

From: Planning Support
Subject: FW: Design comments - - HGY/2022/3846

Sent: 30 March 2023 14:53

Subject: RE: 30-36, Clarendon Road Off Hornsey Park Road, Wood Green, London, N8 0DJ - Validated Planning Application - HGY/2022/3846

Dear Valerie

[HGY/2022/3846 - 30-36, Clarendon Road Off Hornsey Park Road, Wood Green, London, N8 0DJ](#)
Demolition of the existing buildings and construction of a part two, six, eight and eleven storey building plus basement mixed use development comprising 51 residential units and 560 sqm of commercial floorspace, with access, parking and landscaping.

Having been closely involved in discussions with the applicant for this development from pre-application, including for the former larger scheme that also included two neighbouring sites, I am very familiar with these proposals, the site and the relevant issues. As such I have no concerns with these proposals, which are well designed and appropriate to the site, and will provide much needed housing, new business units to increase employment and will fit in well with and help encourage the further development of this important part of the Haringey Heartlands Growth Area.

Site Location & Context

The site is towards the southern end of the Haringey Heartlands Growth Area. This London Plan and Haringey Local Plan designation covers a large area of existing and former industrial land between the Metropolitan Town Centre along Wood Green High Road to the east and the West Coast Main Line railway to the west. Butting up hard against the railway embankment, which is wooded and a designated Ecological Corridor, the Growth area only extends east as far as the back gardens of existing two and three storey, Victorian terraced housing where that exists between the town centre and industrial area, and here, towards the southern end of Heartlands, there are several such residential streets. Just south of the site, Heartlands ends at Turnpike Lane, a major east-west street connecting Turnpike Lane Station, at the southern end of Wood Green High Road, and a major transport interchange a 15 minute walk to the east, with Hornsey High Street, a 5 minute walk under the main railway line to the west.

Surrounded by other industrial and community uses in a mixture of two and three storey buildings of up to forty years old, but generally more recent, either side of the straight, north-south spine of Clarendon Road. However, a 1990s housing block, Westpoint House, closes the end of Clarendon Road, cutting it off from Turnpike Lane, just one property south of the site. A double curving recent road connects Clarendon to Hornsey Park Road, just north of its crossroads with Turnpike Lane and Wightman Road, a major interchange in a wide, nebulous space, dominated by busy traffic, turning lanes and numerous pelican crossings. Heading north, Clarendon Road becomes Mary Neuner Way where it enters the former gas works, currently being redeveloped by St William, in a large major development known as Clarendon Square, to designs by Panter Hudspith. This development has done much to firm up the model of how Heartlands should be developed, albeit that the amount of workspace and residential, and acceptable height, varies across the wider Heartlands area.

The site is part of a Site Allocation, SA23: Clarendon Road South, for employment-led mixed-use development. The allocation requires re-provision of the West Indian Cultural Centre, maximum feasible quantum of employment floorspace (but that enabling residential will be acceptable), taller development acceptable on the west of the site, but the east side should take account of the scale of properties on Hornsey Park Road. Draft site allocation WGS24 (consultation draft Wood Green AAP) also recognises the potential for the site to be used more intensively to create a new mixed-use development including community, employment and residential uses. An allocation in the forthcoming new draft Local Plan is likely to be similar.

Masterplan

As part of the site allocation requirement, given that the application site forms only a small part of a large adopted Site Allocation, itself part of a larger designated Growth Area, the applicants are required to demonstrate through masterplans that their proposals are compatible with both the existing context and likely, similar, SA23 compliant development on some or all of the other sites within this allocation and its neighbours, particularly those in closest proximity.

The large major development at Clarendon Square, the former gas works site, a short distance to the north of this site and adjoining the northern edge of SA23 is the most significant and in many ways forms a suitable model for development of the whole of this allocated site. In particular, officers strongly recommend the model of fragmented blocks, forming a street edge interspersed with landscaped courts connected to the streets, with stepped and L-shaped blocks creating glimpses through to private rear courtyard amenity spaces, as well as of the gradation of heights from low to the backs of the existing two and three storey terraced houses east, to higher to the railway embankment to the west, is followed.

Clarendon Square also includes a gentler rise of height from south to north, with their interface with the Chocolate Factory / Haringey Cultural Quarter site at Coburg Road, identified as the suitable place for Tall Buildings. This will aid wider legibility, identifying the heart of the growth area, where the cultural quarter is, be connected back to Wood Green High Road via a new east-west link and mark the Penstock Tunnel crossing under the wide barrier of the railway to the west, linking to Alexandra Park. Officers have long accepted that the Turnpike Lane interface, particularly its crossroads with Hornsey Park Road / Clarendon Road and Wightman Road, has an equally strong justification as a location for height, especially as the wide space of the crossroads is somewhat nebulous, albeit that it would be just as a point block at the southern end of the WICC site. Having said that, the only opportunity for a transition from that point block would be on this (& the CRC) site. This thinking leads to a longer north-south height profile that drops from tall to mansion-block (6-8 storey) north to south across Clarendon Square, then rises similarly gently across Clarendon South, justifying the 11-storey height proposed for this.

This proposal has undergone a long and at times tortuous gestation, being originally part of a larger comprehensive proposal, which was also for the two neighbouring sites to its south, the Haringey Recovery College (CRC - immediately south) and West Indian Cultural Centre (WICC - beyond and to its south-east) that was developed right up to a planning application but fell through for unconnected reasons. Nevertheless, the applicants have convincingly demonstrated that this proposal would be completely compatible with an effective completion of the rest of the development on those two sites. They have also demonstrated convincingly that a separate development on just the CRC site, either as previously envisaged, with a similar height alongside the taller part of this proposal at the western end of the site, or on the most impactful alternative, with a similar height but pushed instead to the eastern end of the CRC site, would be compatible with these proposals.

Other sites within the allocation are separated by at least the width of the street from this. Many are, it would appear, currently unlikely to be redeveloped in the short-to-medium term, including two that have recently been modestly extended, but we know at least one is in advanced current pre-app discussions. Nevertheless, officers are confident that the street width separation and a pattern of development that includes courtyards off the street, will maintain a pleasing streetscape and good residential amenity. This development can be considered compatible with that pattern of development, provided neighbouring sites maintain that pattern, and therefore can be considered compatible with potential future developments on the northern or western sides of the neighbouring streets to this site.

Streetscape Character & Pattern of Development

The site is on the corner of a junction, between the main north-south alignment of the original Clarendon Road and the point where the original' straight, north-south alignment of Clarendon Road was previously disrupted, by the construction of Westpoint Apartments closing off its previous connection to Turnpike Lane, and a new, double-curved street, also named Clarendon Road, connecting traffic to Hornsey Park Road, just north of its crossroads with Turnpike Lane and Whiteman Road. The eastward, "chicane" section of Clarendon Road is deeply unsatisfactory in urban design and streetscape terms, being pedestrian unfriendly with lack of legibility and limited active frontage, particularly at the current configuration of this application site, which very much fronts west, with side flank small windows and rear

high fences to the chicane portion, with CRC and the WICC doing much the same. At the same time its western frontage, like that of CRC, are set well back from the dead-end continuation of Clarendon Road, which itself peters out in residents parking for Westpoint and a car-park / service yard for WICC.

Although redevelopment of the two neighbouring sites will be required to fully repair the streetscape here, this proposal goes a long way to improving things. The proposed building form and architectural treatment addresses the junction, with a faceted corner and the highest point marking the junction, whilst the most active frontage, with the residential main entrance and the three business units' front doors and "shopfront" windows facing north and east. The development also widens, moderately straightens and greens-up the chicane frontage, with a set-back building line, widened pavement, new street trees and raingardens.

No significant new public realm is created in this proposal, so it does not directly contribute to creation of a courtyard garden or yard as established in the Clarendon Square precedent, but as the height cascades down in its eastern side in a series of landscaped roof terraces, providing private amenity and play space for residents of this proposal, its landscaped quality would become evident and connect to the "greened-up" eastern chicane of Clarendon Road. The small courtyard / lightwell space in the central third of this proposal's southern flank could also connect to the envisaged courtyard part of the CRC site, and the development does provide a nett gain in usable public space.

Form, Bulk, Height, and Massing

At eleven storeys, this proposal just meets definition of a Tall Building, defined as of 10 storeys or over in our adopted local plan, and rather more easily meets the stricter, more recent, government definition, of over six storeys. Nevertheless, the site is within a zone recognised in Haringey's Local Plan as suitable for tall buildings, and the design officer assessment is that the site and this proposal can be justified as a tall building.

Considering each criterion from Haringey's tall building policy is set in SP11 of our Strategic Policies DPD (adopted 2013 (with alterations 2017) and DM6 of our Development Management DPD (adopted 2017), skipping the 3rd & 4th bullets from the Strategic Policies, that reference the other document and the document used in preparing DM6:

- The site is within the areas of both the adopted Local Plan and draft Wood Green AAP, both supporting the principle of tall buildings in this location;
- The council prepared a borough-wide Urban Characterisation Study in 2016, which supported tall buildings in this location, as part of a cluster marking the southern end of the Heartlands Growth Area;
- High quality design especially of public realm is being delivered by other developments within Heartlands, particularly Clarendon Square, and can be further expected as part of the WICC development, with which this proposal will be integrated;
- The applicants Design & Access Statement demonstrates how they have considered local and more distant views of the proposal, further discussed below;
- The proposal will be capable of being considered a "Landmark" by being a wayfinder and a marker within the masterplan, marking the junction in Clarendon Road and forming a subsidiary part of a n intended cluster at the key junction of the Turnpike Lane etc crossroads (where the tallest node will be on the WICC site), and forming a gateway to the heart of Tottenham Hale;
- It will also be capable of being considered a "Landmark" by being elegant, well-proportioned and visually interesting when viewed from any direction as discussed below;
- Consideration of impact on ecology and microclimate encompasses daylight, sunlight and wind, are assessed by others, but this proposal is not expected to have a significant impact, being well away from any protected biodiversity. Impact on ecology could also include impact on the flight of birds and other flying creatures, but this is only likely to be relevant adjacent to open countryside, a large open space or open waterway, which this is not;
- The proposed tall buildings will be in proximity to a number of other tall and less tall buildings, but impact on them and of them on this proposal is considered in detail in the applicants views;

- And the urban design analysis and 3d model views of their proposal satisfactorily shows that the tower could be a successful and elegant landmark, contributing to the planned cluster of tall buildings.

The detailed design of the tower has undergone extensive revision and refinement, in conjunction with numerous workshops with Officers, during the course of this application, particularly in making the tower more slender and elegant.

For the design to be successfully “read” in more distant views, there has to be a significant contrast between the base, middle and top. This proposal is designed with a distinct two storey base, in a darker brick on a more open grid, expressing the commercial uses and residential entrances, and incorporating first floor flats behind terraces. The base will feature intricately detailed brickwork, reflecting details used in the Clarendon Square development and providing a more robust facade, where traffic & discolouration is likely to be greater. The middle is then formed by more domestically scaled windows in a two-storey grid of windows and recessed balconies, in a middle-toned brick, with the top expressed as a four-storey giant frame with infill of more textured brickwork. The form of the proposed tower is also expressed in the “cascade” of roof terraces down its eastern side, integrated into the two-storey grouping of the middle of the composition and better integrating this taller building into the lower rise buildings to its east.

Therefore, this proposed tall building is considered appropriate in this location, legible as a landmark and as part of a wider composition, striking and distinctive in design, in support of meaningful aspects of the design and of high-quality architectural design capable of being seen as beautiful.

Elevational Treatment, Fenestration & Balconies

These proposals have an orderly, elegant and exceptionally carefully designed elevational treatment, expressing the base, middle and top and the cascade of roof terraces as mentioned above. Openings, whether they are doors at ground level, or windows and recessed balconies throughout, are at least paired vertically. In the base (ground and first floor), the darker brick frame has a textured detailing, and windows are larger, with the small areas of remaining intervening brickwork flat. Over the middle, the main expanses of brickwork are flat with textured brick spandrels between paired windows and projecting horizontal bands between each pair of floors, integrated to the steps in the eastern façade. And finally, at and top, larger expanses of textured brickwork and larger windows are between the flat brick giant four storey frame that also hides rooftop plant and lift overruns.

Windows are also vertically proportioned, except in the base, expressing the different residential and commercial uses. Importantly, window reveals, and brick profiling generally will be deep, giving a solidity and vibrancy to the well-considered façade modelling, and adding to residents’ privacy. Roof terraces are screened behind high parapets, coordinated into the pairing of floors, supplemented by a low balustrades. Balconies are always recessed, for added privacy and to better integrate them into the building and façade composition. Balustrades are designed with vertical balusters to give light into and views out from them whilst giving some privacy and hiding clutter in more oblique views.

Materials & Detailing

The proposed materials palette is brick-based, with a crème brick proposed for most floors and a darker grey brick for the ground and first floor base, but a precise brick is not specified. The Design and Access Statement suggests it should be a crème and dark grey brick with a strong red-brown element and a degree of warmth and variation, which would be strongly supported on design grounds, and would be dependent on selection required by condition. Metalwork to windows, balustrades etc would be in complimentary colours, similarly agreed by condition.

Careful consideration has been given to design of doors and ground floor windows, to give a light and airy opening to the main residential entrance, flexible “shopfronts” to the commercial units and robust but interesting solid doors to more functional doors. In particular, the decorative patterns to these solid doors will permit ventilation, to refuse stores and car parking, yet hide potentially ugly functions and still provide visual interest and a surface discouraging of and resistant to vandalism and graffiti.

Residential Quality

All maisonette, flat and room sizes comply with or exceed minima defined in the Nationally Described Space Standards, as is to be routinely expected. All flats also have one or two recessed balconies providing private external amenity space, all of which are at least as large as the London Plan requirement.

Most of the proposed flats (61%) have full dual aspect. Of the few that do not (two per floor on 1st-5th, one per floor on 6th-10th floors), all also have a side window onto their recessed balcony, all are east or west facing, the best direction for single aspect units, and all are single bedroom flats, so that all potential family sized flats have two aspects.

In addition to each flat having at least one private balcony, there are three landscaped communal external amenity terraces, at the 6th floor, 8th floor and roof level. Those on both the 6th and 8th floors include large equipped childrens playspace, with that in the 6th floor including a large covered external play area as well as the area open to the sky; these meet the GLA policy requirement for playspace for the development for 0-4 and 5-11 year old children. The remainder of those two roof terraces and the whole of the rooftop accessible terraces will include planting beds for biodiverse ornamental plants and shrubs, seating benches, decking and potted small trees, with a pergola included on the rooftop terrace, considered a more “adult” communal amenity space.

There will also be biodiverse green roofs to the inaccessible roofs at the 2nd floor and over the rooftop plant and lift/stair core. In addition to the new street trees, landscaping and raingardens to the chicane street, these will contribute to an overall high impression of verdant greenery for such a large and site-filling development.

Privacy & Outlook

This proposed development will be relatively distant from any *existing* homes but is expected to be joined onto the neighbouring future part-residential development on the CRC site to the immediate south, and in close proximity to several others, as part of the expectation of continued intensification and redevelopment of the wider Haringey Heartlands area and the rest of this site allocation in particular.

In expectation of the neighbouring development on the CRC site, this development generally turns its back on its southern flank, with windows to the lift and stair cores and a few secondary residential windows (to bedrooms, bathrooms, kitchens and circulation), onto the small lightwell, and no openings except the sides of west facing recessed balconies within the flank walls against the boundary. There should be no objection to development on the CRC site being built right up to any part of their mutual boundary with no openings, or being close to any part of their mutual boundary, including *some* potential locations for windows to habitable rooms, that would not cause a privacy concern, in the relatively unlikely event that they needed north facing windows. These applicants’ masterplan goes into detail of how a couple of possible neighbouring developments could match this site’s development quantum without creating any privacy concerns.

Other neighbouring potential development sites are all separated from this site by at least a street width, which should be close to or more than the 18m necessary to ensure privacy, notwithstanding that there is less expectation of privacy to street facing windows. It should also be noted that in many flats where bedrooms face the street, they are recessed behind balconies.

Daylight & Sunlight

Of relevance to this section, Haringey policy in the DM DPD DM1 requires that:

“...D Development proposals must ensure a high standard of privacy and amenity for the development’s users and neighbours. The council will support proposals that:

- a. Provide appropriate sunlight, daylight and open aspects (including private amenity spaces where required) to all parts of the development and adjacent buildings and land;*
- b. Provide an appropriate amount of privacy to their residents and neighbouring properties to avoid overlooking and loss of privacy detrimental to the amenity of neighbouring residents and residents of the development...”*

The applicants provided Daylight and Sunlight Report on their proposals and of the effect of their proposals on neighbouring dwellings. These have been prepared fully in accordance with council policy following the methods explained in the Building Research Establishment's publication "Site Layout Planning for Daylight and Sunlight – A Guide to Good Practice" (2nd Edition, Littlefair, 2011), known as "The BRE Guide".

The assessment finds that the impact of the development on existing neighbouring residential properties is generally favourable for both daylight and sunlight, with only 21 neighbouring existing residential windows found to lose a noticeable amount of daylight, and 15 neighbouring windows losing a noticeable amount of sunlight. Notably, none of the older residential properties on Hornsey Park Road or further east or south would lose a noticeable amount of daylight.

The only residential properties affected would be 16 north facing windows in Westpoint apartments, 13 of which are only marginally affected and the remaining 3 are beneath overhanging balconies, and 5 windows in Katerina House (50 Clarendon Road), a recent conversion of workspace without planning permission that in all cases are to windows below overhanging balconies. Four relatively small windows to the rear of nos. 23 & 29 Hornsey Park Road that would lose noticeable amounts of sunlight are close to rear projections to their south making it difficult to avoid some loss, whilst the affected windows in 50 Clarendon Road (Katerina House) are again beneath projecting balconies. The assessment also finds that no existing neighbouring external amenity spaces would lose noticeable amounts of sunlight. Given that the existing building is a low 2 storey structure, meaning neighbours have been receiving more day and sunlight across the application site than would be expected, these results can be considered wholly acceptable.

The applicants' assessment also finds the proposals would achieve good levels of daylight to the proposed dwellings. Only 12 rooms in the whole development would receive less than the BRE Guide recommended daylight levels, of which seven are very close to the recommendations. Just three relevant rooms (living rooms within 90° of south) fail to achieve the BRE recommended sunlight levels. All of the proposed outdoor communal amenity spaces meet the recommendations.

In the case of higher density developments, it should be noted that the BRE Guide itself states that it is written with low density, suburban patterns of development in mind and should not be slavishly applied to more urban locations; as in London, the Mayor of London's Housing SPG acknowledges. In particular, the 27% VSC recommended guideline is based on a low density suburban housing model and in an urban environment it is recognised that VSC values in excess of 20% are considered as reasonably good, and that VSC values in the mid-teens are deemed acceptable. Paragraph 2.3.29 of the GLA Housing SPD supports this view as it acknowledges that natural light can be restricted in densely developed parts of the city. Therefore, full or near full compliance with the BRE Guide is not to be expected and the fact that it is very nearly achieved here is considered an excellent performance.

Conclusions

This proposal is for a well-designed mixed use development that would provide a significant number of high quality new homes as well as improved workspace in an area identified as suitable for considerably increased intensity, density and height of development in adopted London and Haringey Planning Policy. The applicants have demonstrated it would be complimentary to a range of different likely development, or of no change, on neighbouring sites also within the Growth Area, and not be harmful to character and amenity of areas outside of the Growth Area. It would also encourage progress on development of the wider Haringey Heartlands Growth Area, form a marker of development and contribute to its extension into the Clarendon Road South site allocation, towards the anticipated landmark development at the key crossroads on Turnpike Lane. A high quality, brick based materials palette and detailing language compliment the well-considered, attractive proposed composition.

Regards

Richard Truscott
Design Officer

