

DESIGN REVIEW PANEL
NOTES OF MEETING 25 March 2020

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 Linda Kirby (Chair)
- Marcus Beale
- Tony Edwards
- Alistair Huggett
- Tim Long
- Michael Whitwell
- Beatrix Young

Apologies

- Jon Herbert
- Juliette Scalbert

Council Officers Present:

- NA

Councillors Present

- NA

Members of the Public Present

- NA

Declarations of Interest

- None

General Note: This meeting was conducted by e-mail due to the Coronavirus Pandemic. The meeting notes from each Panel member have been assembled, and a summary produced, which constitutes these notes. Panel members and the Chair have also viewed the notes as is normal practice, with amendments made as appropriate.

Notes:

Item 1: Application, 19/P4072, 360-364 London Road (Kwik Fit), Mitcham

Height/Scale/Massing

- The height is OK with the top floor set-back.

Building Design

- Elevations not unattractive but the idiosyncratic geometry seems to overtake design logic and create triangular balconies with un-useable space that are not very fit for purpose.
- Don't mind the appearance of the building. Although the top floor could be treated differently, the corner has a quite dynamic feel.
- The geometry of turning the corner works quite well.
- Much improved on the previous application.
- The roof above the third floor balcony adjacent to Highfield Court creates a heavy overhang and would appear unnecessary as there is no terrace directly above. There is potential to cut this back.
- The scheme could be improved if it could pick up more strongly on datum lines from the adjacent building – maybe through parapet and balcony lines etc, to help the architectural language knit in with the existing streetscape more coherently.
- Glass balustrades may be preferable to railings on London road due to traffic noise.
- Detailing of balconies is critical to avoid washing etc. undermining the quality of the elevations – do not necessarily rely on 'management'.
- Balconies should have more solidity rather than railings – for reasons of noise attenuation and appearance.
- Retail signage needs should be fully considered and reconciled early and not be a poor afterthought.

Site Layout

- The residential entrance should be celebrated, but has such a mean access tucked away with poor surveillance.
- The entry sequence and ground floor experience are a fundamental issue that needs resolving.
- The core definition is better.
- Cycle storage is unconvincing off a mean access to the flats, accessed along a narrow route with no natural surveillance.
- The rear communal garden is small, will mostly be in shade and offers a poor quality amenity.
- The defensible space on Broadway Gardens does not work very well.
- Disabled bays ruin the outlook from the adjacent flats in an area that should be defensible space for the residents. Seems an afterthought and sightlines not good on winding part of road.
- The access to the end unit is made awkward by the accessible parking bays.
- Is there scope to have no disabled accommodation to allow the building line to be moved forward?

Building Layout

- The space to the north of the lift seems superfluous and its removal will remove an overlooking issue with the adjacent flat.
- Naturally lit and ventilated corridors are an improvement.
- One third of the flats are single aspect, yet the London Plan says these should be 'normally avoided'.
- The move away from deck access has resulted in more single aspect flats.

- The relationship of the westerly units to the garden of the adjacent existing house regarding overlooking could also need further exploration, particularly at the first floor.
- The general layout of the flats need better resolving – the shape of the building does them no favours in this respect.
- Treatment of the retail unit is successful.

Servicing

- Would servicing actually work as proposed?
- There is a need to reconcile the clear potential for on-site parking and servicing and store back-of-house with urban design considerations. It may be better to wrap the store round the corner more into Broadway Gardens with the servicing access from Broadway gardens and access to the flats, which would start on the first floor.
- Previous plans showed off-street servicing. Delivery by a recessed bay on London road, right next to traffic lights is not acceptable and will also block the narrow pavement.
- Welcome the widened footway on London Road as it resolves the existing sub-standard footway. However the proposed loading bay leaves only 1m footway which does not meet disability or highway standards. The building could be set back more, but it is unlikely servicing here will be acceptable due to the proximity of the main road junction. The applicant should reconsider their approach as rear servicing is how all other development along the road are provided.
- The servicing of the retail unit is a fundamental issue that needs resolving.

Context & Heritage

- The design should be seen in the context with adjacent proposed development by providing context elevations.
- The façade on London Road is OK but there should be a stronger reference to the listed Burn Bullock PH directly opposite.
- The applicant has tried to respond to the context with the white ground floor and similar brick to the adjacent building.

Sustainability

- There is little information on sustainability and renewables. Air source heat pump? If so where? A lot of cast stone is not recommended in this respect.

OVERALL VERDICT: AMBER

Item 2: Pre-Application, 18/P4465, **67 Clarendon Road**, Colliers Wood

Pre-Application – Notes Confidential

Item 3: Pre-Application, 18/P4159, **Wimbledon Chase Station**, Wimbledon Chase

Pre-Application – Notes Confidential