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London Borough Croydon

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05-Dec-2016



PART 7: Planning Applications for Decision

Item 7.1

1 APPLICATION DETAILS

Ref: [16/01880/P](#) (*Link to related documents on the Planning Register*)
 Location: 35 Cornwall Road, Croydon, CR0 3RD
 Ward: Broad Green
 Description: Demolition of existing buildings; erection of four storey building comprising 13 one bedroom 16 two bedroom and 3 three bedroom flats formation of vehicular access and provision of landscaping and associated parking spaces
 Drawing Nos: 01, 02, 03 RevB, 05 RevB, 06 RevB, 07 RevB, 08 RevB, 11 RevA, 12 RevA, 15 RevA, 16 RevA, 17 RevA, 18 RevB, 19, 22, 24, 25, 26.
 Applicant: Viridian Housing and Maytrix Group Ltd
 Agent: Suzanne Kimman
 Case Officer: Toby Gethin

1.1 This application is being reported to Planning Committee as objections above the threshold in the Committee Consideration Criteria have been received.

SUMMARY OF KEY REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

- The proposal would provide additional housing including affordable housing in an existing residential area.
- The application site is on a previously developed plot which has previous permissions for new housing.
- The Council's community facilities protocol has been sufficiently followed and no firm offers to buy the site for a community use have been received.
- The loss of local heritage value would not be significant and the locally listed park would not be harmed.
- The proposed building's appearance would be of a high quality and would not harm the area's surrounding character.
- There would be no detrimental impact on the amenity of adjoining occupiers.
- The proposal would not harm the safety and efficiency of the adjoining highway network and sufficient off-street car and cycle parking would be provided.
- No park trees or trees within the site worthy of future preservation would be lost, and the landscaping scheme would offset the loss of trees that would be removed.
- The risk of flood would be minimal and the proposal would decrease flood risk to surrounding properties.
- Future occupiers would have adequate living conditions.
- The proposal would not harm local wildlife/ecology.
- Adequate refuse storage and collection arrangements are proposed.

2 RECOMMENDATION

2.1 That the Committee resolve to GRANT planning permission subject to the conclusion of a s106 agreement to secure the following:

- The provision of on-site affordable housing

- Resident parking permit restrictions
- Engagement with car club provisions
- Monitoring fees.

2.2 That the Director of Planning and Strategic Transport is delegated authority to issue the planning permission and impose conditions [and informatives] to secure the following matters:

Conditions

1. The development shall be carried out entirely in accordance with the approved drawings and other documents submitted with the application.
2. Submission and approval of details and samples of external facing materials, including detailed scaled drawings covering transition of materials, depth of reveals, railings etc...
3. Submission of the following details:
 - External fully enclosed cycle stores sufficient for 51 cycles (locations, dimensions, materials/appearance, suitable access)
 - Bin store (dimensions and appearance)
 - Site/security lighting
 - Location of Electrical Vehicle Charging Points (number and locations).
4. Provision of a full landscaping plan (to include details of existing and proposed hard and soft landscaping and boundary treatment).
5. Submission of a detailed drainage strategy (SUDS) prior to commencement of work.
6. Compliance with the details and recommendations set out in the Flood Risk Assessment & Drainage Strategy (Revision A) dated 24 October 2016.
7. Compliance with the details and recommendations set out in the Extended Phase I Habitat Survey (dated April 2016) and the Bat Roost Assessment and Emergence and Return Surveys (dated June 2016).
8. Compliance with the details and recommendations set out in the 'Arboricultural Implications Assessment' report (ref J50.56, dated 6 May 2016).
9. Submission of an updated Travel Plan prior to occupation
10. Parking area hard surfaces to be made of permeable materials.
11. Highways agreement prior to commencement of work
12. Submission and approval of a construction logistics plan.
13. Compliance with the delivery management plan
14. Provision of pedestrian visibility splays prior to commencement of development
15. Provision and retention of the car parking area and access, cycle storage and refuse storage.
16. 35% reduction in CO2 emissions beyond 2015 Building Regulations.
17. Water usage limited to 110lts p/person p/day.
18. Any other planning condition(s) considered necessary by the Director of Planning.

Informatives

- 1) Removal of site notices
- 2) Code of Practice regarding construction
- 3) Any [other] informative(s) considered necessary by the Director of Planning

- 2.3 That the Planning Committee confirms that adequate provision has been made, by the imposition of conditions, for the preservation or planting of trees as required by Section 197 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

3 PROPOSAL AND LOCATION DETAILS

Proposal

- 3.1 Full planning permission is sought for the demolition of existing buildings and the erection of a four-storey building comprising 13x1 bedroom, 16x2 bedroom and 3x3 bedroom flats. A new vehicular access and parking area would be provided, along with provision of associated landscaping and a refuse store.
- 3.2 The existing building on the site would be demolished and replaced with a four-storey building consisting of brick and wooden cladding. A total of 32 flats would be provided. The applicant's intention is that all of the flats would be provided as affordable housing. The Council would secure (by means of a legal agreement) 50% of the units (16 flats) as affordable housing.
- 3.3 The proposal would result in the removal of some preserved trees on the site. Replacement trees and numerous shrubs would be planted.
- 3.4 The application was the subject of two consultation processes. This was because it was found (following the first consultation period) that the original application was deficient and included insufficient information. This included a lack of information regarding bats, an inadequate flood risk assessment and an incomplete community facilities protocol. During determination, the applicant addressed these issues by submitting amended and additional information. Given the new/ revised information received and that the application was subsequently considered to be a departure from the development plan (on flood risk grounds), a second consultation process was undertaken. This involved advertising the application as a departure and providing the public with an opportunity to consider and comment on the new details.

Site and Surroundings

- 3.5 The site is located on the south west side of Cornwall Road, diagonally opposite the junction with Westfield Road. It is rectangular in shape and is approximately 0.20 hectares in area, enclosed by fencing and railings. The closest part of Cornwall Road to the application site has a reduced carriageway width of between 3.5m and 4.5m. The area is located within a Parking Control Zone (CPZ).
- 3.6 The site is occupied by a variety of buildings including a brick constructed former church and attached two-storey house, a large dilapidated corrugated metal single-storey building with a pitched roof and a single-storey brick building (used as a Scout HQ). All are disused and appear to have been vacant for a considerable time.
- 3.7 The site is enclosed on three sides by Wandle Park, which is a Site of Nature Conservation Importance, Local Open Land and a locally listed Historic Park and Garden. There are a significant number of trees within and surrounding the site (in Wandle Park). Several of these trees are considered to provide important amenity value. As such, a Tree Preservation Order has been served (TPO No. 36, 2016), protecting trees of varying species around the outer boundaries of the site.

- 3.8 Given its location, the site is separated from other existing properties. The closest residential properties are on Westfield Road and Cornwall Road. These consist of two-storey residential terraced dwellings to the south and east of the site (on Cornwall Road and Westfield/Theobald Roads respectively). To the south of the site, on Cuthbert Road, there is a three-storey block of flats. Several commercial premises lie to the north/north-west of the site.
- 3.9 The site is statutorily listed as being located within Flood Zone 2. As identified in the Local Plan, the site is also within an area of High Density, an Archaeological Priority Zone and the Croydon Opportunity Area.

Planning History

- 3.10 85/00333/P – permission granted for continued use of premises for the storage, packing and distribution of gramophone records and tapes with ancillary offices.
- 3.11 90/00618/P – permission granted for continued use of premises for the storage, packing and distribution of gramophone records and tapes with ancillary offices.
- 3.12 92/02230/P – temporary permission granted for use of hall for storage and distribution of soft drinks and use of former church for storage purposes. Prior to this date there had been various storage/commercial uses on the site since the early 1960's which had the benefit of temporary planning permissions.
- 3.13 94/00115/P – permission refused for demolition of existing church; detached scout hall and warehouse buildings; erection of 2/3 storey building comprising 14x2 bedroom flats; alterations to vehicular access and provision of 17 parking spaces.
- 3.14 01/02412/P – application withdrawn for demolition of two community buildings at front; erection of a two storey building for use as shared housing for 6 residents leaving care and a single storey building for use as scouts store; formation of vehicular access and provision of a total of 15 parking spaces
- 3.15 06/05004/P – permission granted for demolition of existing buildings; erection of 4x3 three bedroom terraced houses with accommodation in the roofspace; a single storey church/community hall and two-storey detached house to be used as a Vicarage with attached garage; alterations to vehicular access; provision of access road and associated parking
- 3.16 10/03847/P – permission granted for Demolition of existing buildings; erection of 4x3 bedroom terraced houses with accommodation in the roofspace; a single storey Church/Community Hall and two-storey detached house to be used as a Vicarage with attached garage; alterations to vehicular access; provision of access road and associated parking (renewal of planning permission 06/05004/P). This permission was not implemented and has since lapsed.

4 CONSULTATION RESPONSE

- 4.1 The views of the Planning Service are expressed in the MATERIAL PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS section below.
- 4.2 Given the nature and location of the proposal, the following statutory consultees were consulted regarding the application:

- Historic England (no objection and no recommendation for any conditions);
- Lead Local Flood Authority, LLFA (no objection subject to planning conditions securing further details);
- Environment Agency (no objection); and
- Natural England (providing general advice on the protection afforded to bats).

5 LOCAL REPRESENTATION

5.1 The application has been publicised by way of four site notices displayed near the application site. As the application was subsequently considered to be a departure from the development plan, it was the subject of a further site notification process, being advertised in the local press and through the display of further site notices near the application site. The number of representations received from neighbours, local groups etc in response to notification and publicity of the application were as follows:

No of individual responses: 47 Objecting: 46 Supporting: 0

No of petitions received: 1 (objecting to the application, containing 154 signatures)

5.2 The following Councillors made representations:

- Councillor Stuart Collins, objecting to the application.

5.3 Several local groups also commented on the application. Their comments are addressed in substance in the next section of this report:

- Friends of Wandle Park (objecting)
- The Victorian Society (objecting)
- Apostolic Faith Assembly (objecting).

5.4 The following issues were raised in representations that are material to the determination of the application, and they are addressed in substance in the next section of this report:

- Overdevelopment;
- High density;
- No need for more housing/development;
- Application site is not brownfield;
- Local residents planning to form a Neighbourhood Forum/Plan (OFFICER COMMENT): the objector initially raising this issue was provided with advise in terms of how to progress such matters. It is however important to note that the Government is very clear that it will not be possible to use Neighbourhood Plans to stop development where it is being proposed in broad compliance with the presumption in favour of sustainable development);
- Loss of church and its history/heritage;
- Impact on Wandle Park (including the church's importance to the park's character and harm to recent improvements works in the park and on park visitors);
- Church should be re-used/converted;
- Other uses of the site/other proposed buildings (OFFICER COMMENT): some objectors suggested alternative uses and/or alternative replacement buildings. This includes an outline proposal for potential use of the site by the Apostolic

Faith Assembly and the Friends of Wandle Park. Use of the site is considered in detail below, but as the proposals for potential use of the site [including by the Apostolic Faith Assembly and the Friends of Wandle Park] do not form part of the planning application, such potential proposed uses are therefore not specifically considered further;

- Insufficient evidence provided of developer approaching community groups and that the Council's agreed protocol has been followed;
- Mixed and balanced communities and concern about additional affordable housing;
- Application inconsistent with enforcement action against nearby flat development on Theobold Road (OFFICER COMMENT): this relates to a different site and is therefore not directly relevant to this site and application;
- There are no buildings higher than two storeys within vicinity of the site and these should be the reference point for the development (rather than developments on the other side of the park);
- Out of character and scale and dominating to the surrounding area;
- Out of scale with the 1870s terraced cottages of surrounding streets;
- Site is in/should be in a conservation area (OFFICER COMMENT): the application site is not within or adjacent to a conservation area, which have been identified following a detailed review by the Council of their appropriate boundaries. The nearest conservation area is Church Road, located about 0.25km from the site, on the other side of Roman Way. It is therefore considered that the site is not within the setting of and would not harm the conservation area or that of the nearby to Old Town Masterplan area;
- Materials are not sympathetic to the surrounding area;
- Height will dominate area and block views;
- Trees would not screen the building in winter;
- Harm to/loss of protected trees;
- Highways (traffic and parking pressure; need for restriction on resident parking permits; narrow roads; TA flawed as assumes only ten cars; Wandle Park spaces will be used by new residents/their visitors);
- Safety of highway- and park-users;
- Harm to wildlife (including bats using the site and the need for a bat survey);
- Amenity issues (overlooking, increased noise and pollution, loss of light/sunlight);
- Safety/crime/social problems;
- Disturbance and pollution from construction (a justified concern but one which can be suitably controlled by CLP etc);
- No provision for children's play area;
- Flooding and drainage;
- Litter/rubbish issues;
- No communication direct to neighbours (OFFICER COMMENT): rather than sending letters to neighbours, the Council displays site notices near application sites in accordance with the Council's adopted protocol.

5.5 The following issues were raised in representations that are not material to the determination of the application:

- Property prices (OFFICER COMMENT): this is not a material planning consideration.

6 MATERIAL PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

6.1 The main planning issues raised by the application that the committee must consider are:

1. The principle of the development
2. Housing policy
3. The impact on the character of the area and visual amenity of the street scene
4. Residential amenities of adjoining occupiers
5. Parking and highway safety
6. Trees and landscaping
7. Ecology and wildlife
8. Flooding/Sustainable Urban Drainage
9. Living conditions for future occupiers
10. Refuse/recycling
11. Sustainability and energy
12. Contaminated land
13. Archaeology

The principle of the development

6.2 The Council primarily assesses planning applications against policies in the London Plan 2015, the Croydon Local Plan Strategic Policies 2013 (CLP1), the Croydon Replacement Unitary Plan 2006 (2013 Saved Policies, as identified in Appendix 4 of CLP1). For convenience, the plans are respectively referred to as the London Plan, CLP1, and CRUDP in the sections below.

6.3 The principle of development has two aspects:

- Provision of new housing; and
- Loss of community facilities.

These, along with various other issues raised by objectors, are considered in turn below.

6.4 In addition to this, flooding/flood risk is also relevant to determination of the application. The topic is considered in detail in a dedicated section below. However, it is relevant to note here that the site is partly within Flood Zone 2 and the application provides for the creation of residential units which is not necessarily required to support the Council's current five-year supply of housing. The application has therefore been treated as a departure from the development plan and has been advertised as such.

New Housing

6.5 The NPPF requires planning applications to be determined with a presumption in favour of sustainable development. Chapter 6 states that it is the role of local planning authorities to deliver a wide choice of high quality homes, widen opportunities for home ownership and create sustainable, inclusive and mixed communities.

6.6 Nationally and locally, there is a recognised need for new housing/accommodation. Subject to high quality design and a good standard of amenity for occupiers, the NPPF supports delivery of housing and a wide choice of homes and encourages the effective use of land by re-using land that has been previously developed (brownfield land, provided that it is not of high environmental value). It states that housing applications

should be considered in the context of the presumption in favour of sustainable development and supports the effective use of land that has been previously developed. The London Plan promotes a balanced mix of tenures to provide mixed communities and states that “*London desperately needs more homes in order to promote opportunity and real choice for all Londoners, with a range of tenures*”.

- 6.7 Policy SP2.1 of CLP1 states that to provide a choice of housing for people in socially-balanced and inclusive communities in Croydon, the Council will apply a presumption in favour of development of new homes, provided applications for residential development meet the requirements of Policy SP2 and other applicable policies of the development plan. It sets out that one way of doing this is “concentrating development in the places with the most capacity to accommodate new homes whilst respecting the local distinctiveness of the places and protecting the borough’s physical and historic environment”. SP2.2 states that the Council will not permit developments which would result in a net loss of homes or residential land. CRUDP Saved Policy H2 (Supply of Housing) provides support to housing subject to proposals respecting character and not resulting in the loss of protected uses.
- 6.8 There is a need for new homes both nationally and locally and there is strong national and local policy support for new housing. The need for the proposed development is therefore recognised and accepted and would result in the re-use of previously developed (brownfield) land. The provision of much need affordable housing (considered in detail below) adds further support to the proposal. The proposal would however result in the loss of a protected use (community facilities) which is addressed in the next section of this report.

Loss of community facilities

- 6.9 CLP1 Policy SP5.3 states that the Council and its partners will encourage the creation of healthy and liveable neighbourhoods by; (a) ensuring the provision of a network of community facilities, providing essential public services and (b) protecting existing community facilities that still serve, or can serve the needs of the community. For proposals which involve the loss of a community facility, applicants are expected to contact a list of community facility providers and groups to show there is no demand for the existing facility before a change of use or redevelopment will be considered acceptable. London Plan Policy 3.16 is also relevant, stating that proposals which would result in a loss of social infrastructure in areas of defined need for that type of social infrastructure without realistic proposals for re-provision should be resisted and that where the current use of a facility is no longer needed, boroughs should take reasonable steps to identify alternative community uses.
- 6.10 The previous use of the site by a church and a scout hut, both of which are community facilities, means that these policies are required to be properly considered and tested. The existing buildings on the site have been vacant for several years. The 2006/2010 permissions (both now having lapsed) indicate that re-development of the site is likely to be acceptable in principle. However, those permissions were for a mix of residential units and community use (a church/community hall) whilst the current proposal is for a solely residential scheme on the site and does not include the provision of community facilities on the site.
- 6.11 Before a solely residential development can be considered acceptable, the applicant has been required to follow the Council’s community facility protocol. This involves contacting community facility providers and groups to ascertain whether there is a realistic demand for the site and premises from other community facility groups and

providers. The protocol requires that if there are any expressions of interest from relevant organisations about use of the site for community facility, these will need to be explored.

- 6.12 Details of the applicant's approach to the community facilities protocol was submitted with application. The applicant's approach was acceptable in general terms and broadly in-line with the Council's requirements. However, not all organisations listed were successfully consulted by the applicant and during the first public consultation on the application, two local groups (Friends of Wandle Park and the Apostolic Faith Assembly – both of whom are not listed in the Council's community facilities protocol) objected to the loss of community facilities and indicated an interest in providing a community use from the site.
- 6.13 The Council therefore requested that the applicant undertake further engagement with these organisations (as well as fuller engagement with the other groups listed in the Council's community facilities protocol). The applicant subsequently submitted an updated Community Facilities Consultation Exercise (dated August 2016) setting out the further/full engagement undertaken, including with the Friends of Wandle Park and the Apostolic Faith Assembly.
- 6.14 The updated consultation exercise has been reviewed by officers who are satisfied that the protocol has been adequately followed; including attempts to engage in dialogue when interest has been expressed. It is therefore considered that the applicant has met the policy requirement.
- 6.15 During the second public consultation on the application (following the provision of further details during the determination period) representations (including from the Apostolic Faith Assembly) raised concerns that requests to access the site (to value it) was refused by the applicant. In response, the applicant has stated that they did respond to the Apostolic Faith Assembly's request, but that it was unfortunately not able to allow access onto the site. Officers believe that access difficulties relate to H&S and public liability issues; the site has become dangerous, in a state of disrepair and contains various health hazards including drug paraphernalia, overgrown vegetation and fallen branches. It is further understood that the Apostolic Faith Assembly did not respond to the agent's reply.
- 6.16 Given the dilapidated state of the site, the applicant's position (that the site is unsafe) is not considered unreasonable. Whilst full access would have assisted the church with valuing the site, the site is clearly visible from the public realm and there was nothing stopping the church from following up on the rejection of access and providing an offer to buy the site subject to planning and site investigation. It is therefore considered that the applicant has followed the Council's protocol and made best endeavours to identify any real interest in the site which involved an actual offer to purchase it.
- 6.17 The applicant has also provided details that the Scout Group which previously used the site have relocated their headquarters to the large church hall at Croydon Minster. The applicant has also provided details of community facilities available for hire in Croydon, with an accompanying map. This demonstrates that there are several sites within the borough that can provide community uses/facilities.
- 6.18 Following submission of the additional information by the applicant, the details demonstrate that the Council's community facility protocol was sufficiently followed and the relevant groups – including the additional two community groups objecting to the

application and expressing an interest in using/buying the site – were approached but no firm offer for the site has been put forward. It is therefore considered that the provision of a solely residential scheme on the site is acceptable in land-use terms.

Loss of the church/heritage issues

- 6.19 One of the NPPF's core principles is to 'conserve heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of this and future generations', and NPPF para 135 states 'The effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be considered in determining the application. In weighing applications that affect directly or indirectly non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset'.
- 6.20 During determination of this planning application, Historic England received an application to add the church to the List of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest (i.e. to list the church as a nationally designated heritage asset). The response from the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport was that the application would not be taken forward to a full assessment and the building would therefore not be added to the list.
- 6.21 The Council has also received requests to add the church to the local list. The Council is however unable to carry out local listings on an ad-hoc basis and any such local listing would have to form part of an update/review of the Local List SPD.
- 6.22 Significant concern has been raised by objectors about demolition of the church. Information has been provided by objectors, including a booklet (titled 'The Little Church in the Park, A Brief History of Pitlake Mission 1881-1968') setting out a detailed history of the church. It is understood that Cecilie Mary Parker designed a stained-glass window for the Victorian neo-gothic church. However, that window unfortunately no longer remains.
- 6.23 Loss of the windows has reduced the historic interest of the church through its association with Parker. It is however considered that the buildings have some architectural interest and therefore should be considered as a non-designated heritage asset.
- 6.24 Given this and the church's history, its demolition would result in the loss of some local heritage. Although the loss of the buildings would be total, the significance of the buildings (and their contribution to the locally listed park) is limited and therefore the overall level of harm is limited. Having regard to the public benefits of the scheme and NPPF para 135 (which requires a balanced judgement to be made having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset) the principle of its demolition and subsequent heritage loss is acceptable. No objection is raised to the loss of the buildings in this instance (subject to a planning condition securing a photographic building record of the church prior to its demolition). The reasons for this approach are as follows:
- the church is not nationally/statutory or locally listed, meaning there is limited protection afforded to its retention;
 - having been disused for a considerable period, the church (and all buildings on the site) is clearly in a poor state of repair and increasingly dilapidated condition;

- the church has some street presence, but this is limited due to high vegetation levels and a later building which presents a blank brick wall to the street frontage;
- the building has lost some of its original (heritage) features, such as Cecillie Mary Parker stained glass window. The principle of its demolition has also already been previously accepted given the previous recent planning permissions on the site.

Impact on the Locally Listed Historic Park and Garden

- 6.25 CRUDP Policy UC10 states that the Council will resist development proposals which would adversely affect the aspects of locally listed parks and gardens which led to their inclusion in either category.
- 6.26 The site lies adjacent to and is surrounded on three sides by Wandle Park, a locally listed historic park and garden. Objectors have raised concern that loss of the church and the proposed replacement building would harm the character of the locally listed park.
- 6.27 Wandle Park is included on the Local List of Historic Parks and Gardens due to “sufficient layout and features evident to reflect the design of the 1890s and important in local context as one of the oldest public spaces in Croydon”. The local list assessment description identifies St Edmund’s Church and Mission Hall as being located ‘lodge-like’ at the north east entrance to the park. Although not forming part of the layout or design for which the park is designated, the church is considered of some interest/relevance to the park due to its ‘lodge-like’ relationship which adds interest to views in the park.
- 6.28 The church was built in 1881 and thus separately to the park’s creation. The boundaries between the church and park are screened by vegetation, limiting views between the two. It is acknowledged that there would be greater visibility in winter when the deciduous trees lose their leaves, although a level of screening remains. The buildings do not present their principle frontage or entrances to the park; those elevations most visible are relatively blank elevations which limits the significance of those views that are present. These factors reduce the ‘lodge like’ relationship of the church to the designated park and thus the contribution the church makes to its interest. Whilst the demolition of the church would mean its contribution to the locally listed park is removed, given that the local designation does not rely or focus on the church and its contribution to Wandle Park is limited, the overall level of harm caused to the locally listed park would be limited. It is therefore considered that the proposal would not harm the park or the reasons for its inclusion on the local list.
- 6.29 Objectors have also raised concern that the proposal would harm the park’s recent improvement works and park visitors. Those works, funded by Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF), involved amongst other aspects de-culverting the River Wandle, creating new bankside and meadow habitats for wildlife, improvements to park facilities including upgrading the pavilion and café, improving play facilities, new seating, signage and interpretation, and a programme of activities for the public and volunteers.
- 6.30 Being set outside the park, the proposal would not directly affect or harm any of the improvement works at Wandle Park. In addition, the HLF website sets out that the “improvements have created a more welcoming area and altered people’s perception of crime and security in the park”. The proposal would result in removal of the existing vacant and increasingly dilapidated structures on the site and replacement with a building that would increase natural surveillance of the park. It is considered that this would positively assist with people’s perception of crime and safety in the park.

Development density

- 6.31 The site has a PTAL rating of 5-6a. With train stations and tram and bus stops nearby, the site is accessible by a range of public transport options. The site is also located within 800 metres of Croydon Town Centre. Using the London Plan definitions, the site is therefore considered to have central locational characteristics. The London Plan's Sustainable Residential Quality density matrix (covering habitable rooms and dwellings per hectare) sets out a density of 650–1100 habitable rooms per hectare (hrph) for sites such as this in 'central' locations. The density of the proposal would be 177.7 units per hectare or 425 hrph which would be well within (indeed below) the London Plan's density matrix. Whilst the site could therefore arguably have contained more units, the density is considered suitable given the site's setting adjacent to Wandle Park and its relationship to generally smaller two-storey single-family dwelling houses (and a lower density residential area). It is therefore not considered that the scheme would be an over-development of the site or provide an unacceptable level of density.
- 6.32 The proposal has been considered against other relevant Development Plan policies to ascertain whether it is acceptable in relation to all relevant issues. These are covered in detail below. Of relevance is the scheme's appearance and massing in relation to its surroundings, its impact on adjoining occupiers and (given the site is partly within Flood Zone 2) flood risk considerations. However, given the recognised need for new housing and the applicant has followed the Council's community facilities protocol (which has not resulted in any concrete interest leading to formal offers to buy the site) the proposal is supported in land-use terms.

Housing Policy

- 6.33 London Plan Policies 3.10-3.13 require Boroughs to seek to maximise affordable housing provision. CLP1 Policy SP2.4 states that developments should seek to provide 50% of housing units as affordable accommodation. If this cannot be met, a viability assessment must be submitted and verified to justify any reduced provision. Policy SP2.4 also indicates that there should be a 60:40 tenure split within the affordable housing provision between affordable (or social) rent and intermediate low cost home ownership including shared ownership.
- 6.34 There is a significant and pressing need for affordable housing both within the borough and across London. The proposal is to provide 100% on-site affordable homes.
- 6.35 In line with policy, the Council will secure 50% of the units (16 in total) as affordable housing via a legal agreement. This will consist of a mix of units (7x1 bed, 6x2 bed and 3x3 bed units) with a split of 62.5% affordable rent and 37.5% shared ownership. This is considered acceptable and will be secured by the S.106 Agreement. The scheme may ultimately not provide 100% affordable housing (as only 50% will be secured through the legal agreement). However, a scheme which does provide compliant (or even higher) levels of affordable housing in the borough is welcome given the current economic climate and the borough's significant need for affordable housing (as set out in the latest Strategic Housing Market Assessment).
- 6.36 Concern has been raised by objections that providing affordable housing on the site will harm the local community, resulting in an over-supply of affordable homes in the area and not lead to a mixed and balanced community (as per the London Plan). Balanced and mixed communities is clearly an important issue which needs consideration. Part C of Policy SP4.2 in CLP1 is also relevant, requiring development to enhance social cohesion and well-being.

- 6.37 Whilst it is acknowledged that 32 new flats will not be seen by neighbours as insignificant, the scheme is not considered to be substantial in relation to the need for and amount of new housing being constructed in the borough and across London; especially given the built-up nature of the surrounding area. For this size of scheme, it is not expected that a mixed community would be provided from within the development alone (although it should be noted that the scheme does provide a mix of unit sizes and tenure types, as set out below). The surrounding area includes a mixture of housing, including a significant amount of single-family dwelling houses in the immediate vicinity. New flats in the area would therefore result in a greater mix of unit types. In addition, only 50% of the scheme will be secured as affordable housing through the town planning process. The affordable housing will also be a mix of rental and shared ownership units. It is therefore not considered that the provision of affordable housing on the site would harm the local community or create an unacceptable mix of homes in the area.
- 6.38 Policy SP2.6 of CLP1 states that '*Council will seek new homes to meet the needs of residents over a lifetime and contribute to sustainable communities with the borough*)' and London Plan Policy 3.8 sets 10% of homes to be designed to be wheelchair accessible or easily adaptable for residents who are wheelchair users, in accordance with the GLA Best Practice Guide on Wheelchair Accessible Housing. The policy also sets a requirement for all new homes to be built to the Lifetime Homes standards.
- 6.39 The units would meet Building Regulations Part M (2) for accessible and adaptable homes. 10% of the proposed units (three of the ground floor units) would also be fully wheelchair accessible and three parking spaces would be provided on site for disabled users. The proposal also includes level access and a lift, meaning all floors would be easily accessible.
- 6.40 CLP1 Policy SP2.5 sets a strategic target for a proportion of new homes to provide three or more bedrooms. In this part of the Opportunity Area, the Council has a strategic target of 45% of all new homes to have three or more bedrooms. The unit mix proposed is 13 one-bed (circa 40%), 16 two-bed (50%) and 3 three-bed (circa 10%). Whilst the provision of 3 three bed units would not meet the strategic target, larger two-bed four person homes would provide an element of family sized homes. In this case, the proposal incorporates 12 two-bed four-person units. Taking this into account, the scheme would provide circa 47% larger family homes, which is considered acceptable and would therefore support delivery of the London Plan's aim for mixed and balanced communities.

The impact on the character of the area and the visual amenity of the street scene

- 6.41 Chapter 7 of the NPPF requires good design. Policy 7.1 of the London Plan states that the design of new buildings and the spaces around them should reinforce or enhance the character of the neighbourhood. Policy 7.4 seeks high quality design responsive to its surroundings. Policy 7.6 seeks high quality architecture and materials and design appropriate to its context. CLP1 Policy SP4.1 requires development of a high quality which respects and enhances Croydon's varied local character and contributes positively to public realm, landscape and townscape. CRUDP Saved Policy UD2 requires development proposals to reinforce and respect existing development patterns and plot and building frontage widths where they contribute to local character. Policy UD3 permits development proposals provided they respect the design, scale, height and proportions of surrounding buildings which play an important role in determining the character of a street. Paragraph 4.26 of Policy UD3 states that

“...respecting the layout, scale, massing, proportions, height and materials of surrounding buildings is of paramount importance...building on the best characteristics of the local area”. Saved Policy H2 allows housing development in built-up areas, provided that it does not conflict with the aim of respecting the character of residential areas.

- 6.42 The site is located within an area where the predominant surrounding building heights are two-storey. However, the proposed building would be set back from Cornwall Road and would be well separated from surrounding buildings. As such, it would be set away from existing buildings and would be seen as more of a pavilion building in its own setting (it would also be screened by existing and proposed replacement vegetation in and around the site). Its four-storey height is therefore considered acceptable in terms of its height and massing and would not be out of character with or dominating to the surrounding area. There are also examples nearby of buildings of more than two-storeys, including the three-storey flatted development on Cuthbert Road, to the south of the application site.
- 6.43 The proposal for a contemporary building in this location is supported given the building would be high quality and well designed, with a simple and coherent appearance. The building would not harm the character and setting of its surroundings, including that of the historic park and the local area.
- 6.44 The palette of materials proposed (pale grey bricks, glass and balconies) would be different to the predominant cream and red brick of the surrounding two-storey dwellings. However, the building would be well separated from surrounding dwellings and the palette of materials is simple and acceptable for that of a flatted development. It is considered that the contrast of materials to the existing surrounding dwellings would not be detrimental in townscape terms. The materials proposed are also considered to be suitable for the type of building proposed and to ensure a high standard of development, full details of all external materials and features can be secured by condition.
- 6.45 Objectors have raised concerns that the height of the building would block views and that the building would be more visible in winter months. The building would be well separated from adjoining dwellings. It would also be screened by existing (and proposed replacement) vegetation in and around the site. It is acknowledged that there would be greater visibility in winter when the deciduous trees lose their leaves. However, a level of screening would remain and with the proposed palette of materials and the care that has been given to design detailing and architectural treatment, officers are confident that the proposed building should represent a suitable addition to the immediate locality. It is therefore not considered that the building would reduce views into or across the park to any real extent and that natural screening of the building would occur throughout the year.
- 6.46 It is considered that the proposal would be of a high quality and would sufficiently respond to and contribute to the area. It would not have a detrimental effect on the character and appearance of the surrounding area or the park.

Impact on the residential amenities of adjoining occupiers

- 6.47 CRUDP Saved Policy UD8 states the Council will have regard to the form and layout of existing and adjacent buildings and the privacy and amenity of occupiers of surrounding buildings ensuring that both new and existing occupiers are protected from

undue visual intrusion and loss of privacy. London Plan Policy 7.6 states that new buildings should not cause unacceptable harm to the amenity of surrounding land and buildings, particularly residential buildings. CRUDP Policy EP1 (*Control of Potentially Polluting Uses*) and London Plan Policy 7.15 (*Reducing Noise*) also seek to protect residents from pollution associated with new development, such as increased noise and disturbance.

- 6.48 The application site is bounded by residential properties on two sides (to the south and east). However, the proposed building is set back from Cornwall Road and is well removed from the nearest residential dwellings. This reduces concerns that the proposal will lead to an impact on residential amenity of adjoining occupiers with regards to adjoining occupiers suffering from overlooking and a loss of privacy. However, given that the proposed development would be higher than the existing building, there could be a loss of light and/or overshadowing to adjoining occupiers.
- 6.49 A daylight/sunlight assessment was submitted with the application. It concludes that the proposal would not harm the nearest adjoining occupiers (28, 29-37 Theobald Road, 18 & 19 Westfield Road, and 31 & 33 Cornwall Road) through loss of light/sunlight. The report sets out that all the properties assessed would also retain daylight and sunlight levels and would comply with BRE criteria. Its conclusions are considered acceptable.
- 6.50 The creation of residential units would result in some increased noise and disturbance. However, the building would be detached and well separated from surrounding residential dwellings. In view of the built up nature of the surrounding area and the public use of Wandle Park (which generates some noise and disturbance) it is not considered that the proposal would result in an unacceptable increase in noise and disturbance compared to the existing situation.
- 6.51 Concern has been raised by objectors about the potential for safety/crime/social problems arising from the proposed development. It is considered that the creation of residential accommodation at the site could improve the existing situation. For example, the proposal would result in removal of the existing vacant and dilapidated/unsafe structures which could attract vandalism and other undesirable activities taking place on site. The replacement building would increase natural surveillance of the park and surrounding area. It is therefore considered that this would assist with people's perception of crime, safety and anti-social behaviour in the area.
- 6.52 Objectors have also raised concerns about construction works causing noise/air pollution and dust. Some noise and disturbance from construction works cannot be avoided. However, this would be subject to separate environmental legislation. The Council and the GLA also produce good practice guidance on this matter, of which the developer would be informed. Access to the site for construction works, including hours of operation, site management, control of dust and debris etc could also be managed through the conditioning of a Construction Logistics Plan.

The impact on parking and highway safety

- 6.53 CLP1 Policy SP8 (Transport and Communication) sets out numerous relevant policies relating to accessibility, sustainable transport and parking. Policy SP8.17 of the Croydon Local Plan states that outside high PTAL areas, the Council will apply the standards as set out in the London Plan. The CRUDP also has several policies relevant to this proposal. Saved Policy UD13 states that car parking must be designed as an

integral part of a scheme and should be safe, secure, efficient and well designed. Saved Policy T2 states that planning permission will only be granted where the traffic generated by a development can be satisfactorily accommodated on nearby roads. Saved Policy T8 sets out maximum parking standards for new development and states that the Council will restrict the amount of car parking space in new development to promote sustainable transport choices. T4 states that the Council will seek the provision of cycle parking facilities in relevant developments. The London Plan sets out the latest requirements. London Plan 2015 Policy 6.3 states that development proposals should ensure that impacts on transport capacity and the transport network, at both a corridor and local level, are fully assessed. It sets out that development should not adversely affect safety on the transport network. Policy 6.13 states that a balance needs to be struck between promoting new development and preventing excessive car parking provision, and that in locations with high accessibility that car free development should be promoted.

- 6.54 The Council's Strategic Transport team were consulted on the application. They have raised no objection subject to conditions.
- 6.55 The site is in area with a PTAL accessibility rating of 5-6a and is therefore considered to have very good-excellent accessibility to public transport links. It is within 800 metres from Croydon Town Centre and is nearby to various bus stops and within walking distance of Reeves Corner tram stop.
- 6.56 Cornwall Road is a narrow single carriageway road. It runs along the frontage of the site with double yellow line restrictions on both sides of the carriageway. Cornwall Road has a general road width of between 3m-4mts in this section and is subject to a 30mph speed limit. To the south of the site, Cornwall Road widens and is subject to on-street parking on both sides of the carriageway. The car parking bays are restricted to use by permit holders or pay and display with a 4 hour maximum stay. Along the frontage of the site and to the north, a single footway runs along the western side of the narrow section of the carriage and to the south, footways are present along both sides of the carriageway.
- 6.57 Vehicular access to the site would be from 2 locations directly off Cornwall Road. The northern of the access points would provide access to a parking area housing 7 spaces, with the southern access point leading to 3 spaces. The access and parking layout proposed is considerable acceptable. A planning condition will be needed to secure a highways agreement prior to commencement of works. To provide for pedestrian safety, visibility splays to either side of the vehicular accesses will also need to be secured by condition.
- 6.58 As the site is well located to local amenities and public transport facilities and given that 13 of the units would be one bedroom flats (which typically attract a lower level of car ownership) the level of parking can be reduced below the Council's maximum standards. 10 car parking spaces (including the provision of three disabled spaces) is therefore considered acceptable. A planning condition is recommended to secure the provision of Electric Vehicle Charging Points in accordance with the London Plan.
- 6.59 Residents have raised concerns that the off-street parking provision is inadequate and that this would increase parking pressure on the surrounding streets. Concerns have also been raised that new residents would park in Wandle Park. To ensure the proposal does not result in an unacceptable increase in parking pressure and given the site is within a Controlled Parking Zone, it is considered necessary to restrict future residents

from applying for on-street resident parking permits. The applicant has accepted this and the S.106 Agreement will secure this restriction. Given this and that the parking spaces in Wandle Park are clearly marked for use by park visitors, it is considered that the proposal would not result in an unacceptable increase in parking pressure on surrounding streets.

- 6.60 The previous community use of the site would have generated several vehicular trips. However, most trips generated by these uses would take place outside of the peak hours whereas the proposed residential units would generate peak time vehicular traffic. The Transport Assessment submitted with the application interrogated the TRICS database to establish the potential vehicle trips generated in the AM and PM peak periods by the proposed residential development. The results of the traffic generation exercise indicate that the 32 proposed residential units will generate a small number of two-way trips in both the AM peak hour and PM peak hour and that is unlikely to have a significant impact on the adjoining highway network. Given that the number of off-street parking spaces is limited to ten cars and residents would not be allowed to apply for on-street parking permits, it is considered that the additional trip generation from the development would not be material or harm the highway in terms of vehicular or pedestrian safety (including of local residents and park visitors).
- 6.61 Sufficient cycle parking would also be provided in accordance with the London Plan standards. Details of the proposed external cycle stores can be secured by condition.
- 6.62 As set out above, a Demolition/Construction Logistic Plan (including a Construction Management Plan compliant with Chapter 8 of the Road Signs Manual for temporary Works) should be secured by condition. In addition to this managing noise and disturbance to neighbours, it would also ensure suitable management of vehicular movements and therefore avoid harm to traffic flow etc during construction.
- 6.63 The applicant has also submitted a Delivery Management Plan in support of the application. This is acceptable and a condition can secure compliance with its approach. The submitted Travel Plan is also broadly acceptable and a condition can secure an updated final Travel Plan is produced prior to occupation.

Trees and landscaping

- 6.64 CRUDP Saved Policy NC4 states the Council will refuse permission for proposals that result in the loss of valued trees, especially those protected by Tree Preservation Orders and that landscaping proposals to be considered as an intrinsic part of the design concept. Policy 7.21B of the London Plan states that existing trees of value should be retained and any loss as the result of development should be replaced following the principle of 'right place, right tree'. CRUDP Saved Policy UD14 sets out that landscaping should be considered as an integral part of proposals.
- 6.65 During pre-application discussions with the applicant, an Area Wide Tree Preservation Order (TPO) was issued by the Council (TPO No. 20, 2015) on a temporary basis to protect the group of trees within the site whilst scheme was in development. This Area Wide TPO has recently be renewed (reference TPO No. 36, 2016) to ensure continued protection of the trees. This new TPO preserves four trees. This is a reduced number since making the first TPO due to a recent tree failure of the most prominent tree within the site boundaries (to the front of the site).

- 6.66 Officers will update and finalise TPO No. 36 2016 once the development is complete, assuming planning permission is forthcoming. The final TPO will ultimately preserve those trees which are considered to provide amenity value and which should therefore be preserved. At that stage, the Council may also consider preserving the newly planted trees (as provided in the landscape scheme) if it is considered necessary at that time to ensure a good visual transition between the new development and Wandle Park.
- 6.67 A full tree report was submitted with the application, covering assessment of the proposal's impact and tree protection measures (including ground protection, fencing and construction management measures). The report covers a total of 28 trees and two additional small groups of trees, and includes assessment of their size, condition, age, amenity value etc. The proposed development would result in loss of some trees within the application site. However, several of these trees are considered to be of limited value and/or of poor quality and/or are damaged.
- 6.68 The development has been sited to avoid the root protection area of park trees and those trees within the site which officers consider should remain and not be harmed by the development. Those trees within the site that are proposed to be removed to make way for the development do not offer important amenity value and/or are not good quality specimens worthy of preservation. The 12 replacement trees proposed on the site will offset the overall loss of trees arising from the development. This is considered acceptable. Conditions can secure compliance with the arboriculture report/tree protection plan and the submission of a landscaping scheme to provide full details of proposed soft (and hard) landscaping and replacement trees.

Ecology and wildlife

- 6.69 Policy SP7.4 of CLP1 sets out that the Council's approach to maintaining and enhancing biodiversity across the borough. CRUDP Policy NC1 covers Sites of Nature Conservation Importance and NC2 covers protected species and habitats. London Plan Policy 7.19 is also relevant.
- 6.70 Wandle Park is identified as a Site of Nature Conservation Importance. The latest review of such sites was in 2013. This evaluated Wandle Park as having a local conservation value/importance.
- 6.71 The application was accompanied by an Extended Phase I Habitat Survey. This sets out the species and habitats considered as part of the work and the species and habitats found on the site which were subsequently assessed. The report sets out that the development would not result in unacceptable harm to protected species and habitats within and beyond the application. Construction works would be restricted to within the application site boundary and no notable fauna within the Wandle Park listing were found that would be significantly disturbed during construction. The report also sets out further work/assessments required and proposes mitigation measures to avoid harm to wildlife and ecology.
- 6.72 The Extended Phase I Habitat Survey set out that a bat survey should be undertaken. During determination of the application (after the first public consultation completed) the applicant therefore submitted a completed bat survey. This survey and assessment confirmed that the development would result in the loss of one small common pipistrelle summer non-breeding bat roost. Various mitigation measures for the loss of the one bat roost and to reduce the impact of the development overall are proposed.

- 6.73 The loss of a bat roost requires the applicant to apply for a European Protected Species Licence (EPSL) from Natural England following any grant of permission. The Council is also required to satisfy itself that, prior to granting permission, the relevant EPSL tests could be met by the applicant. The Council therefore consulted Natural England on the loss of the bat roost. Natural England confirmed that for this type of development, they would consider the national and local need for new housing and in such cases, they have advised that there is no reason why a EPSL would not be granted. They further stated that they expect all planning issues and conditions to be resolved prior to a EPSL application being submitted to Natural England.
- 6.74 To ensure the development (including demolition/construction works and eventual use of the flats) does not harm wildlife and ecology within the site or in Wandle Park, a condition is required to secure compliance with the recommendations in the phase I report and bat survey regarding mitigation and enhancement measures. The applicant will also need to comply with other relevant environmental legislation, including regarding bats. On this basis, it is considered that the proposal would not result in unacceptable harm to wildlife and local ecology within the site or Wandle Park.

Flooding and sustainable urban drainage

- 6.75 The NPPF sets out that inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding should be avoided by directing development away from areas at highest risk. Policy SP6 (Environment and Climate Change) of CLP1 sets out the Council's approach to flooding. It identifies that Croydon is ranked the 4th settlement in England most susceptible to surface water flooding. The policy requires: Flood Risk Assessments to be submitted for major developments, with proposals in Flood Zones 2 and 3 providing site-specific information proportionate to the degree of flood risk posed to and by the development.
- 6.76 In accordance with the NPPF and Planning Practice Guidance, all applications for major developments must also give priority to the provision of sustainable drainage systems unless demonstrated to be inappropriate. The relevant policies of the London Plan (5.13) and CLP1 (SP6.4) require all new development to utilise sustainable urban drainage systems (SUDS) to reduce surface water run-off and provide water treatment on site.
- 6.77 The Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) and the Environment Agency (EA) were consulted on the application with regards to the submitted drainage strategy/SUDS and flood risk assessment. The LLFA reviewed the proposed SUDS and subject to a standard condition securing further details prior to commencement of work, did not object to the proposal. The EA did not object, responding that they would not formally comment on the application as it is covered by their flood risk standing advice and the proposal should therefore be determined by the Council in accordance with relevant development plan policies and guidance.
- 6.78 The site was previously in Flood Zone 3, but the EA recently updated its flood mapping. Based on the latest EA flood maps, the site is partially within Flood Zone 1 partially within Flood Zone 2. Croydon's Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) identifies the site as having a low risk of surface water flooding. The 1:1000 year flood level nearest to the site is of 41.31mts AOD. Proposed ground levels around the building will be higher than this (41.46mts AOD), approx. 300mm above the 1:1000 year flood level. This complies with/is beyond that required by the EA. Surface water is modelled to flood to a depth of 100mm - 300mm (max 41.5m AOD) in Cornwall Road, in the 1 in

200 year event. The risk of surface water flooding in the 1 in 75 year event is considered to be Low (<100mm). Complying with EA advice, all new ground floor levels will be set at least 300mm above the 1 in 1000 year (+ Climate Change) fluvial flood level of 41.31m AOD, as indicated in the EA's Product 4 data. The proposal comprises 'More Vulnerable' development in Flood Zone 2.

6.79 Given the size of the proposed development and its location (partly within Flood Zone 2) a sequential test is needed for the development, as required by policy, the SFRA and government/EA guidance. The NPPF sets out that when "*determining planning applications, LPAs should ensure flood risk is not increased elsewhere and only consider development appropriate in areas at risk of flooding where, informed by a site-specific FRA following the Sequential Test, and if required the Exception Test, it can be demonstrated that:*

- *within the site, the most vulnerable development is located in areas of lowest flood risk unless there are overriding reasons to prefer a different location, and*
- *development is appropriately flood resilient and resistant, including safe access and escape routes where required, and that any residual risk can be safely managed, including by emergency planning; and it gives priority to the use of sustainable drainage systems."*

6.80 The application was originally not accompanied by a sequential test. However, during determination of the application, an updated Flood Risk Assessment (FRA), including a sequential test and exception test was submitted. The sequential test demonstrates that the borough is currently achieving its 5 year housing land supply. The borough does therefore not currently need to rely on housing within flood zones 2 or 3 to ensure sufficient provision of a 5 year supply of housing in-line with the NPPF. However, the updated FRA provides more detailed assessment of the potential flood risk to the proposed development and the surrounding area, indicating that the risk of flooding is minimal and residential development on the site would be acceptable in this instance.

6.81 The FRA demonstrates that most the site (as existing) is within FZ1; the FZ2 area (extending into the site from the northern boundary) is only able to occupy a localised depression in the site; the proposed development ground levels would remove this depression and the development would therefore mean the future extent of FZ2 would not extend into the site (meaning the site after development would be classified as within FZ1). The FRA assesses that the risk of flooding post-development would range from no risk to a reduced offsite risk. The updated FRA also proposes various flood resilience and mitigation measures to avoid and reduce flood risk to future and surrounding occupiers. Amongst other aspects, this includes: floor levels and access complying with EA guidance; evacuation procedures; internal fit out reducing the impact of flooding; suitable building materials.

6.82 Exception tests are not required for developments defined as more vulnerable which are in FZ2 (such as this site). An exception test is also only required when a sequential test is passed. In this case, the sequential test cannot be passed because the Council is currently meeting its required five-year housing supply. However, the applicant completed an exception test nonetheless. This sets out that the proposal contributes several wider sustainability benefits that outweigh the (limited) flood risk and justifies how the building will be safe for its lifetime (considering users' vulnerability) and will not increase flood risk elsewhere. Combined with the acceptable SUDS proposed, it is considered that the proposal would also assist in reducing flood risk in the surrounding area by reducing surface water run-off when compared to the existing situation.

6.83 The Council is arguably only achieving its 5 year land supply due to significant numbers of residential units arising from office to residential prior approvals. There is uncertainty as to whether these prior approvals will be delivered and of course some of these converted units do not provide good living conditions for future occupiers. In this context, 35 Cornwall Road would deliver high quality units providing suitable living conditions for future occupiers, would provide much needed affordable housing and various other public and sustainability benefits. It is also relevant to note that residential use on the site has previously been approved, including as recently as 2011 when the site was still designated as Flood Zone 3. Given this and the above considerations, it is considered that the proposal is acceptable with regards to flood risk both within and surrounding the site. A departure from policy is not significant and has in this case been clearly and robustly justified. A condition should be included to ensure compliance with the details and recommendations set out in the Flood Risk Assessment & Drainage Strategy (Revision A) dated 24 October 2016.

Living conditions of future occupiers

6.84 Policy SP2.6 of CLP1 states: *'The Council will seek to ensure that new homes in Croydon meet the needs of residents over a lifetime and contribute to sustainable communities with the borough.* The Policy states that all new homes should meet the minimum standards set out in the Mayor of London's Housing Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG, 2016). London Plan Policy 7.6 states that buildings and structures should provide high quality indoor and outdoor spaces and integrate well with surrounding streets and open spaces. The London Plan 2015 (including Minor Alterations to the London Plan 2016), the Mayor's Housing SPG 2016 and the Department for Communities and Local Government's Technical Housing Standards (Nationally Described Space Standard, March 2015) set out minimum space standards for dwellings of different sizes.

6.85 All the units would comply with the minimum floorspace standards. Each flat would also provide sufficient external amenity space through either a private balcony or garden. The total amount of private amenity space provided would be 651sqm, which is divided into a total of 145sqm of private balcony space and 506sqm of garden space. This provision is above the London housing quality standard of 194sqm required for the proposed number and type of units.

6.86 The majority but not all units would be dual aspect. This could result in limited light and natural ventilation for the single aspect units. However, the daylight/sunlight assessment confirms that 99% of the habitable rooms would receive sufficient natural light and 55% would exceed BRE sunlight levels. There would be one room, a ground floor bedroom, which would fall slightly short of the BRE daylight standards and 15 living rooms (with a north facing aspect) falling short of sunlight standards. Some flats are single aspect, hence the daylight/sunlight assessment's findings. However, on balance, it is considered that the living conditions of future residents would be acceptable given sufficient natural glazing ensuring 99% of all habitable rooms would achieve BRE daylight standards and residents would have acceptable outlook.

6.87 Concern has been raised about children's playspace. London Plan Policy 3.6 (Children and young people's play and informal recreation facilities) sets out the Mayor's approach to housing development providing play and informal recreation space where relevant. The Mayor's Housing SPG provides some further direction, including 'Where a development includes family housing, accessible play spaces designed to meet the needs of younger and older children should be provided, taking account of the

projected child population in line with Policy 3.6' (para 1.3.21) and 'A careful balance should be struck between optimising housing output, enabling infrastructure delivery and achieving residential and environmental quality...This may generate comparatively reduced on-site requirements for social infrastructure, play and open space provision, thus enabling higher residential densities to be achieved' (para 1.3.58).

6.88 Given the site's location and high PTAL, it is considered suitable for the site to not involve specific play space provision within the development. However, it is noted that the family sized units are on the ground-floor and have private amenity space which would provide play space for children living in those flats. The site's proximity to Wandle Park would also enable other children living in upper floor flats to utilise the extensive play facilities available in the Park (which has dedicated play facilities including play area for young children, a basketball area, skate park and large grassed areas available for various other sport/play activities). On balance, the lack of dedicated play provision within the site is therefore considered acceptable.

Refuse/recycling

6.89 Saved Policy UD15 of CRUDP states that "*new development...will only be permitted if it provides temporary storage space for refuse which is generated by the development and which is adequately screened and conveniently located.*"

6.90 A refuse store of sufficient size to accommodate refuse and recycling from the proposal would be provided along the southern boundary of the site. This proposed location would make it possible to collect refuse within 20 metres of the highway). This will ensure that rubbish generated by residents would not be left to build up and create a nuisance in terms of smells, litter and an attractant for animals.

6.91 Its location would make it visible from the public realm (both from the highway and access to the park). However, the proposed store would be constructed of high quality materials (including finished with a sedum roof) and suitable boundary treatment (in the form of face brick walling, metal railings and soft landscaping) would be provided. Subject to a condition securing full final details of the proposed materials and final appearance of the store, and landscaping, this is considered acceptable.

Sustainability and energy

6.92 The relevant policies of the London Plan (5.2) and CLP1 (SP6.3) require new residential development to promote sustainable energy use, reduce carbon dioxide emissions and achieve a minimum Code for Sustainable Level 4 or equivalent.

6.93 Energy and sustainability reports were submitted with the application. They outline that the proposed development will incorporate various measures to reduce the buildings' energy and water use, generate on-site renewable energy (through solar PV panels) and maximise sustainability principles during construction and occupation (including re-using materials, minimising construction waste, maintaining/enhancing the site's ecological value and maximising sustainable transport options such as cycling). These are considered acceptable and relevant energy/sustainability issues can be secured by condition.

Contaminated land

6.94 London Plan Policy 5.21 (*Contaminated Land*) and CRUDP Policies EP2 and EP3 (*Land Contamination*) seek to ensure that the land is suitable for the use proposed and that the impacts on health and the environment from contaminated development sites are minimised. The policies require an environmental and historical site review to be undertaken where relevant and further intrusive investigation and remediation if necessary.

6.95 The Council's Environmental Health team reviewed the application and site history. They have confirmed that a contaminated land assessment will not be required in this instance.

Archaeology

6.96 The NPPF (Section 12) and the London Plan (Policy 7.8) emphasise that the conservation of archaeological interest is a material consideration in the planning process. Paragraph 128 of the NPPF says that applicants should be required to submit appropriate desk-based assessments, and where appropriate undertake field evaluation, to describe the significance of heritage assets and how they would be affected by the proposed development. This information should be supplied to inform the planning decision. Saved Policy UC11, Development Proposals on Archaeological Sites, is also relevant, stating that development will only be permitted if proposals are properly assessed where they may affect the archaeological heritage of a site.

6.97 Historic England (The Greater London Archaeological Advisory Service, GLAAS) were consulted on the proposal. They reviewed the application regarding information held in the Greater London Historic Environment Record and/or made available about this application. They have concluded that the proposal is unlikely to have a significant effect on heritage assets of archaeological interest and have therefore not objected and have not recommended any conditions.

Conclusions

6.98 All other relevant policies and considerations, including equalities, have been considered. Planning permission should be granted for the reasons set out above. The details of the decision are set out in the RECOMMENDATION.