

## DESIGN REVIEW PANEL

### NOTES OF MEETING Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> January 2017

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

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

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#### Panel Members Present:

- Councillor John Bowcott (Chair)
- Marcus Beale
- Jason Cully
- Tim Day
- Rachel Jones
- Tim Long
- Sophie Medhurst
- Tony Michael
- Andre Sutherland

#### Council Officers Present:

- Paul Garrett
- David Gardener

#### Declarations of Interest

- Marcus Beale raised potential minor conflicts of interest regarding two items. These were considered by the Panel not to be sufficient for him to absent himself from the review.

#### Notes:

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#### **Item 1:** Application, 15/P3293, **Rose Court**, 24 Woodside, Wimbledon

The Panel felt that in general the plan, form and layout was appropriate, but with a couple of exceptions. The Panel were not convinced that the Woodside elevation did not project forward of the established building line. They also felt that the south elevation was far too dominant in the view and needed to lose some height, particularly regarding the bays. The Panel were critical of the south facing bay elements, which were actually balconies, and considered they felt like an external stairwell.

The Panel welcomed the detailed analysis and the way it was presented. However they struggled to see how it translated into, or had successfully shaped the proposed design. A discussion about the character of the local streets led the Panel to advise

that further work needed to be done on this and to then apply this to the building envelope to help generate a creative response to the site.

This was particularly so with respect to the bays. The bays as designed, blurred where the building line was and how well it related to the existing building lines of both streets. The Panel felt that the approach to the bays was not right yet. They were too rigid and dominant and not well reflecting the rooms within. The bays on Woodside had an odd angle. The bays also had no side windows – part of the purpose of bays. Related to this, the Panel felt that the window form was very rigid and the building did not change scale or become ‘lighter’ the higher it went – the building was lacking a vertical hierarchy. The window shape was neither square or rectangular and it needed to have more clarity in this.

This could be achieved by a range of means, not necessarily through decoration. The brick was welcomed as relevant, but the Panel urged care regarding the white stone banding, and that it seemed not to be an honest interpretation of that seen on surrounding houses – it needed a stronger reason for being there.

The Panel felt that despite various elements of the design, the building was still reading as a ‘brick box’. The lack of step down to the south and the semi-basement added to the feel that the building was still working against the topography. One suggestion was to have different levels for each half of the building.

The Panel noted that although on a prominent corner site, the building made no attempt to achieve anything architecturally with the corner – attention being drawn away from it. It was felt that this was not well done and needed to be better acknowledged, whatever the design approach – the corner needed to be ‘unlocked’. The Panel were also concerned about how the building ‘met the sky’ and felt that there was a need for more articulation in the roof form.

The Panel felt that certain ‘random’ ornamentation’ was not necessary and that inspiration should be taken from good contemporary architects who worked in brick. Whilst the building was too dominant on the south side, adjacent to the white building on Woodside it was a little weak. A little more work was needed on car parking arrangements and landscaping, to avoid ‘left-over’ space which could become scruffy. The Panel also recommended the applicant to draw to scale some extended street elevations of both streets to show how the proposal related to them and to help in addressing the issue of the rhythm of the street.

VERDICT: **AMBER**

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**Item 2:** Pre-Application, 16/P2942, **Wellington House**, 60-68 Wimbledon Hill Road, Wimbledon

Pre-Application – Notes Confidential

VERDICT: **GREEN**

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**Item 3:** Pre-Application, 16/P4231/NEW, **41-47 Wimbledon Hill Road**, Wimbledon

Pre-Application – Notes Confidential