

# **SUPPLEMENTARY AGENDA 2 PLANNING COMMITTEE A**

Date of Meeting: **WEDNESDAY, 4 NOVEMBER 2020 TIME 7.30 PM**

PLACE: **MICROSOFT TEAMS VIRTUAL MEETING**

Members of the Committee are summoned to attend this meeting:

## **Membership Councillors:**

**James-J Walsh (Chair)**  
**Sophie Davis (Vice-Chair)**  
**Obajimi Adefiranye**  
**Patrick Codd**  
**Liam Curran**  
**Carl Handley**  
**Octavia Holland**  
**Pauline Morrison**  
**John Paschoud**  
**Luke Sorba**

The public are welcome to attend our committee meetings, however, occasionally committees may have to consider some business in private. Copies of reports can be made available in additional formats on request.

**Kim Wright**  
**Chief Executive**  
**Lewisham Town Hall**  
**London SE6 4RU**  
**Date: Tuesday, 27 October 2020**

**For further information please contact:**  
**Claudette Minott Committee Officer**  
**2nd Floor Civic Suite**  
**Catford Road SE6 4RU**

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# SUPPLEMENTARY AGENDA 2

	<b>Order Of Business</b>		
<b>Item No</b>	<b>Title of Report</b>	<b>Ward</b>	<b>Page No.</b>
3.	<p>HESPER HOUSE, WELLS PARK ROAD, SE26 6RQ</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• This addendum provides a response to a late representation received following the agenda publication.</li></ul>	Forest Hill	1 - 6

Committee	PLANNING COMMITTEE A	
Report Title	Hesper House, Wells Park Road, SE26 6RQ	
Ward	Forest Hill	
Contributors	Samuel James	
Class	PART 1	4 <sup>th</sup> November 2020

## 1 ADDENDUM

1 This is an addendum to the planning committee agenda published 27<sup>th</sup> October 2020 in respect of Planning Committee A on 4<sup>th</sup> November 2020

2 This addendum provides a response to a late representation received following the agenda publication for Item 3 (Hesper House, Wells Park Road, SE26 6RQ). This representation was received 29<sup>th</sup> October 2020 and is from the Sydenham Hill Ridge Neighbourhood Forum (SHRNF). The submission is attached as **Appendix 1**.

3 The representation sets out two issues, which are addressed below.

*Lack of consideration of Lewisham Characterisation Study, March 2019*

4 The letter asserts that the Committee report has not considered the Lewisham Characterisation Study (March 2019). It is noted that the Characterisation Study is not an adopted Development Plan document, and it therefore does not form a part of the Lewisham Local Development Framework.

5 The letter also takes issue with officers' reasoning in the report at paragraph 72, where it is argued that the area "*exhibits a mixture of urban and suburban characteristics*".

6 Paragraph 72 of the report sets out the character of the area for the purposes of applying the London Plan Density Matrix. Whilst the surrounding area does not exhibit all of the 'urban' characteristics as defined by the London Plan it also does not fall within the 'suburban' definition, and therefore the officer reasoning that the site falls within an area of mixed character in the report is sound.

7 It is not considered this contradicts the findings of the Lewisham Characterisation Study. The Characterisation Study is not adopted planning policy and is not intended to be used for density calculations. The officer conclusions around density remain unchanged.

*No reference to Recommendation to refuse Planning Permission for a comparable application, 2 Sydenham Hill, DC/19/114486, in July 2020*

- 8 The letter asserts that 2 Sydenham Hill, a putatively refused scheme under appeal that is close to the application site, should have been taken into consideration and assessed in the same way as Hesper House.
- 9 All applications are considered on their individual merits based upon the policies in the local development framework, and there is no need for officers to directly consider other applications within the area that do not directly adjoin or impact the site. The officers' report outlines why the design of the current proposal is considered to be acceptable within the context of the application site.
- 10 For Committee Members' information, the application at 2 Sydenham Hill is not considered comparable to the current application site. It is a highly prominent corner site opposite Crystal Palace Park, and the proposed building would be sited close to the pavement. In contrast the Hesper House site is not on a corner, and the proposed building would be sufficiently set back from the pavement.
- 11 Application DC/19/114486 is therefore not a material consideration for the Committee.

**29 October 2020**

**To Head of Planning, Lewisham**

**Dear Ms Talbot,**

**Re: Hesper House DC/19/113716**

*“Demolition of existing buildings on site and the construction of a 5-storey building (plus basement for parking) consisting of 7x three bedroom and 3 x two bedroom self-contained dwellings at the site known as Hesper House, Wells Park Road, SE26, incorporating 10 off-street parking spaces.....”*

**Summary:**

I am writing on behalf of Sydenham Hill Ridge Neighbourhood Forum.

We are concerned by the lack of consistency in the Planning Officer’s Report on Hesper House Planning Application DC/19/113716 in considering, as part of the Recommendation to Approve process:

- (1) either the Lewisham Characterisation Study, and / or
- (2) the planning decision made by another Lewisham Planning Officer in our Neighbourhood Area for a comparable development in the similar time period.

**(1) Lack of consideration of Lewisham Characterisation Study, March 2019**

The Lewisham Characterisation Study of March 2019 characterises the area around Sydenham Wells Park, in which Hesper House is located, as characterised by “free form **suburban** blocks”.

Set out below is the extended relevant text from Lewisham Characterisation study:

*“8.2.18 The Sydenham Hill neighbourhood is focussed on Sydenham Wells Park. The area is characterised by its free form **suburban** blocks set within communal landscaped gardens on spacious and tree-lined streets. The hilly topography is a key feature and many of the streets offer panoramas towards the city and the West End...”*

*(Source: pages 178 – 179 of Study)*

There is no suggestion in the Lewisham Characterisation Study that our Sydenham Hill Ridge Neighbourhood area “exhibits a mixture of urban and suburban characteristics, and does not clearly fall into either setting as defined”, as described in the Planning Officer’s Report on Hesper House application (*see Paragraph 72*).

The argument by the Planning Officer of “a mixture of urban and suburban characteristics”, which is fundamental to the case for recommending this development proposal, seems to

us to flatly contradict and/or shows a lack of awareness of the Lewisham Characterisation Study.

By way of aide-memoire, on the Council's website, it states in relation to the Characterisation Study:

*"The study provides the evidence for policies set out in the Lewisham **LDF Core Strategy** and acts as a general reference document for the council and residents, developers, designers, planners and other stakeholders."*

**(2) No reference to Recommendation to refuse Planning Permission for a comparable application, 2 Sydenham Hill, DC/19/114486, in July 2020**

*Reference: "Astra Palace Hotel 2 Sydenham Hill: DC/19/114486 | Demolition of existing hotel (Use Class C1) and erection of a part four and part five-storey building comprising 9 self-contained flats..."*

In the case of 2 Sydenham Hill, which is within our Neighbourhood Area and close to the Hesper House site, a different Lewisham Planning Officer recommended turning down an application for a similar sized development, filed almost contemporaneously with the Hesper House application, on the following grounds:

"The proposed development, by reason of siting, and excessive scale and height, would appear as an overbearing form of development that would fail to respond sympathetically to the character of the surrounding area and the prominent corner location..."

"The proposed siting, height and scale of the development would serve to impact detrimentally upon the amenities of neighbouring occupiers by way of reduced outlook and increased sense of enclosure, contrary to Core Strategy Policy..."

Surely similar arguments to those used in DC/19/114486 by the Lewisham Planning Officer may apply equally in the Hesper House case, or at least need to be considered in the Planning Officer's Report on DC/19/113716?

**Conclusion:**

We draw attention to this apparent lack of consistency in the context of the Planning Committee A which will consider the Hesper House Planning Application on 4<sup>th</sup> November 2020.

**Next steps:**

We invite the Planning Department to respond to our concerns.

As is our custom, we send a copy to each of the five Lewisham Ward Councillors whose wards include parts of our Neighbourhood Area, so they are each aware of the Forum's

emerging concerns as we set out about carrying out our Early Engagement Survey and preparing first draft of elements of the Forum's Neighbourhood Plan.

We are also copying in local Civic Societies and Lee Neighbourhood Forum, all of whom have provided the Forum in its set-up phase with valuable experience (to be clear, none of these organisations have any responsibility for this letter), to ask whether they also see a similar pattern of inconsistency outside our own small Neighbourhood Area.

We would like to find out whether the Hesper House Officer's Report is representative of a broader problem across Lewisham.

As the Hesper House application is to be decided by Lewisham Planning Committee next week, we are also sending a copy for the attention of the Secretary to that particular Committee meeting; and we ask the Secretary to draw the attention of the Chairman to our concerns.

Yours sincerely

Stephen Weil  
Secretary  
Sydenham Hill Ridge Neighbourhood Forum (SHRNF)  
Private home address: 75 Sydenham Hill, London SE26 6TQ  
E: [news@sydenhamhillridge.london](mailto:news@sydenhamhillridge.london)

***Background to Sydenham Hill Ridge Neighbourhood Forum (SHRNF)***

*Sydenham Hill Ridge Neighbourhood Forum (SHRNF) and Sydenham Hill Ridge Neighbourhood Area (SHR Neighbourhood Area) were designated by Lewisham and Southwark in March 2020.*

*SHRNF has been involved in looking at and responding to various planning applications within the SHR Neighbourhood Area during its early stages and has developed a methodology based on walkabouts and consultation.*

Cc:

Claudette Minott, [committee@lewisham.gov.uk](mailto:committee@lewisham.gov.uk) Property Ref LE/73/I/TP

Lewisham Ward Cllrs whose wards include parts of Sydenham Hill Ridge Neighbourhood Area:

- Cllr Chris Best
- Cllr Sophie Davis
- Cllr Liam Curran
- Cllr Leo Gibbons
- Cllr Peter Bernards

Forest Hill Society/ Michael Abrahams

Sydenham Society/ Annabel McClaren  
Lee Neighbourhood Forum/ Sarah McMichael