

Committee Report

Committee Date:			
Item No.	14		
Site Address:	St John's Road, Battersea, London SW11 1QL		
Application Number:	2020/1966	Date Validated:	10/02/2020
Ward:	Northcote	Officer:	C. Jagg
Application Type:	Application for Full Permission		
Proposal:	Redevelopment of the site to provide a mixed use development in buildings ranging in height between 7 and 22 storeys plus basement, to provide a 289 -bedroom hotel with 1158 sq.m. of retail use (class A1), 64 sq.m. of cafe/restaurant use (class A3), 1519 sq.m. of office use (class B1), and 146 sq.m. of community floorspace (class D1)		
Recommendation Summary:	Approve Subject to Legal Agreement CIL Liable		

REASON FOR REFERRAL:

This application has been referred to the PAC as the proposal involves providing five or more residential units and as the grant of permission would be dependent upon a planning obligation (under Sections 4 and 3 of "Delegations to the Head of Planning and Development").

APPLICATION DETAILS:

Redevelopment of the site to provide a mixed use development in buildings ranging in height between 7 and 22 storeys plus basement, to provide a 289 -bedroom hotel with 1158 sq.m. of retail use (class A1), 64 sq.m. of cafe/restaurant use (class A3), 1519 sq.m. of office use (class B1), and 146 sq.m. of community floorspace (class D1)

Community Infrastructure Levy Estimate

CIL Estimate	
Mayoral	Borough
TBC	TBC

The actual amount of CIL can only be confirmed once all relevant details are approved and any relief claimed.

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS:

The main considerations material to the assessment of this application have been summarised as:

- Land use and principle of development
- Design including layout/public realm, external appearance, height and impact upon heritage assets
- Affordable housing, density and housing mix
- Quality of accommodation
- Neighbour amenity, including daylight/sunlight, outlook, privacy, noise and disturbance
- Highways and transportation
- Flood risk and drainage
- Contamination
- Archaeology
- Waste management

- Sustainability, ecology and arboriculture
- Statement of Community Involvement
- Planning obligations

1 Land Use & principle of development

The demolition of the existing building would offer an opportunity for the comprehensive redevelopment of the site, and the chance to enhance the appearance of this prominent town centre location, whilst at the same time maximising the use of this brownfield site, in accordance with the objectives of the NPPF.

2 Design including layout/public realm, external appearance, massing, height and visual impact upon heritage assets

The architects have analysed the architectural character of the context and developed a strategy for the new building that would ensure that it would not only relate well to its listed neighbours but would also reinforce the character of the street and enhance the appearance of the conservation area.

It is accepted that the tower would be clearly visible from certain viewpoints within the Conservation Area. In particular, the new building will be a prominent feature on the skyline. This is an axial view looking away from the conservation area buildings and framed by trees and would focus on the tower in the middle distance. However, the building is a distinctive feature of high architectural quality and could be considered to provide a positive feature to the skyline. It would be clearly perceived as being within another character area. It would appear as a distant, high quality and distinctive building and is considered not to cause substantial harm to the setting of the conservation area.

The architectural form would be unique and provides the development with a positive focal point and landmark feature. A landmark in this location would be justified in townscape terms because of the site's location. In particular the building would be a distinctive feature with the potential to be a high-quality addition to a local townscape that is, at present, unremarkable and lacking any real sense of place.

The tall building assessment is set out below:

Criterion i): Contribution to social inclusion, environmental health and economic viability of the borough

The scheme as a whole will make a very significant contribution to the economic vitality of the area. In addition, the scheme has been carefully designed to comply with all current standards of environmental health and to allow access for all members of the public regardless of disability.

Criterion ii): transport assessment and travel plan demonstrating innovative and sustainable approaches to transport issues including reduction in private vehicle usage and improved access to public transport.

Transport Officers assessed the proposal as acceptable. A transport assessment and framework travel plan are provided with the application, and the transportation impacts are considered in more detail in the Transport part of this report. The proposed public realm would improve pedestrian safety and access across the site.

Criterion iii): micro-climate effects

There will be some climatic effects arising from the tall building in terms of impact on sun/daylight, however there is sufficient sunlight to the public realm and amenity areas.

Criterion iv): show through a detailed design analysis that the proposal will have an acceptable visual impact on surrounding areas (through computer visualisations and photo montages).

It is accepted that the tall building would provide a significant and positive contribution to the townscape. It would provide a high quality landmark feature where it would strongly define a stretch of modern and large scale development. It is considered that it would appear as a high quality addition to local and wider views.

Criterion v): assess the impact on the existing historical environment through a conservation impact assessment identifying how the surrounding area's character or appearance or the setting of a listed building will be preserved or enhanced.

The modelled views demonstrate that the development, while clearly visible, would not appear dominant and would relate to the scale of the residential blocks in the middle ground of the view, therefore not detracting from the ability to appreciate the special character of any heritage asset.

Criterion vi): describe how the proposed land use mix supports and complements the surrounding land use pattern and local community

The application site is identified within the Local Plan and is allocated for residential mix-used redevelopment. Therefore, the proposed uses would be compatible with the existing surrounding context.

Criterion vii): describe how the massing and scale of the proposal creates a form that is well integrated into surrounding development.

The height of the tower is fully acknowledged; however, it must be viewed alongside the other tall buildings that are located within close proximity of the site. When viewed cumulatively, the appearance is integrated with the surrounding buildings.

Criterion viii): demonstrate how the proposal successfully sits within the existing townscape and landform by way of a townscape/landscape impact assessment.

It would be visible from the Conservation Area and will have an impact on its setting. This has been judged to be harmful but there is the possibility that some would regard the presence of a new high-quality piece of architecture appearing on the skyline in some views from the conservation area as a positive feature. The harm identified is considered to be less than substantial to two conservation areas and listed buildings in the area, and in view of the public benefits of the scheme, the proposal is considered to have addressed the criterion and paragraph 134 of the NPPF.

Criterion ix): describe how the proposal positively contributes to streetscape, particularly including active frontages and legible entrances.

Active and engaging frontages would exist along all elevations.

Criterion x): describe how the proposal responds positively to any characteristic alignment and setbacks of surrounding areas.

The high quality of the public realm proposed on the site, and how it would tie in with improvements to adjacent areas of the site has been set out in detail in the sections above, and below, and are considered one of the key public benefits of the proposed scheme.

Criterion xi): describe how the proposal has been designed to create high quality public spaces.

The proposed new public realm has been designed using high quality materials to maximise use by both the passer by and those using the building.

Criterion xii): describe how the proposal will encourage public access.

The proposed landscape works would include cycle parking and will create an active public space with new trees.

Criterion xiii): describe long term maintenance commitments in a maintenance programme including details for the long-term management and maintenance of public spaces.

This would be secured through a recommended condition to ensure criterion xiii) is successfully addressed.

Criterion xiv): submit a management plan, for which the freeholder is responsible, specifying how the landlords will manage the development.

This would be required by a proposed condition to ensure criterion xiv is successfully addressed.

Criterion xv): demonstrate the financial and technical credibility of design.

The team working on this scheme, and the architectural team have a proven track record in providing examples of good quality schemes.

For the reasons set out above, the proposed tall building is considered to successfully address all of the individual criteria of tall building policy.

The detailed analysis above indicates that the application complies with the criteria within the Tall Building assessment as set out in the local plan.

4 Density

The density of the development is driven by the height and form of the proposed building and its impact on neighbour amenity, which is considered to be acceptable.

5 Affordable housing

The applicant's appraisal scenarios have been reviewed by independent property consultants BNP Paribas (BNPP) who concluded that based on current day values and costs, the proposed scheme cannot support any additional contribution to affordable housing.

6 Quality of accommodation

Levels of sunlight were only carried out to the rooms at ground or first floor levels with the assumption that if they are broadly acceptable, the units on the upper floors would have improved levels of light.

7 Amenity Impact: Daylight/Sunlight

Some surrounding properties would experience reductions in VSC of major significance. Whilst this is regrettable, it is considered given the small numbers of windows affected and to bedrooms, the overall impact is considered minor adverse in relation to this building as a whole.

As submitted, the proposal would cause a noticeable loss of daylight to half of the assessed windows, i.e. they would experience more than a 20% reduction in VSC as set out in the BRE daylight guidance. However, on balance, the resulting VSC results to these windows along with the distribution through the affected rooms when considered with the material consideration of the redevelopment of this site, the impact to the overall amenity of these neighbouring properties from the loss of daylight cause by the proposal is considered not to warrant the refusal of the application.

8 Outlook

CGI images have been supplied as part of the applicant's submission which demonstrate the visual impact of the development in both close up and slightly longer distance views. These clearly demonstrate the scale of the proposed buildings, emphasising the considerable alteration from the existing situation and the inevitable impact on the outlook from existing residential properties as a result. This resulting relationship is, however, not untypical of recent developments in both this and other boroughs in London, where given the urban location of sites it has come to be accepted that taller more dense developments such as are likely to be found within some residents more immediate outlook.

9 Privacy

Existing side facing windows would be at a short distance from side facing windows in the proposed development. As a result, there would be mutual overlooking between the two with some loss of privacy. To a degree this is inevitable given that each is relying on part of their neighbouring site for their outlook by placing windows in the side elevations close to their site boundaries.

10 Noise and disturbance

The applicant's noise consultants have confirmed that it is likely that there would be some increase in noise due to reflections from the proposed new building. However, it is considered unlikely that this increase would be significant. The conclusion is that the proposed development would not significantly adversely affect amenity at the nearest neighbouring properties.

11 Highways and transportation

Whilst there would be an impact on the number of people using public transport, the overall transport strategy, access and car parking provision are considered to be appropriate for the site.

The Transportation team has concerns regarding bus capacity as although the applicant's consultants have concluded that the overall impact of this scheme on the public transport network can be accommodated. However, a financial contribution to bus service improvements could be secured by a planning obligation to address this and provide appropriate mitigation.

12 Arboriculture and Ecology

The Council Arboricultural team have objected to the removal of the existing trees due to the loss of amenity to the main street. These comments from the Arboricultural team are noted and it is acknowledged that the loss of these trees would be harmful to the aesthetics and public realm of the street. However, the visual benefits of the new frontage outweigh the loss of the trees.

13 Waste management

The Waste Strategy Manager considers there to be sufficient storage space within the scheme.

14 Conclusion

In terms of neighbour amenity, there would be some impact to neighbouring properties as a result of the development. However, given the extent of infringement and the townscape context of substantial buildings within an urban location, the level of impact has been assessed as acceptable.

While there would be some harm to the area and listed buildings, this would not be substantial and, on balance, would be outweighed by the positive benefits of the scheme.

RECOMMENDATION: Approve Subject to Conditions and Legal Agreement (CIL Liable)