
From: Marie-Claire Tovey <MTovey@eppingforestdc.gov.uk>
Sent: 22 September 2021 10:28
To: App Comment
Subject: EPF/2868/20 177 High Road Chigwell_Urban Design Comments_210921
Attachments: 177 High Road Chigwell_Urban Design Comments_210921.docx

TO: Marie-Claire Tovey, Senior Planning Officer

FROM: Krishma Shah, Senior Urban Design Officer

DATE: 21/09/2021

REF: EPF/2868/20



Epping Forest District Council

Address: 177 High Road, Chigwell IG7 6NX

LPSV Site Allocation: Not allocated.

Proposal description: Demolition and removal of existing car showroom, ancillary structures and one residential unit, and the erection of a mixed-use development to provide 35 residential dwellings (Use Class C3) and 500sqm of commercial floorspace (Use Class E) together with cycle and car parking, landscaping, provision of new pavement and loading bay on Brook Mews and associated infrastructure.

Urban Design Officer Response:

Pre-application advice	
Application comments	✓
Previous design advice provided?	✓
Supports the proposal	
Does not support the proposal	✓
Recommend amendments	✓
Additional information required for consideration	
Recommend review of proposal by Council's Quality Review Panel	

Context

- The comments and recommendations below relate to a planning application received in December 2020 and follow on from pre-application discussions and comments ref: EF\2020\ENQ\00246 and
- Comments and recommendations herein relate to the design quality of the proposed scheme in the context of local and national planning policy and do not cover policy relating to the principle of the development or specific transport issues as these will be addressed by EFDC Policy and ECC Transport Officers respectively.

Site and Surroundings

The application site is occupied by the former Volvo garage and car showroom that are situated on the High Road and corner of Brook Mews. The car showroom is a modest one to one and a half storey building that is set back from the highways and pavement edge. The area at the front of the site was formerly used as parking related to the car showroom.

To the south of the site is the 'Cube' residential development that is three storeys in height with an inset fourth storey. The northern boundary of the site is bounded by Brook Mews which leads to the rear of and Brook Parade. Brook Parade is a restrained 1930s three storey terrace of retail/commercial units with residential at first and second floor. Brook Mews provides service

access to Brook Parade and the rear of adjacent Dickens Rise, a residential development of two storey, predominately semi-detached dwellings with a mixture of on-street and driveway parking. Across the road from the site is Chigwell London Underground Station.

The High Road, where the site is situated, faces onto Station Green which is a triangular area of open space bound by Station Road and Hainault Road. The streets bordering Station Green are occupied by predominately low-rise residential development, with the exception of development to the north of Brook Parade which extends to four storeys but like other development in the vicinity have generous set-backs from the main High Road.

Summary of Design comments

The completion of the block adjoining the Cube developments is positive and through considered and high-quality elevations will contribute positively to the public realm. There is also a significant benefit in the provision of 35 new homes with private and communal amenity in a highly sustainable location. There remain a small number of design concerns as noted below, key of which is the massing of the top set-back storey forwards of the adjacent Cube development massing, which will be overly visible and prominent from long views.

Layout and access:

- It is noted that the principle of commercial use fronting onto the High Road is supported and the residential typology on Brook Mews is also acceptable. Whilst there are extents of inactive frontage on Brook Mews, the applicant has introduced a further core entrance and proposed green walls to activate and soften this frontage.
- LG.01 – this dwelling has a narrow frontage and limited outlook to the sides and front aspects, however a landscaped garden is proposed to the rear. Whilst it is not ideal that the main access to a wheelchair accessible flat requires a wheelchair user to negotiate two flights of ramp, there is an alternative access at the rear from the wheelchair accessible parking space, which is located in close proximity to this dwelling. The applicant has confirmed that the ramp/ stair arrangement meets the technical access requirements of Approved Document M4(3).
- The access route to Building B is compromised due to the route via the car park, however it is recognised that the negative impacts are mitigated somewhat through high-quality landscape design.
- The residential core entrances appear legible and well resolved. It is noted that there is no lift provided within the second residential core and therefore the dwellings served by this core will not meet the accessibility requirements of Part M4(2). Given the limited number of flats served by this core and balancing the impact on service charges of providing a lift, this is acceptable.
- Access to the communal courtyard for those dwellings served by the second residential core is via an access point via the under-croft car park. Access to the courtyard by all residents should be secured by condition.
- The orientation of the dwellings is supported, with almost all dwellings either dual-aspect or with an east-west aspect. The exceptions are flat 1.12 and corresponding flats above, however, given the orientation of the site and the need to provide robust frontage to the two street-facing perimeters, this is acceptable.

Bulk, massing, scale:

- The completion of the block, started by 'the Cube' development is positive and the massing is generally acceptable, with positive features to respond to the surrounding context, including the chamfer to the corner of Brook Mews/ High Road and the stepping down of

the ground floor plinth on the High Road to respond to the topography of the site, the scale of Brook Parade and the proportions relative to the full height of the building.

- Whilst the proposal will be prominent from long views along the High road and from the Green opposite, particularly in the context of the open character and generous set-backs of the surroundings, the chamfer and articulation of the main massing make this acceptable.
- There remains concern regarding the frontage line of the top floor set-back storey, which is forward of the set-back storey on the adjacent Cube development and will therefore be more visible and prominent, particularly from the Green opposite. We would suggest the set-back is amended to align with the Cube building line and canopies provided over doors to provide some shelter and make the rooftop amenity usable.

Residential Design Quality:

- The layouts appear generally well considered, with private amenity to each and meeting overall NDSS minimum areas.
- Whilst the location of Building B is compromised due to the isolated location, access arrangements and proximity to the railway line, it is recognised that there has been a significant effort to mitigate the negative impacts of the location through landscape design and sustainability aspirations.

Appearance and Materials:

- The elevational approach, high quality material palette and detailing is generally supported and detailed elements such as brick specification and patterns for brick detailing/ sample panels should be secured through Conditions. These should be in line with the quality of detailing in the precedent images provided on p26 of the DAS. Similarly, the Conditions should require the approval of details such as window frame materials, door materials, rainwater goods materials, positions of any vents or services on the elevations as these will have a significant impact on the quality of the building.
- The use of high-quality metal balustrades on the main frontage is supported.

Landscape:

- The courtyard amenity is well considered with high-quality landscape proposals. Conditions should require detail regarding the maturity of trees being proposed, in line with illustrations/ sections within the Landscape Design Statement.

Sustainability:

- There are high sustainability aspirations for Building B and the rest of the scheme appears to meet the requirements of the Building Regulations. It has been confirmed by the applicant that gas boilers will not be part of the final design and this will be secured by condition.

The above comments and recommendations are supported by policies SP3, H1, H2, E1, E2, T1, DM9, DM10, DM11 of our Local Plan (SV 2017), and paragraphs 127, 128, 129, 130, 131 of the NPPF (2019).