floor rear windows of neighbouring properties on either side. The gap at to the west is 3m and to the east is 3.5m. The stepping in of the development towards the rear also helps to break up the massing of the flank elevations so that it does not appear overbearing. Representations have suggested that the proposal is an overdevelopment of the site due to the larger footprint and the extent of the rear projection beyond neighbouring properties. The footprint extends 6.8m beyond the rear building line of the neighbouring property to the west (number 133) and 9m beyond the neighbouring property to the east (number 12). However, given that the rear projection complies with guidance regarding 45 degree lines and ample shared amenity space is retained on the site, it is not considered that the amount of development / built footprint is excessive. Overall, the scale, height and massing is in accordance with the Suburban Design Guide SPD and the proposal for 8 units is not considered to be an overdevelopment of the site.
- 8.11 The site slopes upwards from front to back (north to south) by approximately 5.5m so some fairly significant land excavation would be required at the rear to accommodate the larger building footprint. Currently there are steps from the rear of the property up to the lawn, and a similar arrangement is proposed from the rear of the building, with a stepped, landscaped retaining wall and a set of steps accessed via the communal core and with a stair lift to provide inclusive access. This sloping topography and excavation helps to reduce the perceived scale of the building when viewed from the rear as the ground floor level would be hidden behind the retaining wall. At the front, an element of land excavation is also required to flatten the front forecourt to a 1:20 gradient.

the front boundary treatment. The amount of greenery on the front forecourt will be less than the current layout but not dissimilar to the neighbouring properties which generally have areas of landscaping plus areas hardstanding for car parking. There is a separate pedestrian path providing access to the main front entrance. The bin store and bike store are located internally at ground floor level in easily accessible spaces, and there is internal access through the building to the shared amenity space and play space at the rear. The central core and stair arrangement is generous with access to natural light and passive ventilation.

8.13 The proposed design approach is a contemporary reinterpretation, which is supported. The variety of building types and styles in the vicinity is noted; the proposed design is considered to respect the established character whilst enhancing the street scene. The asymmetrical design and the front gable, along with the stepped front building line, helps to reduce the mass of the building so that it does not appear overbearing. The fenestration is also considered to be well proportioned. The proposed balconies are inset and those on the front elevation are subtly designed so they do not appear incongruous. The proposed materials are white brick and red brick, with a dark red roof tiles to reflect the predominant materials in the area. Additional brick detailing has been added to the ground floor to further acknowledge the predominant banding feature at lower levels as seen on neighbouring properties. Material details will be required by condition. The proposed design is considered to be of a good quality and is supported.

8.14 Overall, the proposal is considered to comply with policies SP4.1 and DM10.

Quality of Accommodation

8.15 London Plan policy D6 states that housing developments should be of a high quality and provide adequately sized rooms with comfortable and functional layouts. It sets out minimum Gross Internal Area (GIA) standards for new residential developments. All proposed units exceed the minimum space standards and internal layouts are acceptable. All proposed units are dual or triple aspect. The units are orientated predominately north and south with smaller, secondary side facing windows which would be obscure glazed at first and second floor level. The unit at roof level would receive adequate light via the large rear balcony and roof lights. The ground floor units would be partially below ground level at the rear, due to the slope in the land, however due to the south facing orientation and the large rear doors, it is considered that these spaces would receive adequate levels of natural light.

8.16 London Plan policy D7 states that 10% of new build housing should meet Building Regulation requirement M4(3) 'Wheelchair User Dwellings'. There are 2 x M4(3) wheelchair user dwellings provided: unit 1 (1b2p on the ground floor) and unit 2 (3b5p on the ground floor) which complies with this requirement. The remaining 90% should meet Building Regulation requirement M4(2) 'Accessible and

Adaptable Dwellings' which requires step free access to all units and the facilities of the site. A lift is provided internally (following an amendment to the scheme) so all units can be accessed in a step free manner. At the rear, an external chair lift is proposed on the 1.5m wide stairs which lead up from the core to the communal garden and play space. Given that there is a 3m change in level from the rear of the property to the main garden area, ramped access would not be possible and the proposed chair lift is a reasonable alternative. The remainder of the garden is on a gradual gradient. A disabled car parking space is proposed closest to the entrance on the front forecourt and the forecourt is on a 1:20 gradient which is acceptable.

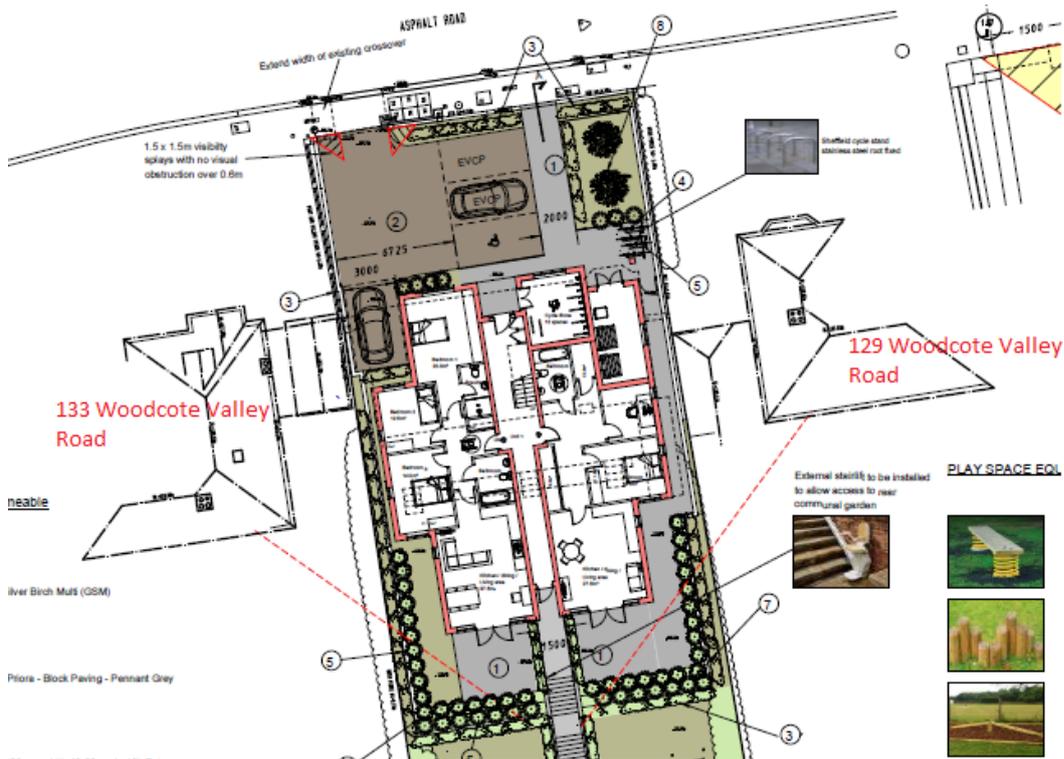
- 8.17 Policy DM10.4 of the Local Plan requires provision of high quality private amenity space at a minimum of 5sqm per 1-2 person unit and an extra 1sqm per extra occupant thereafter. The 2 ground floor units have private amenity space at the rear. Due to the land gradient, this space is set at a low ground level and bounded by retaining walls. The proposed retaining walls are stepped and landscaped and the private gardens would be 3.8m in depth and south facing, so this space would not feel too enclosed. The outlook from the rear windows of the ground floor properties would comply with guidance in the Suburban Design Guide SPD which states that spaces below ground should not have a depth that is greater than 25 degrees as measured from 2m high. The hedge at the top of the retaining wall provides good screening and defensible space between the private and shared amenity space. All other units have private amenity space in the form of inset balconies.
- 8.18 Policy DM10.4 also requires provision of children's play space calculated using the Mayor of London's population yield calculator. Play space of 35sqm is provided in the rear garden, which would exceed the requirements (17.1sqm) according to table 6.2 of policy DM10.4. The play equipment proposed includes timber balancing beams, stepping stones and wobble board, and full details can be submitted by condition.
- 8.19 Policy DM10.5 requires high quality communal outdoor amenity space that is designed to be flexible, multifunctional, accessible and inclusive. The communal amenity space amounts to around 460sqm in total (including the area of large trees at the rear) which is extensive. Features in this area include grass, planting, stepping stones, seating, a pergola and a shed. As mentioned, it is accessible and inclusive due to the proposed chair lift.
- 8.20 In summary, the proposal would provide good quality accommodation for future occupiers internally and externally in accordance with Local Plan Policies SP2 and DM10 and London Plan policies D6 and D7.

Impacts on Neighbouring Residential Amenity

- 8.21 Policy DM10.6 of the Local Plan states that the Council will ensure proposals protect the amenity of occupiers of adjoining buildings and will not result in direct

overlooking into their habitable rooms or private outdoor space and not result in significant loss of existing daylight or sunlight levels.

8.22 The nearest residential properties are number 133 to the west and number 129 to the east. As mentioned, the proposed building would not breach the 45 degree lines from neighbouring properties in plan, and neither would they be breached in elevation from the closest rear ground floor habitable room on either side. It has therefore been demonstrated that the proposed building would not be overbearing nor impact detrimentally on neighbouring outlook.



45 degree line in plan



45 degree line in elevation

8.23 Representations have been received from Right of Light Consulting on behalf of numbers 129 and 133 regarding the impact of the proposal on the daylight and sunlight levels received by these properties.

- 8.24 Number 129 has 3 side windows facing the site serving a living room at ground floor and 2 side facing bedroom windows at first floor, at a distance of around 5.6m separated by a single storey garage. The representation states that the 25 degree line from the first floor dressing room window (within the bedroom) would be breached by the proposed development resulting in a reduction in the No Sky Line level from the first floor dressing room window to less than 0.44 times its former value. The 25 degree line would be reached by the top of the proposed building. As a dressing room is not a habitable room, and this side facing dressing room window could be considered 'unneighbourly', and the bedroom is served by another south facing window, this would not warrant further daylight and sunlight testing and would not be considered a major amenity concern. The ground floor living room window is a secondary window, with its main window facing the street and the proposal would not have a material difference on this window in comparison to the existing situation so this does not raise amenity concerns. In order to mitigate any overlooking from the proposed development, side facing windows on the eastern elevation of the proposed building at first floor and above will be obscured up to 1.7m in height.
- 8.25 Number 133 to the west has 4 side windows facing the site serving the kitchen and a shower room at ground floor and 2 bathroom windows at first floor, at a distance of approximately 5.2m separated by a single storey garage. The representation states that the 25 degree line from the ground floor kitchen window would be breached by the proposed development, which it would. However this is a secondary kitchen window with the main kitchen window facing south over the garden, and a standalone kitchen is not considered a habitable room so this is acceptable on balance. In order to mitigate any overlooking from the proposed development, side facing windows on the western elevation of the proposed building at first floor and above will be obscured up to 1.7m in height.
- 8.26 Obscure windows on flank elevations at first and second floor level would be acceptable from a quality of accommodation point of view given their secondary nature and would adequately mitigate overlooking concerns to neighbouring properties. It is not necessary for the side facing roof windows to be obscured as these are not orientated towards neighbours. Given that there is no breach of the 45 degree line in plan or elevation on either side and the height and massing is considered to be acceptable, a full daylight and sunlight assessment is not required and has not been provided. Discussion regarding legal rights to light can be held outside of the planning process.
- 8.27 Balconies are proposed on the front and rear elevations however these are all inset so do not raise overlooking concerns towards neighbouring properties or the first 10m of neighbouring gardens. Outlook would be over the rear amenity space of the site or over the public highway which does not raise any amenity concerns. Representations have raised concerns about overlooking towards properties on Woodside Road, however these properties are over 60m away and there are large trees at the site boundaries, so this is not considered to be a

concern. Representations have also raised concerns about impacts on daylight and sunlight to gardens further east, such as number 125, however it is not considered that there would be a material impact.

- 8.28 Overall, any potential amenity impacts on neighbouring occupiers are considered to have been largely avoided by the proposed massing and layout of the building, and any residual impacts have been adequately mitigated by obscure glazing. The proposal is considered to comply with policy DM10.6.

Access, Parking and Highway Safety

- 8.29 The site has a Public Transport Accessibility Level (PTAL) of 1a which indicates very poor access to public transport. Woodcote Valley Road is on a bus route. There is no CPZ in the area.

Access arrangements

- 8.30 The proposal is to maintain the existing crossover which is located on the north west corner of the site; it would not be widened or moved. As mentioned, some land excavation will take place at front to ensure level access from the footway to the front door. A separate 2m wide pedestrian path is provided.
- 8.31 The site is located opposite the wide junction to Manor Road. Woodcote Valley Road is a 20mph road. Manual for Streets requires visibility splays of 2.4m x 25m from the vehicle exit point on a 20mph road such as this. The visibility splay of 2.4m x 25m from the access point to the right (east) is achievable when taken at a point 0.5m from the kerbline. This complies with Manual for Streets guidance. The BT box outside the site on the right (east) is not within the sightlines. On the left (west), a visibility splay of 2m x 25m can be achieved or 2.4m x 22.5m. This is due to the bend in the road and would mean that some vehicles exiting the driveway may need to protrude slightly further into the carriageway to see the full 25m. This does not raise any concerns given the width of the road, the low speed limit and speed bumps on Woodcote Valley Road and the fact that vehicles from the left would be travelling on the far side of the road. Vehicle visibility splays on both sides have been agreed with the Council's Highways Team and are acceptable.
- 8.32 Pedestrian sightlines of 1.5m x 1.5m are achieved within the site on both the right and the left from the existing crossover. The plans show that there are no obstructions over 0.6m within the sightlines and a condition will be attached to ensure this is retained.
- 8.33 Representations have raised concerns about the location of the site opposite the Manor Road junction. It has been demonstrated that vehicles will be able to access and egress the site in forward gear so there will be full and clear visibility of this junction by vehicles moving in and out of the site. As noted, the vehicular

and pedestrian sightlines comply with guidance. In addition, some of the S106 contribution towards sustainable transport initiatives could be used by the Council to introduce yellow lines or other parking restrictions opposite the junction with Manor Way to prevent parking in this area to ensure there are no impairments to visibility or highway safety.

8.34 The proposed access arrangements do not raise any highways safety concerns.

Car parking

8.35 4 car parking spaces for the 8 units are proposed on the front forecourt. In areas of PTAL 1 in outer London, London Plan policy T6.1 requires up to 1.5 spaces per dwelling which would equate to a maximum of 12 spaces. The Council normally seeks parking on a 1:1 basis which would be 8 spaces. The provision of 4 spaces is therefore a shortfall of up to 8 spaces (by London Plan standards) and may lead to on-street parking depending on levels of car ownership amongst future occupiers. Representations have raised concerns about the impact of on-street parking on highway safety.

8.36 In order to justify the shortfall in on-site car parking spaces, a parking stress survey has been undertaken in line with Lambeth Methodology. The survey demonstrates that parking stress within 200m walking distance of the site along Woodcote Valley Road and Manor Road is low at 12%. The survey was undertaken during 2 weekday nights in October 2019; 100 spare spaces were identified and there are no parking restrictions on these roads. It is noted that Woodcote Valley Road is a bus route so on-street parking should not be encouraged, however it has been demonstrated that there is sufficient capacity on the public highway (including Manor Road which is not a bus route) to accommodate potential overspill car parking.

8.37 Consented residential developments within a 400m radius of the proposed scheme have also been reviewed to consider the cumulative on-street parking impacts from this site alongside nearby schemes. 6 schemes have been identified with a potential total shortfall of 23 on-site car parking spaces in comparison to the London Plan maximum standards. If all of these cars, plus the maximum of 8 identified as the shortfall on this site, park within the 200m radius of this site, the parking stress would rise to 40%. This is a worst case scenario and would remain well below the threshold for 'high' parking stress which is generally considered to be 85%. It should also be pointed out that 'maximum' figures are being discussed here and actual levels of car ownership may be lower. Also, it is often not desirable to provide the maximum level of car parking on site as this can encourage unsustainable methods of travel.

8.38 A significant number of objections have been received with regards to parking arrangements and impacts on highway safety, however it has been demonstrated in detail that policy requirements regarding car parking have been

met and that highway safety would not be harmed by the access arrangements or the amount of car parking provided on site and would not be a reason for refusal.

- 8.39 Swept path analysis for each of the car parking spaces has been provided using a 4.8m car, which is acceptable. One disabled car parking space is provided closest to the front entrance and 2 spaces with active electric vehicle charging points have been shown on plan and the remaining 2 spaces would be passive spaces. This will be required by condition.
- 8.40 A contribution of £12,000 (£1,500 per unit) will be secured via S106 agreement. As mentioned, this could be used towards possible on street parking restrictions opposite the junction of Manor Way, and also for sustainable transport initiatives in the area including on street car clubs with electric vehicle charging points (ECVPs) as well as general expansion of the EVCP network in the area in line with Local Plan policies SP8.12 and SP8.13. The funding could go towards traffic orders at around £2500, signing, lining of car club bay, EVCP provision including electrics and set up costs for the car club. Funding will also be used for extension and improvements to walking and cycling routes in the area to support and encourage sustainable methods of transport.
- 8.41 On balance, the shortage of on-site parking would not outweigh the benefits associated with the provision of the proposed residential units. It has been demonstrated that there is capacity in the surrounding streets for overspill parking, highway safety can be managed by parking restrictions opposite the junction and sightlines are acceptable, so on balance car parking arrangements are considered to be acceptable in line with Local Plan policy DM30 and London Plan policy T6.

Cycle parking

- 8.42 Policy DM30 and London Plan policy T5 and Table 10.2 would require provision of a total of 14.5 cycle parking spaces for residents plus 2 visitor cycle spaces. A total of 16 cycle spaces are proposed. 12 are within an internal cycle store conveniently located by the main front entrance, and 4 are Sheffield stands located on the front forecourt. The cycle stands are appropriate and 5% will be available for wider or adapted bikes. Electrical sockets would be provided for charging e-bikes. Details are acceptable and a condition will be attached to ensure compliance with the approved details.

Waste / Recycling Facilities

- 8.43 Policy DM13 requires the design of refuse and recycling facilities to be treated as an integral element of the overall design. The bin store is proposed internally, accessed from the front. The drag distance for operatives is less than 20m via a 2m wide path, which is appropriate. Proposed waste receptacles include 1 x 1100L refuse bin, 1 x 1280L recycling bin and 1 x 140L food recycler which complies with guidance in the Council's New Build and Conversion waste

management document. A bulky waste storage area of 10sqm is provided at the front of the site in line with policy DM13.

Trees and landscaping

- 8.44 Policy DM10.8 and DM28 seek to retain existing trees and vegetation and to incorporate hard and soft landscaping within developments. There is one large semi-mature willow tree towards the end of the garden (T1 - Category C) and a group of conifers along the southern boundary of the site (TG2 – Category B) which have been assessed within the submitted Arboricultural Report. The group of conifers are proposed for retention and protective fencing would be constructed in front of the conifers to protect their RPAs. The willow tree is proposed for replacement. It is a multi-stemmed tree which has been previously reduced and has grown back leaving dead stumps and poor unions and the base has possible weak forks. Whilst the tree is not a safety issue, it is recommended for removal and replacement, and it is proposed to replace the tree with a new willow tree in the same location. The existing boundary treatments in the rear garden (perimeter hedging) would be retained and new planting would be proposed on the rear retaining wall. This is supported.
- 8.45 At the front, 2 new 7ft cherry blossom trees are proposed on the forecourt within an area of soft landscaping. A low boundary wall with planting is proposed at the front. There is also defensive planting in front of ground floor bedroom windows which face towards the forecourt. Paving would be permeable. Details are acceptable in line with policy DM10.8 and further landscaping detail will be required by condition.

Ecology

- 8.46 A Preliminary Ecology Appraisal has been submitted and has been revised during the assessment of the scheme following further investigation into the presence of bats on the site as a result of consultation with the Council's specialist ecological advisors.
- 8.47 The initial Preliminary Ecology Appraisal (dated January 2020 and now superseded) identified that the building on site had 'low' potential for roosting bats. In line with paragraph 99 of the ODPM Circular 2005 it is not possible to determine a planning application without establishing definitively the presence or otherwise of protected species and the extent to which they may be affected by the proposed development. The initial inspection identified the building as having 'low' potential for roosting bats due to the void between the wooden sarking and the roof tiles in the loft and recommended further investigation

- 8.48 Further investigations such as a bat emergence study or an endoscope survey were therefore required before a decision was made. An endoscope survey was subsequently carried out on 30 November 2020 where surveyors used an endoscope to look under the lifted roof tiles. This resulted in no bat roosts or evidence of bats being found. The building was therefore reclassified as having negligible potential for both bats and birds to roost. No habitats of conservation concern were located on the site. This assessment has been agreed with the Council's specialist advisors.
- 8.49 Mitigation measures and biodiversity enhancements are also proposed within the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal. Mitigation measures include a sensitive artificial lighting plan to ensure that the trees do not become illuminated to ensure that any local bat populations can continue to thrive in the area; hedge and tree removal to be undertaken outside of bird breeding season to ensure no active birds nests are destroyed; precautionary measures for hedgehogs and a precautionary reptile method statement. These measures should be collated into a Biodiversity Method Statement which will be required as a pre-commencement condition.
- 8.50 Enhancement measures include the provision of bat boxes on the south eastern and south western elevation of the building, bird boxes around the site, inclusion of an area of wild meadow within the landscaping scheme, as well as a Bumblebee Box and Bug Hotel in the garden. These measures should be collated into a Biodiversity Enhancement Strategy which will be required by condition.

Flood Risk and Energy Efficiency

Flood risk

- 8.51 Local Plan policy DM25 requires all development to incorporate sustainable drainage measures (SuDS). The site itself has low risk of surface water flooding but Woodcote Valley Road has high risk of surface water flooding, and the site is within a Critical Drainage Area. A SUDS Strategy has been submitted outlining that surface water will be managed on site by direct infiltration through a soakaway with appropriate techniques to minimise sedimentation, plus a rainwater butt to collect water for external use. As noted in other sections of the report, hardstanding will be permeable. The strategy demonstrates that all surface water arising can be managed on site using SUDS and exceedance flows can be accommodated within areas of bioretention, soakaway crates and the sub-base to the hardstanding. A maintenance plan for the SUDS has been provided. The information provided demonstrates compliance with policy DM25 and a compliance condition will be attached.

Energy efficiency

8.52 In order to ensure that the proposed development will be constructed to high standards of sustainable design in accordance with Local Plan policy SP6, a condition will be attached requiring the proposed development to both achieve the national technical standard for energy efficiency in new homes (2015) which requires a minimum of 19% CO2 reduction beyond the Building Regulations Part L (2013), and meet a minimum water efficiency standard of 110 litres/person/day as set out in Building Regulations Part G.

Conclusion

8.53 The proposed provision of 8 new residential units in this location is acceptable in principle. The proposed mix of units provides over one third family sized units and the quality of accommodation and amenity space is acceptable. The proposed scale, design and massing of the building is considered to be appropriate insofar as it would complement the character of the area and would not appear overbearing within the streetscene nor harm the amenities of neighbouring occupiers. There is a shortfall of on-site car parking provision but it has been demonstrated that there is adequate capacity in the surrounding streets to accommodate overspill parking and a S106 contribution could contribute towards parking restrictions opposite the junction with Manor Road to ensure there are no adverse impacts on highway safety. Impacts on trees, biodiversity and flood risk are also acceptable.

8.54 All material considerations have been taken into account, including responses to the public consultation. Taking into account the consistency of the scheme with the Development Plan and weighing this against all other material planning considerations, the proposal is considered to be acceptable in planning policy terms.

Other matters

8.55 All other planning related matters have been considered and no other planning harm has been identified.