

MINUTES OF THE PLANNING COMMITTEE A

Tuesday, 6 August 2024 at 7.30 pm

PRESENT: Councillors Peter Bernards (Chair), Andre Bourne, Liz Johnston-Franklin, and Luke Warner.

OFFICERS PRESENT IN PERSON: North Area Team Leader - Development Management; Planning Officer and Committee Officer.

OFFICERS PRESENT REMOTELY: Monitoring Officer, Senior Planning Lawyer for the Director of Law and Corporate Governance, Senior Committee Manager, Planning Officer.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor John Paschoud, Councillor Liam Curran, and Councillor Hilary Moore.

1. **Declarations of Interests**

No interest was declared at the meeting.

2. **Minutes**

RESOLVED that the minutes of the last meeting held on 11 June 2024, be confirmed, and signed as an accurate record.

3. **68 Ravensbourne Park Crescent, London, SE6 - DC/24/135333**

3.1 The Planning Officer gave an illustrative presentation to the Addendum Report under consideration at the meeting. The Addendum Report stemmed from the original report considered by Members on 11 June 2024, wherein the Committee approved planning permission for the construction of 5 two-storey dwellinghouses, together with cycle parking, refuse storage and associated landscaping on the east side of 68 Ravensbourne Park Crescent, SE6.

3.2 In considering the submission, the Committee received clarification from the Officer that the recommendations in the approved scheme were granted subject to the conditions that were stated therein, however, the completion of the unilateral undertaking remained unchanged. Thereafter, following complaints by residents about the decision that was taken when the scheme was approved, the local Planning Authority concluded that the original application should be reported back for Members to consider minor updates and the history of the proposed site, including matters relating to the historical buildings and the provision of local open space in the vicinity.

3.3 In clarifying the rationale for the update, the Planning Officer submitted that although the proposed site was next to an area of archaeological priority, it did not bear any weight on the planning application that was considered before the scheme was approved because the site was not located within the

archaeological priority area. Moreover, the proposed site was not identified as open space within the Lewisham's Parks and Open Space Strategy 2020-25 nor was it located in an area of open space deficiency for district parks or local, small and pocket parks. The Planning Officer also drew the Committee's attention to the approved scheme to highlight that there were 5 parks within 1km of the site, not 14 as stated in the original report.

3.4 The Committee heard submissions by the applicant and noted the following:

- That the applicant's team engaged extensively both with the Council's Planning Team during the pre-application process and with residents during consultation.
- That the proposed site would be a car free development and the applicant would secure a unilateral undertaking preventing future occupants from accessing parking permits.
- That overlooking into premises in Ravensbourne Park and Ravensbourne Park Crescent would be minimised using obscured windows in the proposed site and extensive planting.
- That the proposed development would contribute to the Borough's annual housing target by delivering 5 new dwellings. In addition to that, the proposal would introduce extensive landscaping, native species of plants and a pocket park including a wildlife conservation area.
- That the applicant would adhere to the two additional conditions recommended by the Committee on 11 June 2024 regarding the following:
 - Upgrading of the gate for the side access to 68 Ravensbourne Park Crescent.
 - Installation of low- level lighting along the route adjacent to the southern boundary of the proposed site.

3.5 With the understanding that the information in the Addendum report did not materially affect the merit of the original planning application, Councillor Luke Warner moved the recommendation on the proposal, including the two conditions previously imposed, which was seconded by Councillor Liz Johnston-Franklin and voted upon. The Committee

RESOLVED

Unanimously

To GRANT planning permission for the construction of 5 two-storey dwellinghouses, together with cycle parking, refuse storage and associated landscaping on land on the east side of 68 Ravensbourne Park Crescent, SE6,

- Subject to a unilateral undertaking and to the conditions and informatives as outlined in the report, with additional conditions as follows:

- i. That the side access to No. 68's rear garden would be paved and secured with a lockable gate.
- ii. That steps would be taken to ensure high-quality lighting design and installation in order to prevent adverse impacts of light pollution which can have a detrimental impact on biodiversity and wildlife, local character, pedestrian environment, residential amenity and views of the night sky.

4. SYDENHAM HIGH SENIOR SCHOOL, 19 WESTWOOD HILL, LONDON, SE26 6BL - DC/24/135436

4.1 The Planning Officer gave an illustrative presentation of the report, with a suggestion that the Committee should grant planning permission for the demolition of the existing caretaker's cottage, the sixth form building, and the single storey of the lodge building.

4.2 The Committee noted the report, and that after the demolition works, the applicant would deliver the following:

- A three-storey building to the front of the site.
- A new sports pavilion at the rear of the site.
- A two-storey extension and alterations to the facade, and
- Installation of steel walkway with glass balustrade and air source heat pump to the lodge building, together with new railings and associated landscaping at Sydenham High Senior School, 19 Westwood Hill SE26.

4.2.1 In considering the submission, the Committee asked questions on the following matter:

(a) Clarification about Transport arrangements. Officers responded as follows:

- That during the internal consultation period, the Council's Highways officials requested additional information relating to sustainable mode of transport and, they suggested that the applicant should provide a School Travel Plan to address Highways' concerns, which should be secured via Section 106 Legal Agreement.
- That because the site was in an area that would be considered as Controlled Parking Zone (CPZ) in the future, the Council's Highways officials also requested that the applicant should demonstrate how students and staff members would use more sustainable mode of transport after implementation of the proposal.

4.3 The Committee heard submissions by the applicant and her agent. The agent advised he was also acting as the architect in relation to the application. Both advised the Committee as follows:

- That the school had failed to retain a number of pupils going into the sixth form in recent years due to its outdated facilities. Hence, the proposal under consideration. Considering that, the applicant would be providing suitable teaching space on the school site by replacing spaces that were no longer fit for purpose.
- That the applicant undertook effective consultation exercise during the pre-application period including engagement with the Council Planning Team, the local community, and the Lewisham Design Review Panel.
- That the applicant would address concerns about overlooking by planting canopy trees along the western side of the site to provide an obscured boundary to neighbouring properties.

4.4 In response to questions raised, the applicant's team advised the Committee on the following matters:

- a) *Number of pupils.* It was stated that the applicant had no intention to increase the capacity of the school in terms of pupils' numbers. However, with the new up-to-date facilities to be provided, the applicant hoped that sixth form students' numbers would be retained, and that would bring the overall capacity in the establishment to an increase of approximately 7%.
- b) *Noise during the construction period.* It was stated that noise caused by construction works would be managed under the Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) to be submitted by the applicant and approved in writing by the local planning authority prior to the commencement of development works on the proposed site.
- c) *Noise and disturbance after completion of the development.* It was stated that pupils were currently using outside spaces within the grounds of proposed site, and such arrangement would continue after completion of the development works. Therefore, it was unlikely that the expected increase in students' numbers of approximately 7% would create an unusual noise disturbance when compared to the existing use of the outside premises grounds during classroom breaks and lunch time periods.
- d) *Main Entrance.* It was clarified that, for health and safety reasons, Amberley Grove entrance point would temporarily be used by sixth form pupils to enter and exit the school during construction works. After completion of the development works, sixth form pupils' main entrance would revert to Westwood Hill.
- e) *Communication with the community.* The applicant stated that she was determined to maintain a positive dialogue with parents and residents during the construction period. She advised the Committee that the school would set up a hotline and an email address for parents and residents to raise immediate concerns relating to new site during construction.

4.5 The Committee was addressed by two residents who advised that they were residing respectively at Westwood Hill and Amberley Grove. They advised the Committee that they were objecting to the proposal because of the following reasons:

- That the proposed development was much larger than the existing site and would not present a tangible benefit to the community because the increase in the number of students would be minimum.
- That the proposed development would have a significant negative impact on residents due to the increase of noise pollution and traffic congestion in the area during the proposed construction works.
- That, upon completion, the proposed development would overlook onto neighbours' properties and the new canopy trees would not act as a visual barrier in the short or medium term due to the time it would take them to grow into mature, large trees.
- That the community engagement with the school during the pre-application period in October 2023 was ineffective as only 6 people attended.
- That the use of the school entrance gate in Amberley Grove would cause disruption to the residents who were already experiencing disturbance due to construction works taking place at the back of the building.

4.6 In response to questions raised by the Committee in relation to the objectors' concerns about overlooking, the Officer made the following clarifications:

- That the proposed development would not result in overlooking and loss of privacy of the adjoining properties because of the following reasons:
 - Although the proposed development would introduce a three-storey block compared to the existing caretaker's building, it would be located at a sufficient separation distance of 21 metres to ensure no unreasonable overlooking into neighbouring properties.
 - That the proposed West Block would be located at approximately 27m from the block of flats at Westwood Hill and would consist of window openings on its west elevation to serve the stairwell, which was considered a transitional space.
 - That because of the typology of the land, with Westwood on a higher ground level than the site, the proposed Entrance Building would sit below the maximum height of the neighbouring properties.

4.7 In deliberating on submissions made at the meeting, the Committee sought further clarifications from the applicant's team about traffic management measures to be adopted during the construction period and noted the following response:

- That Amberley Grove entry point would serve as a temporary pedestrian entrance for pupils arriving on foot from Westwood Hill and for the entrance of the school minibus that would drive into the school ground from the back of the site. It was stated that there were no plans for construction traffic to affect Amberley Grove during the development work on the site.

4.8 In reaching a decision on the application and considering responses by the Officer regarding traffic and parking management issues, the Committee proposed that an additional informative should be added as a reassurance that residents in the area would not be adversely affected by contractors parking their vehicles at Amberley Grove during the proposed development works. With the additional informative, Councillor Andre Bourne moved the recommendation on the proposal, which was seconded by Councillor Luke Warner and voted upon. The Committee

RESOLVED

Unanimously

To GRANT planning permission for the demolition of the existing caretakers cottage, 6th form building and a single storey of the lodge building and the construction of a three-storey building to the front of the site, a new sports pavilion at the rear and a two storey extension and alterations to the facade, installation of steel walkway with glass balustrade and air source heat pump to the lodge building, together with new railings and associated landscaping at Sydenham High Senior School, 19 Westwood Hill SE26:

- Subject to a S106 Legal Agreement and to the conditions and informatives as outlined in the report, and to add a new condition 3(j) to state as follows:
 - That the Construction Environmental Management Plan should include a line on best endeavours to prevent contractor parking on Amberley Grove.

The meeting ended at 9:00 PM

The Chair