

## DESIGN REVIEW PANEL

### NOTES OF MEETING of 27 March 2018

---

Agenda and notes (where appropriate) can be viewed at the Council's website at:

<http://www.merton.gov.uk/living/designandconservation/designreviewpanel.htm>

---

#### Panel Members Present:

- Councillor John Bowcott (Chair)
- Marcus Beale
- Vinita Dhume
- John Fyfield
- Sophie Medhurst
- Tony Michael

#### Apologies

- Jason Cully
- Beatrix Young

#### Council Officers Present:

- Paul Garrett
- Paul McGarry

#### Members of the Public Present

- Eve Cohen (Item 1)

#### Notes:

---

**Item 1:** Application, 18/P0086, **Cricket Green School**, Lower Green West, Mitcham

At the fundamental level, the Panel were happy with the physical arrangement of the buildings and the fact that they created a number of potentially valuable and interesting spaces. It was however asked, whether siting the school further back in the site, possibly to include the Worsfold House site, would be better as it would create a more secluded location for the school and allow for enabling residential development towards the front of the site.

The principle of a combination of minor extensions and new build in a campus style was considered appropriate and liked by the Panel. However, the Panel felt that there was a significant disconnect between the buildings and their landscape setting. This was felt to be significantly detrimental to the whole scheme, to the extent that it

was felt to justify a Red verdict. The Panel felt that rectifying this issue need not take a significant amount of extra time or money and could and should be achieved within the existing timescale of the application, although there was a suggestion that withdrawal and resubmission was another possibility.

Regarding materials, it was felt that the approach should be to use materials to unify the appearance of the buildings rather than reinforce their separate characters. The use of grey panelling was questioned as there seemed to be no story about how the materials in general had been chosen. The Panel were clear that the choice of materials should be based on a clear analysis of the conservation area character and chosen to identify and reinforce a sense of 'Mitchamness'.

The Panel were disappointed with the approach to the landscaping proposals, to the extent that they felt that no attempt had been made to create exciting new spaces that helped unify the buildings and site as a whole. This was most strongly evidenced by the treatment of the historic arch, which had no sense of place or setting. There was a clear opportunity to celebrate this yet no attempt had been made to do so and it seemed as if the applicant felt this was a hindrance they didn't really know what to do with. The landscaping also had a huge educational and sensory potential if well designed and this opportunity was being missed.

The approach to wider context seemed to be to try and ignore it, justified by the extensive tree belt on the street boundary. Thus there seemed to be little attempt to clearly mark the entrance, yet it ought to be visible from the main road and include positive wayfinding. There was no 'wow factor'. Because the building could not be seen from the road, there seemed little need to link it with the surrounding area. The panel felt that this was missing an opportunity to improve the conservation area and the quality of the school for its pupils. It was advocated that the tree line along the road should be managed to allow better views into the site, including improving the existing poor quality boundary fencing.

It was felt that the proposals should be designed from the outside-in, with landscape being used to pull everything together as a coherent whole, along with a consistent design theme to the buildings. The outdoor spaces were considered as important as the indoor spaces. However, there needed to be a clear purpose and design to these spaces that was well integrated to the buildings. This was clearly lacking.

VERDICT: **RED**

---

**Item 2:** Pre-Application, 18/P0391, **67 Clarendon Road**, Colliers Wood

Pre-Application, Notes Confidential

---

**Item 3:** Pre-Application, 18/P1024/NEW, **Raynes Park Playing Fields**, Grand Drive, Raynes Park

Pre-Application, Notes Confidential