

1 DETAILS OF THE DEVELOPMENT

Ref: 18/02458/PRE
Location: 30-38 Addiscombe Road, Croydon, CR0 5PE
Ward: Addiscombe West
Description: Residential redevelopment of the site to provide circa 140 flats
Applicant: London & Quadrant (L&Q)
Agent: Aaron Peate, Indigo Planning
Case Officer: Katy Marks

2 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 2.1 The site is currently vacant, however planning permission has previously been granted for a five/six storey building to provide 62 flats. Since this permission was granted, L&Q have bought the site and are seeking to provide more flats on the site. The current scheme is a part 8 storey, part 18 storey building providing 137 flats.
- 2.2 The scheme has been discussed at a series of pre-application meetings and several iterations of the scheme have been reviewed by the Council's planning officers, the Place Review Panel (PRP) and the Greater London Authority (GLA). Discussions have focused on the appropriate heights and massing, impact upon the locally designated view of No.1 Croydon, quality of accommodation and affordable housing.
- 2.3 The views of members are sought on the proposals, with particular regard to the following key issues:

Affordable housing:

- 2.4 The Applicant is seeking to maximise the amount of affordable housing on site with aspirations for 50% delivery with a 50:50 split between affordable rent and intermediate products. Officers consider the percentage of affordable housing to be positive. The Committee's views are sought on the tenure and housing mix of the affordable housing.

Design, Massing and Views:

- 2.5 The site is considered to be a transition site for tall buildings (defined in the OAPF as an 'Edge Area' for tall buildings) and within a newly designated protected local view from Sandilands tram stop of No.1 Croydon (a locally listed building). Having reviewed the Applicant's initial modelling, PRP and GLA comments, Officers feel that the massing is an appropriate response to the context. The Committee's views are sought on the height of the proposed tower and its relationship to No.1 Croydon and the design and massing of the 'mansion block'.

Ground Floor Layout and Site Landscaping:

- 2.6 Officers support the general layout of the site (with amenity space around the protected tree) and the provision of servicing to the front of the site from Addiscombe Road. However, Officers and PRP have raised concerns about the limited activation to the ground floor frontage and the legibility of the front of the site. PRP also suggested that

a visual link should be provided through the building to the amenity space to the rear of the site and raised concerns about the landscaping to the west of the site which would have limited light and use. The Committee's views are sought on the layout of the ground floor and landscaping of the amenity space.

3 LOCATION DETAILS

Site and Surroundings

- 3.1 The site is a vacant plot of about 0.35ha to the southern side of Addiscombe Road. The last known use of the site was for residential purpose. Planning permission has been partially implemented with the demolition of previous residential property on the site and part construction of the floor slab for the 1997 permission (see details below).
- 3.2 The site is subject to a tree preservation order which covered two trees: a Yew tree (to the front of the site) and Holm Oak (to the rear). The yew tree was removed in 2014 (with permission) but no replacement has yet been provided. There are two existing vehicle access points to the site, one to the front on Addiscombe Road and one to the rear from Addiscombe Grove. The rear access is a shared service road owned by Easy Hotel. The Applicant has limited access rights over this shared road.
- 3.3 The site has a number of designations in the Croydon Local Plan 2018 including:
 - Croydon Opportunity Area
 - Site Proposal no.174 for residential redevelopment (for 49 – 141 properties)
 - Addiscombe Road is a Local Distributor Road (and part of the tram network)
 - The site is partially within a Local Designated View from Sandilands Tram stop of No. 1 Croydon which is designated as a Local Landmark and is a locally listed building)
 - The site is located adjacent to the Croydon Metropolitan Centre
 - The site is located within the setting of the locally listed No.1 Croydon
- 3.4 The Public Transport Accessibility Level (PTAL) of the site is 6b, which is the highest level of accessibility. The site is within about 250m of East Croydon station.
- 3.5 The site is located with Flood Risk Zone 1. However, parts of the sites are modelled as being at risk from surface water flooding.

Planning History

- 3.6 The following planning decisions are relevant to the application:
 - 97/02323/P Demolition of existing building and erection of 1 five storey and 1 four storey buildings comprising 4 three bedroom and 32 two bedroom flats; erection of refuse enclosures; formation of vehicular access and provision of 44 parking spaces.

Approved and implemented.
 - 16/02864/P Planning Permission Granted for erection of five/six storey building to provide 31 two bedroom, 14 one bedroom and 16 three bedroom flats, formation of vehicular access and provision of associated landscaping and car parking.

Approved with legal agreement

3.7 The site is located in close proximity to a number of recent development sites. The following sites have planning permission for development:

- 28-30 Addiscombe Grove (17/02680/FUL) Permission granted for demolition of existing buildings including parking garage and redevelopment of the sites for a part 9, 20 and 21 storey building comprising 153 residential dwellings (Class C3) and a single storey sub-station; hard and soft landscaping, cycle and car parking facilities; plant areas and other ancillary works.

4 PROPOSAL

- 4.1 The proposals seek the erection of a part 8 storey, part 18 storey building to provide 137 flats. The building would have an L-shaped form providing a large amenity space around the protected Holme Oak in the south eastern corner of the site. The 8 storey part of the building (the 'mansion block') would provide a continuous building frontage to Addiscombe Road. The 18 storey tower would be set back, linking to the rear of the mansion block. The building would have two cores accessed from the front of the building on Addiscombe Road.
- 4.2 The current proposals include 50% Affordable housing with a 50:50 tenure split. The housing mix includes 10% family sized 3 bedroom properties and 41% 2 bedroom 4 people properties.
- 4.3 Amenity space is proposed in the form of private balconies for each flat in line with London Plan standards and a large shared amenity space to the rear of the site is proposed and additional space to the roof of the mansion block. The large amenity space is being designed to include child play space in line with standards.
- 4.4 Servicing would take place from Addiscombe Road. There would be 7 car parking spaces, including one car club space which would be accessed from the service road from Addiscombe Grove. The site would provide cycle storage and bin storage within the footprint of the building.

5 PRP RESPONSE

- 5.1 The panel applauded the level of affordable housing proposed and agreed that the site definitely has the potential to accommodate additional development to the consented scheme and that the current scheme has some merit. They felt that the site is an important gateway scheme to the town centre and therefore significant further design development was required. Their main comments were as follows:
- The development requires its own unique and coherent architectural character
 - It needs to mediate the transition between the tall building zone and the neighbouring suburban context and the mansion block could benefit from being reduced in height for greater visual distinction between it and the tower.
 - The western facing flats of the first 6 storeys would have an poor outlook and daylight
 - The design of the public realm and communal amenity space requires significant enhancement
 - The ground floors require additional activation including a visual link through the building

- North facing single aspect flats and north facing balconies are not supported
- The form of the tower should be altered to provide more design interest and reduce overshadowing and further refinement to the balcony design
- Southern entrance to the site and buildings should be enhanced

5.2 The Applicant has begun to evolve the scheme to respond to these comments including undertaking massing studies to consider whether the building could be broken up further to address the transition of the site and views through the site.

5.3 Whilst it is noted that the Panel suggested that the mansion block should be reduced in height (and additional height added to the tower element), Officers are comfortable with the height of the mansion block and have concerns that additional height to the tower element would negatively impact upon the relationship between the development and No.1 Croydon in the protected view. The height of the mansion block, whilst larger than other development in the street scene does not represent a significant increase in height to the neighbouring flats and office building. Officers consider that the massing and bulk of the mansion block could be rationalised through design and materials rather than requiring reduced heights or more significant breaking up of the block suggested by the Panel.

5.4 Since PRP the Applicant has sought to make amendments to the scheme and are exploring the following:

- Creation of a visual link through the building at street-level
- Recessing the tower balconies
- Developing an approach to materials and detailing to soften the building (in particular the northern façade of the mansion block)

6 MATERIAL PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

6.1 The main planning considerations are:

1. Principle of development including
2. Townscape and visual impact
3. Housing Quality for future occupiers
4. Impact upon Neighbours
5. Transport
6. Environmental Impact, Sustainability and Flooding
7. S106 obligations

Principle of Development

Residential

The residential redevelopment of the site is supported. Planning permission has previously been granted for this use and the site is allocated in the Local Plan for a residential development. The proposals would increase the density of the development above that of the previous schemes but in line with the site allocation (which suggests up to 141 units would be appropriate, based on the London Plan density matrix).

Housing Mix

- 6.2 The proposals currently seek to provide 10% of units as 3 bedroom properties which would meet the requirements for family accommodation in this part of the Opportunity Area as set out in the Local Plan (Policy DM1). Overall, 51% of units would be family sized units when including the 2b4p flats which would significantly exceed the current minimum requirement.

Affordable Housing:

- 6.3 The Applicant is a Registered Provider of affordable housing and is seeking to maximise the number of affordable units brought forward on this site. The Applicant's current aspirations is to provide 50% of the units as affordable housing, of which 50% would be affordable rented units and 50% shared ownership (which equates to 33 affordable rented and 36 shared ownership flats).
- 6.4 The Local Plan (policy SP2) seeks a minimum of 15% on site as a baseline minimum (with a review mechanism or donor site where the amount is less than 30%) and have a target of 50% with a 60:40 mix of affordable rent to shared ownership. The tenure mix would not meet the Council's preferred tenure mix. The Applicant has indicated that the family accommodation would be secured across all tenures though the precise layouts have not yet been confirmed.
- 6.5 No affordable housing was provided as part of the 1997 permission and the 2017 permission secured only 18.3% affordable (7 affordable rented units and 4 shared ownership). The anticipated affordable housing offer would present a significant uplift in the number of units which is supported by Officers.

Townscape and Visual Impact

Tall building, massing and protected view

- 6.6 The townscape context of the site varies in terms of its urban grain. Surrounding the site to the north, south and east are a mixture of 2-storey houses and low-rise blocks. To the west is No.1 Croydon (24 storeys tall), site for the approved Pocket Living tower (21 storeys tall), East Croydon Station and associated development sites.
- 6.7 The site is located adjacent to the Croydon Metropolitan Centre, but within the OAPF. It sits within the 'edge area' (as defined in Local Plan policy CM38.4) where tall buildings may be appropriate where it can be demonstrated that there will be limited negative impact on sensitive locations and that the form, height, design and treatment of a building are high quality.
- 6.8 The proposal also partially sits within the local view from Sandilands Tram stop towards the locally listed No.1 Croydon as designated in Local Plan policy DM17. Development within this view should be positioned such that they minimise any intrusion on the silhouette of No.1 Croydon and that they have a visible difference in height. This is to avoid blocking the view or coalescing with the locally listed building.
- 6.9 In principle, officers are satisfied that a tall building would be appropriate on this site, but the height and massing must respond to the relationship with No.1 Croydon. Concerns were raised with earlier design options where the tower element of the development was set further forward in the site and overlapped with the silhouette of No.1 Croydon. The Tower element has been set further back in the site and the Applicant has modelled the impact in order to demonstrate that it would have a satisfactory relationship with No.1 Croydon.

- 6.10 The arrangement of massing is a 'mansion block' plus tower. The mansion block is 8 storeys and faces onto Addiscombe Road, but is set back from the road to allow for landscaping and servicing access.
- 6.11 The tower is 18 storeys and is set in the south-western corner of the site, closest to the approved Pocket Living scheme. The applicant has also looked at a wider tower of 16 storeys tall. This wider tower resulted in the eastern and western elevations being notably wide and led to some overlap with the silhouette of No.1 Croydon. The proposal for 18 storeys is closer in height to No.1 Croydon tower, but still results in sufficient difference in height to ensure that the locally listed building remains the most prominent building within the view corridor. The arrangement of massing across the site is broadly supported and follows the "tower and podium" form advocated by the OAPF.

Site layout, amenity and internal layout

- 6.12 The current layout of the ground floor results in a largely inactive frontage facing onto the forecourt due to plant and servicing arrangements. Officers have advised that the level of inactive frontage should be reduced and that the Applicant should consider how the elevation will be treated to help minimise the appearance of inactive frontage where it is unavoidable. The Applicant is exploring ways in which to reduce to inactive frontage and provision of a visual link through the building of the private amenity space in response to comments raised by the GLA and PRP.
- 6.13 The landscape and forecourt design should help to define the relationship with the road and tram and provide a legible entrance for pedestrians. This has to be balanced against the need to provide servicing access which cannot take place to the rear of the site due to access rights. The design of the forecourt remains to be resolved and particular importance needs to be placed on the different uses for this space (pedestrian and cycle access and servicing) and how the forecourt relates to the street and integrates into the public realm. The quality of the public realm facing onto Addiscombe Road and tree planting are also important to ease the relationship with suburban scale housing opposite the site and to maintain the character of the street scene.
- 6.14 The south eastern part of the site would provide shared amenity space around the focal point of the mature protected Holme oak tree. This is provided in addition to private amenity space in the form of balconies for each flat. The amenity space must provide sufficient child play space to meet Local Plan standards and should be designed to a high quality to ensure it is well used. Officers have encouraged the Applicant to provide additional amenity space to the roof of the mansion block.
- 6.15 RPR raised concerns about the amenity space to the west of the site as this is narrow and will have limited light. The use and layout of this space needs further resolution.
- 6.16 Officers have advised that the balconies should be recessed where possible particularly to the front elevation of the mansion block and to the tower to ensure that these spaces are useable for residents and provide a more streamline and elegant appearance to the tower. Discussions are ongoing to resolve these concerns.
- 6.17 Within the building, there would be two cores. The widths of these corridors and the associated lobbies have been increased as the design has evolved. But the corridor which links flats in the mansion block and the tower core is long and lacks natural light. The Applicant has explored ways in which to improve light to the ground floor and floors

within the smaller footprint of the tower. However, Officers have advised that further work is required to minimise long unappealing artificially lit shared access routes in the lower floors of the building. The Applicant is currently exploring solutions to this.

- 6.18 Discussions relating to the internal layouts are ongoing and limited information has been provided to officers to date about the layouts and window position of individual flats. Officers have some concerns about potential overlooking between apartments and outlook for some of the flats within the lower floors of the mansion block. The fenestration layout and internal layout of the flats will require careful positioning to ensure that the flats are of a suitable quality.

Elevational treatment

- 6.19 The Applicant has made references to the chamfered corners of the NLA tower and the elevational grid witnessed on 20th Century and recent blocks within Croydon. This has largely been through a defined grid that helps to frame openings, with splayed reveals. Whilst this approach is supported by officers, there are concerns that this ambition has been watered down and the elevational appearances need further work to ensure they are successful. The framing of the mansion block and balcony design are of particular concern and remain unresolved.
- 6.20 The ground floor facing the forecourt needs work to ensure the elevational treatment helps to minimise the appearance of the inactive façade. Officers have advised the Applicant to consider a range of material treatments to give a varied sense to the façade at ground level and minimise it appearing largely closed off from the street. Officers have also advised that the entrances may be framed in some manner as part of the elevational treatment to emphasise them, drawing the attention of the pedestrian away from any inactive frontage. Since PRP, the Applicant has also been exploring ways in which to open up a visual link through the mansion block of the residential amenity behind.
- 6.21 The applicant is proposing to use a mixture of brick with bronze cladding to emphasise certain elements of the building. The material palette is supported by officers, but requires refining to provide clarity around exactly which materials would be used where.

Housing Quality for future occupiers

- 6.22 The flats are being designed to meet National space standards. Previous iterations of the development resulted in a significant number of north facing single aspect units. The Applicant has sought to reduce these in number which is positive, with only 8 remaining within the most recent plans (1 to each floor of the mansion block).
- 6.23 All of the flats should have good quality daylight, sunlight, outlook and privacy. The privacy of the flats on the ground floor needs further resolution and it has not yet been possible to assess the quality of the outlook and light for several flats as the fenestration and internal floor layouts have not yet been confirmed by the Applicant. The Applicant is aware that a daylight and sunlight report will be required to demonstrate that all flats will have ample daylight. This is particularly important in relation to the lower levels of the tower where some flats would have a tight relationship with the flank of Go-ahead House to the west and with the Pocket Living scheme to the south.

- 6.24 Two cores would be provided. These should meet London Plan standards for no more than 8 flats per core on each floor. The corridors and access cores need further refinement, particularly to ensure that there is sufficient light to the long corridors and that the entrances are generous and legible. The Applicant is currently seeking to introduce natural light to the longer cores which would improve the quality of these spaces.
- 6.25 All flats are being designed with private balconies in line with London Plan standards. The shared amenity space/ child-play space has been designed around the protected Holm Oak tree to the rear of the site. This allows the scheme to make the most of this feature and provide a large shared space, but discussions are ongoing with regards to the layout and landscaping of this area. The quantum required under the Local Plan is dependent upon tenure and mix but based on the emerging scheme about 386sqm is required. Officers have recommended that the applicant should make use of the roof of the 'mansion' block for additional amenity space.

Impact upon Neighbours

- 6.26 To the east the site is bounded by residential development of between 3-5 storeys. The building line of these flats overlook the rear of the site. There are two storey houses to the south east of the site and north of the site (on the opposite side of Addiscombe Road). The tallest part of the development is set away from the sensitive south eastern corner of the site where the existing tree would provide some screening of the development. The relationship between the mansion block and the lower density neighbouring properties presents a step towards the taller and larger massing of development within the Metropolitan Centre. A daylight & sunlight assessment has been requested to demonstrate that the development would not result in significant harm to the neighbours.
- 6.27 To the rear of the site (to the south), permission was granted in early 2018 for redevelopment of the neighbouring site at 28-30 Addiscombe Grove (Pocket Living). Construction has commenced on the Pocket Living development. This neighbour is separated from the rear of the site by a shared service road and the Pocket Living scheme has habitable room windows overlooking the site. These Pocket Living windows are positioned to ensure that there would be no direct overlooking to the windows or balconies in the extant permission (which would have been about 14m away). The proposed development seeks to increase the distance between the two developments, but would also increase the height of development on this part of the site. Officers have requested that the applicant undertakes a daylight and sunlight assessment to ensure that the relationship does not result in significant harm the daylight to the Pocket Living flats.
- 6.28 The site is adjoined by a five storey office building to the west. This office building is currently in use and it is located in the designated Office Retention Area in the Local Plan. The Applicant has been advised to consider the impact of the proposals upon potential redevelopment to ensure that the proposed development does not prejudice the future redevelopment of this neighbouring site.

Transport

- 6.29 The site currently has vehicle access to the front and rear. The extant permission proposed access and parking both to the front and rear of the site.

6.30 The proposed scheme is being developed as a car free scheme with 7 parking for disabled parking and a car club space (in line with the emerging London Plan standards which requires parking for 3% of flats). Parking permit restrictions would be secured by legal agreement. Cycle storage is proposed within the footprint of the building in line with London Plan standards. The car parking spaces are currently proposed to the rear of the site accessed from Addiscombe Grove along the shared access road. Parking was previously proposed to the front forecourt, this has now been removed which provides more landscaping opportunities. An in-out vehicle access is proposed to the front of the site to allow for servicing (bins and waste) and deliveries. Servicing and deliveries must take place off Addiscombe Road to ensure that they do not interfere with the tram network. As stated above, the design of the forecourt is still to be resolved but the provision for servicing from Addiscombe Road is accepted in principle.

Environmental Impact, Sustainability & Flooding

6.31 The applicant has been made aware of the requirements for passive design, zero carbon development, and connection to the forthcoming Croydon Decentralised Energy Network. Discussions are forthcoming in relation to air quality, overheating, surface water drainage, micro climate and lighting impacts.

6.32 The site is within Flood Zone 1 (Low Risk) and partially within an area where there is potential for surface water flooding. The Applicant has been advised that a flood risk assessment and drainage strategy would be required to support a planning application.

S106 obligations

6.33 At this stage it is envisaged that planning obligations will be required to mitigate the impacts. Discussions are forthcoming in relation to the heads of terms, but it is anticipated that these would include the following:

- Affordable housing (on site)
- Employment and Construction training
- Air Quality
- Zero carbon off-set
- Car club
- Travel Plan
- Car permit restrictions
- Transport for London contributions

7 SPECIFIC FEEDBACK REQUESTED

7.1 In view of the above, it is suggested that members focus on the following issues:

- i. The proposed quantum of development and quantum, tenure and size mix of affordable housing
- ii. The proposed height of the tower and mansion block, including the impact upon the designated view of No.1 Croydon
- iii. The ground floor design particularly the frontage, core arrangements and forecourt design

iv. The emerging landscape design

8 PROCEDURAL NOTE

- 8.1 This is the first presentation of the scheme to the Planning Committee. The proposal is reported to Planning Committee to enable Members to view and comment on it prior to submission of a formal application. The proposal is not a planning application. Any comments are provisional and subject to full consideration, including public consultation and notification as part of any subsequent application.
- 8.2 A planning application for the proposed development would be referable to the Mayor of London under the Mayor of London Order 2008. The Mayor's views have not yet been formally sought, but the applicant has met with the Greater London Authority's officers through their pre-application advice service (including consideration by Transport for London), prior to the submission of a formal planning application.