

DESIGN REVIEW PANEL

NOTES OF MEETING Thursday 29th January 2015

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
- John Fyfield
- Alistair Huggett
- Tony Michael
- Andre Sutherland
- Nick Waring

Apologies

- Sophie Medhurst
- Sally Warren

Council Officers Present:

- Paul Garrett

Notes:

Item 1: Pre-Application, No Number Yet, The Dutch House, **87 Cottenham Park Road**.

Pre-Application – notes confidential

Item 2: Application, 14/P4603, **20 Sheridan Road**

The Panel clearly saw the house as aspirational and of good architectural quality, and were generally confident the architect could achieve this quality. If anything, it was trying too hard and could 'relax' a little. The key point the Panel raised was the relationship to the conservation area and setting of the house. The conservation area as a whole is a heritage asset and the house and its design had to talk to the setting as well as make sense on its own.

The elements of asymmetry did relate well to the subtle Arts and Crafts feel of the area.

The Panel clearly felt that this had not been done rigorously and this led to issues with the design in places. This was particularly so with the chosen colour of brick, the choice of a pitched roof and its material. Making the brick deliberately contrast with the surroundings made the task of justifying its preservation or enhancement of the conservation area character much harder – it had to justify its difference – and thus it had to be of exemplary quality. Use of a brick that related to the setting – but not necessarily copied the adjacent houses – would be easier to justify. Tile rather than metal was suggested for the roof, as it related better to the setting but would not detract from the contemporary feel of the building.

The Panel did not object to a pitched roof in principle, but it was unclear why it was proposed, how it was an integral or necessary part of the design and how it related to the surrounding roofs, their sizes and pitches. The Panel suggested that an aspiration for a modern version of the existing building, which made people turn back and look again after initially passing it, was a more subtle and appropriate aspiration. One suggestion was to bring forward the alignment of the front roof plane.

The Panel felt that the analysis of local character and justification for the design needed to be far more rigorous. The design should stem from this analysis and test itself against the relevant planning and conservation policies of the Council. More care needed to be taken with use of terminology and the accuracy of appearance of the graphics. Further points raised included the need for the building to meet CSH level 5, that rooflights on bedrooms don't work well in rain and that the front landscape setting must be addressed as part of the application. The Panel also recommended the street view sketch be improved and developed further.

VERDICT: **AMBER**