

Minutes of a meeting of the Planning Applications Committee held at the Town Hall, Wandsworth, SW18 2PU on Tuesday, 14th January, 2025 at 7.30 p.m.

## **PRESENT**

Councillor Belton (Chair); Councillor Ayres (Deputy Chair); Councillors Apps, S. Boswell, Colclough, Govindia, Humphries, Justin, Owens and White.

The Committee proceeded to consider the business set out on the agenda for their meeting (a copy of which is interleaved, together with a copy of each of the supporting papers).

### **1. Minutes - 12th December 2024**

The minutes of the Planning Applications Committee meeting held on 12th December 2024 were confirmed as a correct record.

### **2. Declarations of Interest**

In respect of Application 1 (2022/1835), Booker Cash & Carry and BMW Car Service Garage, 41-49 and 49-59 Battersea Park Road, SW8 5AL, Councillor Apps declared that she would not be participating in this item as she had previously raised an objection in relation to it.

### **3. Applications (Paper No. 25-02)**

The Head of Development Management referred to the Local Plan update that was included in the late items of correspondence circulated before the meeting. The Local Plan was published for a six-week consultation period, which included six policies proposed to be updated. The draft policies were at an early stage, and at this stage, officers recommended that limited weight be given to the draft policies in decision making for applications that come forward in the next couple of months. Following the conclusion of the consultation, it was anticipated that further advice would be provided on the weight that could be given to individual policies.

#### **i. Application 1 ([2022/1835](#)) - Booker Cash & Carry and BMW Car Service Garage, 41-49 and 49-59 Battersea Park Road, SW8 5AL**

The Planning Manager, Strategic Development Team, gave a presentation on the application. The Committee was told that the applicant had lodged an appeal for non-determination of the application, so the proposal was before them to consider whether they would have been minded to approve the application had an appeal not been lodged. The Legal Advisor to the Committee also noted that if the Committee took a different view, then it would be useful for officers to

take forward the reasons for refusal to the appeal, where the inspector would make their own considerations. If the Council did not take a view on the application then it was at risk of having costs made against it.

In response to a question on how the situation had arisen, the Head of Strategic Development referred to the various discussions officers held with the applicant and suggested amendments, noting that officers had been thorough with considering the application and it had been delayed in coming to the Committee as officers sought for standards to be met. Officers had been made aware of the applicant's intention to appeal for non-determination. It was questioned whether the planning obligations and conditions included in the report would be upheld if the appeal was successful. The Head of Strategic Development noted that they would be put forward but the inspector could change the obligations and conditions should they be minded to.

The late items of correspondence circulated before the meeting set out some additional information, including a correction to the reference to a previous planning application 2015/6813 that was determined on 19th October 2016, not March 2019 as set out in the report on page 18. This application had been implemented and the BMW garage on the site had been demolished.

It was noted that page 23 of the agenda reports pack referred to the application being in the Shaftesbury and Queenstown Ward, which was correct at the time of submission, but the application site was now situated in the Nine Elms Ward.

The impact on the Peabody site was raised, in particular due to the loss of light. The Planning Manager referred to page 93 of the agenda pack that summarised the daylight impacts, noting that there would only be 7 rooms that would have greater daylight impacts than the consented scheme and there would be 18 more rooms affected in Phase 4A. The Head of Strategic Development commented that the daylight guidance sets out that in regeneration areas in the city there would invariably be some impact, and he noted that to balance the different ambitions of maximising site potential and increasing housing then there would be some impact, but not so severe as to be refused in officers' opinions. An independent sunlight and daylight assessor had considered the impact on the Council's behalf.

Councillor Justin, Ward Councillor for Nine Elms, reported that he had spent a lot of time in the new development meeting a lot of residents, and noted that they did not need student accommodation but needed family friendly housing. He commented that the student accommodation would only be taken up by foreign students as there was no university or higher education facilities in the immediate area. He referred to the student accommodation already situated in Vauxhall that was empty and questioned why a third block of student accommodation was needed in the area, commenting that the scheme was not in keeping with the area and residential accommodation was needed. He also commented that the proposal was now four stories higher than the first application.

The amount of student accommodation in Nine Elms, not just in Wandsworth but also Lambeth, was questioned, as 800 units on Albert Embankment had recently been given permission by Lambeth Council, and there were blocks for King's College in Vauxhall and Palmerston Court in Wandsworth. The Head of Strategic Development noted that policies in the Local Plan were led by the Greater London Authority, and in respect of student accommodation it looked at the need across London, and the role higher education institutes in London had on the economy. It had been identified that there was a significant demand and undersupply of student accommodation in London and particularly within half an hour's commute of the main institutions, such as Imperial King's College and the London School of Economics (LSE). The LSE had expressed interest particularly in this site; no institutions had yet signed up to the development but would not likely to until planning permission was granted. In response to a question, the Committee was told that there was potential for the buildings to be adapted to residential accommodation if there was no demand from the institutions.

One Member suggested that there could be an informative proposed that the affordable student accommodation was given as a priority to UK students. The Head of Strategic Development commented that if proposed this could be passed onto the inspector, and noted that the GLA sets the guidance on affordable housing.

In respect of the scale of the development, the Head of Strategic Development commented that the height of the buildings was below the maximum permitted. He noted that in terms of policy the neighbourhood area was specified as 800 metres from the site, and within 800 metres walking distance there was three institutions. Belmont Street, that was just over the borough boundary, had 250 student beds, Palmerston Court had 867, and the amount for this proposed site was 765. If this application was approved, it would total 4.3% of the Wandsworth housing delivery, which the Head of Strategic Development noted was not over concentrated.

Councillor Ayres expressed concern over the scale of the development, and that the proposed space for bicycles was in a large basement area that was probably ill-lit and not suitable for young people.

The 800 internal bathrooms on the site was referred to, and concerns were raised over the sustainability of the development, with the number of extraction fans proposed and the bathrooms being unnaturally lit and could lead to mould. It was noted that half of the bathrooms could have had natural ventilation if they were differently positioned.

Questions were also raised over the definition of affordable student accommodation. Councillor Govindia questioned the amount of construction jobs the development would generate given the construction method of the units off-site, and the Committee was told that the number of jobs were based on the predicted construction of the development. In respect of the economy generated by students, a Member commented that this amount was London wide and not in the borough. The Head of Strategic Development noted that some of this would be generated in the borough, and there would be secondary employment

generated from local shops and businesses.

In response to a question about the amount of disabled car parking spaces, the Committee told there would be 5 spaces.

Councillor White felt there was a need for student accommodation in London but expressed concerns over the amount of student accommodation on this development which would be overbearing. The lack of outdoor amenity spaces was referred to. The distance from Mansion Square of 10.1 metres was questioned whether there should be a minimum of 18 metres. The Planning Manager commented that there was not a distance set in the Local Plan, and the 18 metres distance was for developments outside of densely built urban areas, and the distance to Mansion Square was further away in the proposed scheme than what had been consented. Pages 88 to 89 of the agenda pack sets out the distances, which were not direct but at an angle and windows faced away.

In response to a question about the layout of the corridors, the Committee was told that this was due to fire regulations for means of fire escape and also to help reduce any noise.

Concerns were expressed over the reduction in housing accommodation, with the change of use of the development from being wholly residential to student accommodation, with some residential. Councillor Humphries expressed concern over the intensification of use of the site which would be greater in this application than the current one. There would be an impact on deliveries and servicing which he felt would be more intensive and an increase of delivery mopeds for the number of students on the site. The Head of Transport Strategy noted that the number of trips done by students in terms of road traffic would be less than residential, so the number of trips would be reduced in peak hours, as there would be more walking trips. In relation to servicing on the site, the application had been accompanied by a detailed transport assessment, and the assessment generally demonstrated that the servicing needs of the development could be accommodated by the proposed arrangements. Two conditions in the report covered access to the servicing bays and also a delivery and servicing plan. The Head of Transport Strategy's view was that the development was acceptable in terms of traffic and servicing subject to the delivery of the conditions. Councillor Humphries felt that the impact would be greater than estimated, and there would be more of an impact by the amount of delivery bikes on the site.

Following the discussion, the Committee voted on the recommendation in the report, and by 4 votes to 5, the recommendation was lost.

It was then moved by Councillor Govindia, seconded by Councillor Humphries, that the Committee be minded to refuse planning permission due to the following reasons:

- The quantum height, and of the increased height of the proposal was excessive compared to the extant scheme.
- As a consequence of the increase in height and close proximity there would be an impact on the adjoining properties, in particular the Peabody site. There would be a loss of amenity and outlook for the adjoining blocks, with an

impact of overlooking the existing gardens as well in the amenity space on the Peabody site. There would be an overbearing impact on the neighbouring sites, particularly the homes in the Peabody site.

- Due to the change of use from being wholly residential to being overwhelmingly for student use with some residential. There was a balance between need and demand, and this was the wrong balance for land use, and for this site, given the demand and need for housing, and affordable housing in particular, was greater here.

By 5 votes for refusal, 1 against refusal, and 3 abstentions, the recommendation for refusal was agreed.

**RESOLVED** - *(5 for refusal, 1 against refusal, and 3 abstentions)* that had an appeal not been lodged against non-determination, the Committee was minded to refuse planning permission, for the following reasons:

- The quantum height, and of the increased height of the proposal was excessive compared to the extant scheme.
- As a consequence of the increase in height and close proximity there would be an impact on the adjoining properties, in particular the Peabody site. There would be a loss of amenity and outlook for the adjoining blocks, with an impact of overlooking the existing gardens as well in the amenity space on the Peabody site. There would be an overbearing impact on the neighbouring sites, particularly the homes in the Peabody site.
- Due to the change of use from being wholly residential to being overwhelmingly for student use with some residential. There was a balance between need and demand and this was the wrong balance for land use, and for this site, given the demand and need for housing, and affordable housing in particular, was greater here.

*(Councillor Apps did not participate in the above item).*

## ii. **Application 2 (2024/0574) - 20 Lydden Road, SW18 4LR**

In response to a question about meeting affordable workspace, the Area Team Manager (West Team), noted that the policies sought for affordable workspace first to be secured on site, but if that was not viable then it would allow for a contribution to be made.

Concern was raised over the distance of the disabled parking space as it was furthest away from the entrance of the building.

In response to questions about the colour scheme of the development and delivery times, the Committee was told that there were conditions covering these. The Head of Transport Strategy expected contractors to be members of the freight operators recognition scheme and to have cycling safety standards as well, and when the construction management plans came in, this would be checked.

There was also a condition on noise management and further information on that would be submitted for approval at a later date.

A Member referred to a complaint made about lack of community engagement and that some residents suggested that it would be good to have a local input into the sort of jobs and training potentially offered as a result of the financial contribution. The Area Team Manager (West Team) commented that the Economic Development Officer worked closely with developers on employment opportunities and training, ensuring as many apprenticeships were secured. Based on the size of the site, there might be between 15 to 20 apprenticeship places.

One Member commented on an intensification in the area and a change in the employment in that area. It was questioned whether any obligations in the Section 106 agreement would be imposed on the developer or the tenant of the site in relation to the apprenticeships. The Area Team Manager (West Team) responded that in the Section 106 agreement, the heads of terms set out that the obligations in it would go with the land.

A member referred to the intensification of more vehicles using the site and suggested there be a restriction on vehicles during school times, due to there being a school at the end of the road and there being a lot of pedestrian traffic at school times. The Head of Transport Strategy noted that it was standard that the construction would avoid school arrival and pick up times.

**RESOLVED** - *(9 for, 1 abstention)* that planning permission be granted as set out in the report, noting the additional information as set out in the late items of correspondence paper, subject to legal agreement, CIL liable.

**iii. Application 3 (2024/2673) - St George's Hospital, Blackshaw Road, SW17 0QT**

A Member praised the design of this application, particularly as it would be visible from Blackshaw Road.

In response to a question, the Head of Transport Strategy explained the two-way vehicle movements referred to in the report, giving an example of in most cases somebody will go into the hospital and come back out, so that was a two-way trip, however the staff would go in the morning and leave later in their shift which was one trip.

A Member referred to the biodiversity net gain (BNG) score of 4.6% which would be reached on site and the provision of off-site units to make up the mandatory 10%, and asked how this would be achieved. The Area Team Manager (East Team) noted that off-site credits could be bought, and there were conditions where evidence base had to be provided, and whilst a desire for the credits to be as close as possible to the borough could be expressed, the legislation did not specify where it should be located.

The 26 trees that were proposed to be removed were discussed and the categories of the trees were set out in page 249 of the agenda pack.

Replacement trees were included in the proposal, and officers felt that the removal of the trees was outweighed by the public benefit of the proposal.

A Member questioned if there were plans to capture the heat produced by the hospital. The Area Team Manager (East Team) commented that the buildings had to be highly thermally insulated and the proposal was exceeding the 35% minimum carbon savings required at 43%, and was one of the highest performing BREEAM Outstanding score officers had seen for some time. To achieve this score a range of areas would be looked at, such as the thermal capacity of the building, the machinery used, what recovery was used, how the building would be heated, etc.

The Committee asked that the signage at the hospital be considered for improvements.

**RESOLVED** - (*unanimous*) that planning permission be granted as set out in the report, noting the additional information as set out in the late items of correspondence paper, subject to legal agreement, CIL liable.

#### **4. Enforcement (Paper No. 25-03)**

##### **2024/0401/ENF - 60 Fairfield Street, SW18 1DY**

**RESOLVED** – To authorise issue of an enforcement notice and any other legal or direct action that may be necessary in order to secure the removal of the extract system from the property.

#### **5. Tree Preservation Orders (Paper No. 25-04)**

**RESOLVED** – That the following Tree Preservation Order be confirmed:

- (i) TPO 495/2024 – 12 Baskerville Road, SW18 3RJ (Wandsworth Common)

#### **6. Decisions (Paper No. 25-05)**

**RESOLVED** – That the report be received for information.

#### **7. Closure of Investigation Files (Paper No. 25-06)**

**RESOLVED** – That the report be received for information.

#### **8. Closed Appeals (Paper No. 25-07)**

**RESOLVED** – That the report be received for information.

The meeting ended at 9.30 p.m.