

Minutes of a meeting of the Planning Applications Committee held at the Town Hall, Wandsworth, SW18 2PU on Thursday, 24th April, 2025 at 7.30 p.m.

PRESENT

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

In attendance:

Councillor de La Soujeole, Ward Councillor for St Mary's.

Apologies:

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Colclough.

1. Minutes - 27th March 2025

The minutes of the Planning Applications Committee meeting held on 27th March 2025 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

2. Declarations of Interest

Councillor White noted that he was a voluntary member of CREW (a registered Community Benefit Society providing advice and assistance to promote the use of low carbon solutions).

3. Applications (Paper No. 25-137)

i. Application 1 ([2024/1322](#)) - The Glassmill, 1 Battersea Bridge Road, SW11 3BZ

The Chair commented that he had never experienced an application with such a quantum of commentary regarding the consultation process. He noted that much of the consultation had been carried out by the applicant as was standard practice for many applications. The Chair added that a consultation was not a referendum, and advised that the application would be considered by Members of the Committee on its own merits. He noted that Members of the PAC had considerable experience of reviewing and understanding consultation documents and responses.

Councillor de La Soujeole, neighbouring Ward Councillor for St Mary's Ward, addressed the Committee on behalf of local residents. Councillor de La Soujeole raised the following points:

- There had been unprecedented public opposition to this scheme, with over 2,000 people submitting objections;

- Over 5,000 individuals had also signed a petition in objection to the proposals, with a further 600 having signed a petition organised by Cllr de La Soujeole;
- The proposals were contrary to a variety of policies within the Local Plan, the London Plan and the NPPF. Should such an application be approved, it could be used as a precedent for approving other schemes in flagrant breach of adopted planning policies and plans;
- The development was the wrong type of building in the wrong location. Should approval be granted, the building would dominate the skyline, whilst the GLA and other consultees had noted the harm that the proposed building would cause to heritage assets and conservation areas;
- There were also specific concerns regarding the potential structural harm that could be caused to the Grade II listed Battersea Bridge via the construction of the proposed development;
- Local residents and neighbours were concerned that the proposals would cause significant overshadowing and privacy issues;
- The proposals would not provide enough public realm improvements, whilst concerns had also been raised with regards to construction traffic, in part as the application lacked a construction management plan;
- Residents were supportive of the additional affordable housing that the application proposed, however, the application would be subject to viability whilst it appeared that there was no registered provider in place to manage the affordable units. In short, there were no guarantees that the levels of affordable housing proposed would materialise;
- Many of the proposed affordable units would be single aspect, restricting windows to only one side of each flat;
- The difficulty in presenting residents' concerns to the Committee was not finding enough grounds for objection, but instead summarising the significant number of objections in the time given.

Councillors Colclough and Lee, Ward Councillors for the neighbouring St Mary's Ward, addressed the Committee via a written statement due to their absence. The statement was read out by the Clerk, and raised the following points:

- The residents of St Mary's Ward wished to voice their significant concerns regarding the proposed development. In particular, the Friends of Battersea Riverside, the Battersea Society and the residents of Morgan's Walk in addition to many other individuals and groups from across both St Mary's and Battersea Park Wards had provided detailed objections to the proposals;
- Residents wanted to send a clear message to developers – schemes such as this which ignored the local character of the area and put profit ahead of improvements to the local area and people's wellbeing were not welcome in Battersea;
- This application was in contrast to the Gasholders application approved by the Committee the month prior. That application was located in an abandoned, decontaminated site with no nearby residential properties. As such, it presented no amenity impacts on local residents;

- This application would allow for a 29-storey tower in a prominent location, which would cause real harm both to local residents and to historic views from Battersea Park, the Thames Embankment and the Battersea Square Conservation Area. This was in clear breach of Local Plan Policy LP3;
- The proposal would result in up to seventy-percent of the daylight being lost for nearby residents. This would be devastating for individual's quality of life and health, in breach of Local Plan policies LP2, LP15 and LP27;
- Residents had voiced their clear concerns with regards to flooding and climate impacts that would occur as a result of the proposed development. In addition, the Environment Agency had raised concerns regarding flood risk, which would potentially be in breach of policies contained within the NPPF and Local Plan policy LP12 and London Plan policy SI12;
- Scepticism was urged with regards to the letters of support that had been received, many of which appeared heavily guided or scripted. Such comments were not reflective of the feelings that local residents had been expressing to Ward Councillors on the doorstep. In addition, some of the language used in letters of support was written in such a way that many residents would not naturally use;
- Residents and local Ward Councillors were supportive of social housing, however it would be residents that would have to live with the reality of the proposed development and its construction;
- In short, the application falls far short of demonstrating the benefits of the application to justify the significant harm that it would cause.

The Committee sought Councillor de La Soujeole's views regarding the height level that residents might find acceptable, the feeling of the consultation having potentially misled residents, and whether there was any sense of hostility to the proposed social rented housing. Councillor de La Soujeole stated that she had asked the Friends of Battersea Riverside, who noted that nearby buildings were 10-storeys high, which would be more acceptable from a local perspective. Regarding the consultation, residents felt that the consultation document had not been presented in the clearest manner, whilst there was concern regarding how the letters of support had been gathered. In relation to social housing, residents were supportive of delivery of new social housing, and had recently welcomed new units on the Surrey Lane Estate. The vast majority of residents she had spoken to had expressed no objection to the delivery of social rented units.

The Area Manager (East Team) presented the application, and noted the falling land across the site and the limited development space as key features of the site. The application included a subterranean basement which provided servicing and access to the car park on the rear elevation. The first floor would house the affordable work space, whilst the landscaping plan would allow for the currently difficult to navigate outdoor area to be replaced with more flowing and easily navigable gradients.

The application was located between zones designated for tall buildings of 7-12 storeys to both the east and the west, however the site itself was not classified as being in a tall building zone, with a 6 storey maximum height allocated for the application site. Heritage assets including the Albert Bridge

and Battersea Bridge had been identified as being moderately impacted in terms of the harm caused by the proposed development.

The benefits of the application had been classified as follows: 110 residential units (moderate benefit); 54 social rented units (significant benefit); provision of a community facility (great benefit); provision of affordable workspace (moderate benefit); and public realm improvements (moderate benefit).

In terms of harm, the urban and tall building impacts had been assessed as amounting to significant harm, given the proposals were for a 29-storey building in a zone designated for up to 6-storeys. A building of this height was considered to be at such odds with the relatively young Local Plan which was adopted in 2023.

The Area Manager (East Team) concluded by stating that officers were recommending refusal on the grounds that the proposal, by reason of its excessive height and scale, within an established local spatial character that is predominantly low-rise, while also being located within a low-rise policy zone, would represent an unacceptable and incongruous transformative change within the location that would significantly harm the spatial character of the same location. The significant harm identified had not been outweighed by material considerations that indicate otherwise. As such, the proposal was considered to be contrary to the NPPF 2024, Policy D9 (Tall buildings) of the London Plan 2021 and Policies PM9 (Riverside) and LP4 (Tall and Mid-rise Buildings) of the Wandsworth Local Plan 2023.

The Chair sought officer comment regarding concerns voiced by residents in relation to the impact to traffic and access should the development go ahead. The Head of Transport Strategy stated that the current office usage of the site generated a moderate level of travel, which would be increased via the proposed development. However, this increase in trip rate would not have a material impact on the local transport network, in part as the proposal would lead to a relatively low car ownership development as a result of sustainable transport and public transport options.

It was noted that TfL had not raised an objection to the development on highways grounds. Deliveries and servicing would be facilitated via a degree of space for circulation and parking. With regards to construction management, Battersea Bridge was located on a red route and there was no restriction on the number of vehicles that could use this route. In addition, there were already a number of large vehicles and buses that used this route. Officers and TfL were in agreement that there was no reason that the proposed development could not be constructed, whilst a construction management plan would be required by condition in the event of planning permission being granted.

The Committee thanked the Area Manager (East Team) for his detailed, balanced and well-written report.

Members were unanimous that the proposal was not just too tall or too large, but it was simply enormous and would completely dominate over both its

immediate surroundings and a variety of conservation areas and heritage assets. In addition, it was noted that the lower section of the building was more akin to 12-storeys in height at the southern end as a result of the falling land.

The Committee raised concerns regarding the single-aspect nature of many of the proposed social rented units.

Questions were raised as to whether use of the river for construction access had been explored, whether an occupier for the community space had been identified, and whether the social housing units in situ on 6 Hester Road would be one of the buildings most significantly impacted by the proposed development. The Area Manager (East Team) confirmed that the units on 6 Hester Road were social housing, and would be immediately adjacent to the proposed development. Three expressions of interest had been received with regards to the community space, which could act as a drop-in point or facilitate administrative functions to delivery a community facility. The Area Manager (East Team) added that he could not confirm if river access for construction had been negotiated to a point whereby it would be secured, however he was aware of references to river access.

The Chair noted a separate scheme on a different site had reduced the eventual provision of affordable units on the grounds of viability. He sought clarity as to what, if any, guarantees could be given to require the applicant to deliver the fifty-percent affordable units should planning permission be granted. The Principal Development Viability Officer stated that the applicant had not been required to submit a viability assessment as they were proposing delivery of fifty-percent affordable units. Officers had however carried out high level assessments of the likely viability of the development, which indicated that there could be some surplus within the scheme. However, it could also be possible that the applicant could argue this position, and therefore there was the risk that the applicant could return and request an amendment to the number of affordable units proposed, especially as they were currently due to be one hundred percent social rented units, which typically provided a lower yield. The Area Manager (East Team) noted that the application before the Committee was to supply fifty-percent affordable units, with one hundred percent of those being social rent, and any future deviation would require the applicant to return requested permission.

Members queried whether the proximity of the Battersea Heliport had been considered in relation to this application. The Area Manager (East Team) stated that whilst the heliport had not responded to the consultation, he was aware that the helicopters did not travel as far as the application site when accessing the heliport.

Members reflected that the Battersea Riverside was typically known for delivery a large quantum of housing, with a relatively low percentage of affordable units (sixteen percent). As such, the Committee queried whether the applicant had given thought to removing the tower whilst retaining the lower form part of the development for affordable housing. The Area Manager

(East Team) stated that the application before the Committee represented a shorter height design than previous incarnations of the scheme.

The Committee reiterated concerns regarding the harm which would be caused to a number of heritage assets and conservation areas as a result of the development.

Members commented that the applicant may have paid too much for the site, and were trying to recover these costs via the extreme height of the proposed building. It was added that the residents, the Council and the local community should not have to bear the consequences of the decision made by the applicant.

Reference was made to the Gasholders application which was approved at the previous meeting of the Committee. Some Members felt that the Gasholders application was of a similar height and scale to the subject application, and raised concern that both applications were not recommended for refusal, which would have provided clear messaging to developers. Other Members were of the opinion that the former application was located in an area whereby there would be no immediate resident impacts, given its location. The Chair commented that the proposed application was surrounded by heritage riverfront and dense residential developments, in stark contrast to the former application.

RESOLVED – (*unanimous*) that planning permission be refused for the reasons set out in the report, noting the additional information as set out in the late items of correspondence paper.

At this point of the evening, the meeting was adjourned at 8.50pm and resumed at 8.56pm.

ii. **Application 2 (a) ([2024/2326](#)) and (b) ([2024/2362](#)) - The Lodge, 98 - 100 Tooting Bec Road, SW17 8BG**

Councillor Boswell noted that the site had remained vacant for the past 17 years, and she welcomed efforts to make use of the site. Notwithstanding, she raised concerns with regards to heritage aspects on this site, citing the objection raised by the Conservation and Heritage Advisory Committee. Councillor Boswell added that there had been three enforcement notices issued in relation to this site, including in September 2024, and commented that she understood that the applicant had already commenced with some aspects of work on the site. Councillor Boswell stated that residents had concerns regarding hearses parking on residential roads, and she queried the hours of business for the site. Councillor Boswell commented that she would be voting against the application, citing Local Plan Policy LP3.

The Planning Case Officer explained that there were no structural changes proposed to the planned form of the listed lodge building, adding that the proposed extension would have no physical impact to the lodge building. An informative had been included to highlight to the applicant that consent may be required regarding the scope and scale of any proposed internal works to

the lodge. Regarding hearses, there was no detail regarding the maximum number of hearses expected to be in use, however there were six car parking spaces proposed which would facilitate a mix of parking for hearses, staff vehicles and vans. The hours of business were stated as being from 8am to 5pm, and therefore there was no expectation of operation throughout the night. The business would operate as a funeral director, which would facilitate discreet viewings with customers in attendance, however bodies would not be stored on the site beyond this.

The Committee queried whether there were any specific requirements regarding access for hearses, and sought additional details regarding sustainability, specifically in the absence of a sustainability report being submitted as part of the application. The Planning Case Officer stated that there were no specific requirements regarding the access required for hearses. Two conditions were proposed regarding sustainability, the first requiring post occupation pre-assessment for BREEAM 'Outstanding', and a further condition within three months of completion requiring a post completion certificate to demonstrate the former.

In response to a question regarding whether a company had been identified to occupy and run the site, the Planning Case Officer confirmed that Evershed Brothers had been identified to run the site.

Members queried whether the hard standing was proposed to be permeable. In response, the Planning Case Officer stated that sandstone paving was proposed around the lodge building, with permeable tarmac proposed to the rear of the site. It was noted that materials would be secured by condition.

The Committee questioned whether installation of signage would require a further application, and queried whether thought had been given to making the roof of the proposed café flatter and less obvious as raised by the Conservation and Heritage Advisory Committee. The Planning Case Officer stated that a single advertisement sign was proposed as part of this application, and any advertisement on the lodge building itself would require both advertisement and listed building consent. In relation to the proposed café roof, it was noted that a smaller greenhouse property previously occupied that area of the site which included a smaller pitched roof. The café building was now proposed to be further set back to display the lodge as the focal point of the site.

The Chair queried whether it would be possible for any condition to be included to help manage the traffic and access associated with the site. The Head of Transport Strategy stated that whilst a condition would not be appropriate, it would be helpful if the vehicles accessing the main road utilised the shorter section of the side road.

RESOLVED – (8 votes for, to 1 against) that planning permission and listed building consent be granted for the reasons set out in the report (CIL liable).

iii. Application 3 ([2024/3185](#)) - 166 Upper Richmond Road, SW15 2UA

The Committee queried whether renovation and reconfiguration of the existing building into residential units had been considered in order to achieve a carbon benefit and sought detail as to the reasoning behind a lack of flood risk assessment accompanying the application. The Area Manager (West Team) stated that the policy requirement was for a 35 percent carbon saving as part of development, whilst the application proposed a 41 percent carbon saving which exceeded policy requirements. The applicant had also submitted justification for demolition, which highlighted that retrofitting the building would result in the loss of floorspace whilst requiring considerable structural work to meet regulations. The Area Manager (West Team) added that the site was not located within a conservation area, and noted that the property was also not located within a flood risk zone.

The Committee urged the applicant to minimise the disruption to both the pedestrian and vehicular flows, in particular when excavating the basement area. The Area Team Manager (West Team) noted that the road was owned by TfL, who the applicant would be required to consult with throughout construction.

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

iv. Application 4 ([2024/4355](#)) - 151 Elsenham Street, SW18 5NZ

Councillor Humphries felt that the proposal was relatively modest, and noted that roof terraces such as the one proposed tended to not generate any considerable amount of noise or disturbance.

RESOLVED – (*unanimous*) that planning permission be granted for the reasons set out in the report.

v. Application 5 ([2025/0047](#)) - 40 Skeena Hill, SW18 5PL

RESOLVED – (*unanimous*) that the application be deferred to the next meeting of the PAC on grounds that the planning database had not been updated and informed local residents of the committee date.

4. Tree Preservation Orders (Paper No. 25-138)

RESOLVED – That the following Tree Preservation Orders be confirmed:

- i. TPO 501/2024 - 27 Deodar Road, SW15 2NP (Thamesfield); and
- ii. TPO 502/2024 - 43 Upper Richmond Road, SW15 2RF (East Putney).

5. Decisions (Paper No. 25-139)

RESOLVED – That the report be received for information.

6. Closure of Investigation Files (Paper No. 25-140)

RESOLVED – That the report be received for information.

7. Closed Appeals (Paper No. 25-141)

RESOLVED – That the report be received for information.

The meeting ended at 9.25 p.m.