

To: Complaints Resolution Team
Pete Smith – Head of Development
Management
Bernard Weatherill House
8 Mint Walk
Croydon
CR0 1EA

**Monks Orchard Residents'
Association
Planning**

26th January 2020

Emails:
pete.smith@croydon.gov.uk
complaints@croydon.gov.uk

planning@mo-ra.co
chairman@mo-ra.co
hello@mo-ra.co

Corporate Complaint (Escalation to Stage 2)
17 Orchard Avenue (LBC Ref 19/00131/FUL) CAS-126578

Dear Mr Smith and Complaints Resolution Team

Thank you for your response of **9th January 2020** to our **Stage 1 Complaint Ref 19/00131/FUL CAS-126578** in respect of the Case Officer's Report regarding the Planning Committee's decision for the demolition of a single-family dwelling and the erection of a 3 storey block with a further floor of accommodation in the roof space comprising 3x1 bed, 4x2 bed and 1x3 bed flats with the provision of 4 car parking spaces and refuse storage. Planning permission was issued on the 7th November 2019.

Our Original Stage 1 Complaint comprised the following issues:

- 1 Failure to apply the current adopted **London Plan Policy 3.4** to Optimise the Housing Potential **or** the **consolidated emerging London Plan Policy D1A - Infrastructure requirements for sustainable densities**, in accordance with the Policy on **Residential and Housing Density** appropriate for the **available or forecast Public Transport Accessibility** for the locality at a '**suburban**' setting and **PTAL of 2**, as required by **NPPF (2018/19) para 122 - Achieving Appropriate Densities.**
- 2 Failure to consider the **overbearing nature** of the proposed development with regard to **loss of amenity** to both adjacent properties at **19 & 15 Orchard Avenue** as defined by **Policy SPD2 Figure 2.11c**: Height of projection beyond the rear of neighbouring properties to be no greater than **45° degrees** as measured vertically from the middle of the ground floor window of the closest habitable room on the rear elevation of the neighbouring property should **NOT** intersect the proposed development.
- 3 Infraction of Planning Policies on grounds that it is more imperative to meet housing targets than to countenance and implement adopted Planning Policies.

Your Response:

"In many ways, a number of these issues have been previously raised and responded to; previous complaints into other development proposals in and around Shirley, a number of which have also been investigated by the Local Government Ombudsman. In all cases, the

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Local Government Ombudsman has found in favour of the Council with no evidence of maladministration. I would respectfully suggest that there is no evidence of maladministration in this case."

Our Response:

We concur that these recent Complaints are rather repetitive, but that is because our fundamental concerns have NOT been adequately resolved. We only raise Complaints if there is sufficient evidence that Planning Policies are being ignored **"without reasonable justification for so doing"** as there is **NO opportunity to appeal against an approved application** and we do NOT have funds to support a **Judicial Review**.

We will endeavour to explain our reasoning for both our Stage 1 Complaint and Stage 2 escalation in the following:

Our fundamental issue with all recent complaints is that "Development Management" are not implementing Planning Policies as defined and specified in the adopted Croydon Local Plan, the approved policies in the Supplementary Planning Guidance SPD2 or the emerging London Plan Planning Policies which are defined to ensure planning proposals meet reasonable requirements to provide new occupants with acceptable accommodation standards and that new proposals are sustainable and meet acceptable criteria for the locality they are destined for.

Your Response:

"I was not present at this particular Planning Committee and have therefore reviewed the web-cast including the officer's presentation, the various questions and items of clarification raised by Planning Committee Members, comments made by the speakers (for and against) and the Planning Committee debate. It is clear to me that all the points you highlighted in your letter were either responded to by officers (in response to Member's questions) or were properly aired during the debate. I am therefore at a loss to understand the context of this formal complaint when the various issues were discussed and dealt with by the Planning Committee."

Our Response:

We appreciate that issues were raised and debated at committee, but that such debate did not adequately examine the policy requirements in a fair and equitable manner as the policy requirements were considered as insignificant or superfluous to the proposal by some committee members when compared against the need for more housing. The debate was not related to the requirement of meeting the policies but how and why those policies could be circumvented in order to meet the overriding "Development Management" objective of providing additional homes.

The criteria of whether those homes would provide acceptable accommodation standards for the new occupants or would be acceptable for existing adjacent residents was **NOT** of fundamental consideration by the Case Officer in the "Report" or to the majority of the committee, which should be their priority as required by the Policies.

Your Response:

“We are obliged to determine applications in accordance with the development plan (considered as a whole) unless other material considerations indicate otherwise. The Supplementary Planning Documents, including the London Mayoral Housing SPG and the Council’s own Suburban Design Guide SPD, do not enjoy the same weight as the various constituents of the development plan and are treated as other material planning considerations. As the titles suggest, they merely provide guidance in support of development plan policy and do not enjoy the weight of S70(2) of the 1990 Act.”

Our Response:

The introduction to SPD2 Chapters 1 - Introduction para 1.1 & Chapter 2 – para 2.1 Suburban Residential Development states:

1.1 OVERVIEW OF THIS DESIGN GUIDE

1.1.1 This design guide provides **guidance for suburban residential developments** and extensions and alterations to existing homes across the borough. It is a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) which **“should” be used by residents, developers, builders and agents including architects and planning consultants in shaping development proposals**, and will **assist in making decisions on planning applications** and inform the Council’s pre-planning application service. Beyond providing technical design guidance, this guide sets out how **residential development**, including extensions and alterations, in neighbourhoods across the borough is part of a **holistic strategy being driven by the Council to deliver tangible public benefits to suburban communities**.

2.1 SUBURBAN DEVELOPMENT

2.1.1 This section of the SPD is **relevant** to the **delivery of new homes** through conversion or **redevelopment of existing properties** or new housing built in rear gardens and back lands.

2.1.2 The Croydon Local Plan has identified that some existing residential areas have the capacity to accommodate growth **without significant change to its character**. In these locations, to accommodate the target for additional homes in the suburbs, new residential units may be created through the interventions described in Figures 2.1a – 2.1e.

2.1.3 These approaches to development are set out in Table 6.4 of the Croydon Local Plan and the supporting text. The guidance set out in this section responds to **Policies DM10.1 – DM10.10** of the Croydon Local Plan regarding design and **density**, including ensuring growth is accommodated **without significant change to the character of an area**.

It is **inappropriate** to have a **Design Guide** that is **NOT** used for **“design guidance”** and can be ignored on the whim of a case officer **without justification**. This is very dangerous as it means the **“Design Guidance”** is subject to varying degrees of **interpretation and can be ignored without justification**. A very subjective determination allows case officers to ascertain whether or not these **“guides”** are **enforced** or **overlooked** which in turn places Case Officers at pressure of collusion or, at worst, corruption when significant financial commitments are at stake.

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Your Response:

MORA Comments/Objections

"It is clear from the officer's report (presented to the 6th November 2019 Planning Committee) that your August 2019 objection was properly read, digested and summarised. The report refers to your own density calculation and the issues raised in your August letter.

The on-line register refers to MORAs objection and in many ways the August 2019 objection changed little (in terms of MORAs general views) and re-affirmed the objection previously raised (albeit based on a residential redevelopment proposal with increased density)."

Our Response:

It is noted that only **one** Case Officer's Report is listed on the Online public register List of Documents dated 6th November which refers to the **MORA Consultation at para 6.5** – There is **NO** report listed for the earlier pre-amended drawings objection which was to be on the June Planning Committee Agenda. In addition, the list of objectors on the on-line public register comments tab only includes only **one** objection from **MORA** – so it is **not obvious** whether both **MORA Objections** of **3rd April** and **5th August** were considered or more importantly whether the **5th August Objection** was considered **prior to the determination**. **The most significant change in our second objection, as a result of the additional floor, was on the non-compliance to the 45° (vertical) amenity Rule which was totally ignored or mentioned at all in the case officers Report to committee.**

Policy Interpretation (Residential Density)

"As previously advised, the housing density matrix was introduced as part of the First London Plan back in 2004, well before the introduction of the National Planning Policy Framework and the realisation of the current pressures being placed on London Boroughs to deliver exceptionally challenging housing targets and the requirement to maintain a 5-year housing supply for the foreseeable future. It has been long considered that the density matrix is no longer fit for purpose and whilst it is appreciated that it remains part of the London Plan (in its current iteration) its weight (as a material planning consideration) is relatively limited. As you will be aware, the supporting text advises that a consideration of housing density is only the start of planning housing development; not the end and it would be unacceptable to apply the density matrix mechanistically."

"You will be aware that the London Plan Panel Report has been issued by the Planning Inspectorate which supports the intended deletion of the density matrix. The Panel concluded (notwithstanding the level of comment from the likes of yourselves) that the matrix is fundamentally in conflict with the design led approach now advocated – which sees density as an output and not as an input when determining the form and type of new development. Critically, it advises that enforcing a strict upper limit on density runs the risk of stymying otherwise acceptable development which would run contrary to the strategy of Good Growth."

"The London Mayor's response to the Panel Report has been recently published and the fate of the New London Plan now lies with the Secretary of State."

Our Response:

The London Plan and the Draft London Plan

The information on the Mayor of London website attempts to provide guidance on how much “**weight**” the draft London Plan should have in any **current planning decisions**.

https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/inspectors_report_and_recommendations_2019_final.pdf

states:

The current 2016 Plan ([The London Plan consolidated with alterations since 2011](#)) is still the adopted Development Plan, but the Draft London Plan is a material consideration in planning decisions. The significance given to it is a matter for the decision maker, but it **gains more weight as it moves through the process to adoption.**

The draft London Plan underwent its external examination in Public (EiP) during the first half of 2019. The Inspector’s Report published formal comments on the **Draft London Plan on Oct 8th 2019**.

The current London Plan policies as adopted are still **valid** and the emerging London Plan policies to replace the current adopted policies are also **valid** (NPPF para 48) and are published and as such are the **appropriate grounds for basing our observations and criteria for observance** when applying those policies to development proposals.

Your responses to our complaints do not answer the fundamental questions to satisfactorily resolve the complaints as we will try to set out below:

The repetition relates to proposals which have **densities** which do not accord with the **availability of supporting infrastructure** which the **current London Plan defines** by the **Density Matrix** and the **New (emerging) London Plan** (Draft London Plan – consolidated changes version–Clean July 2019) defines by **Policy D1A Infrastructure requirements for sustainable densities**.

You regularly state that the current London Plan Policy Panel concluded (*notwithstanding the level of comment from the likes of ourselves*) that the matrix is fundamentally in conflict with the **design led approach** now advocated – which sees density as an **output** and not as an **input** when determining the form and type of new development. Critically, it advises that “enforcing a strict upper limit on density runs the risk of stymying otherwise acceptable development which would run contrary to the strategy of **Good Growth**”.

The Inspector’s Panel Report on the Examination in Public of the draft London Plan was published on 8th October 2019 and a “**design-led approach**” to density has been re-affirmed.

However, **crucially**, the “**Design-led-approach**” requires consideration of the parameters which have a fundamental input to the “**design**” which considers the appropriate “**supporting infrastructure**” and the “**local character**” to allow any proposed development to be “**SUSTAINABLE**”. It is these **crucial concepts of the “design-led-approach” and “design” limitations** that you continually **disregard** which is why we continually raise these questions and complaints.

The Inspectors Report States:

275. This suite of policies provides a sequence of considerations to assist in the delivery of well-designed development, at an “**appropriate density**”, that responds to **local character**, form and **infrastructure capacity**. They are aimed to put design at the **core of plan making** and decision taking. In short, they require boroughs to determine a local plan’s **spatial strategy** to meet its growth requirements based on a thorough understanding of the character of the plan area. Identified **infrastructure deficiencies** should be addressed and **optimised site capacities** established for **all site allocations** and other development proposals, through the exploration of design options.
285. Subsequent policies relate to the **site-specific** context. **Policy D1A seeks to ensure that density of development proposals** respond to **future infrastructure capacity** and that it should be **proportionate to a site’s accessibility and connectivity**. Policy D1A part D introduces further suggested changes that set out explicitly that **infrastructure capacity ultimately will limit the scale of development** where it cannot be enhanced to mitigate the impact of development. This will ensure that the **density of a development cannot exceed a sustainable level**, even if it is acceptable in design terms. It will also help to ensure that development accords with **Good Growth**.

Policy D1A - Infrastructure requirements for sustainable densities

A The density of development proposals **should**:

- 1) **consider**, and **be linked to**, the **provision of future planned levels of infrastructure** rather than existing levels,
- 2) **be proportionate** to the site’s **connectivity and accessibility** by walking, cycling, and **public transport** to jobs and services (including both PTAL and access to local services ^{22A}).

B Where there is currently **insufficient capacity of existing infrastructure to support proposed densities** (including the impact of **cumulative development**), boroughs should work with applicants and infrastructure providers **to ensure that sufficient capacity will exist** at the appropriate time. This may mean, that if the development is contingent on the **provision of new infrastructure**, including **public transport services**, it will be appropriate that **the development is phased accordingly**.

C When a proposed development is acceptable in terms of use, scale and massing, **given the surrounding built form**, uses and **character**, **but it exceeds the capacity identified in a site allocation** or the site is not allocated, and the borough considers the **planned infrastructure capacity will be exceeded**, additional infrastructure **proportionate to the development** should be delivered through the development. This will be identified through an infrastructure assessment during the planning application process, which will have regard to the **local infrastructure delivery plan or programme**, and the **CIL contribution** that the development will make. **Where additional required infrastructure cannot be delivered, the scale of the development should be reconsidered to reflect the capacity of current or future planned supporting infrastructure.**

How do you therefore justify the Residential and Housing Density of the proposal when you have **NOT assessed the appropriate requirements of paras A, B or C** of the New London Plan **Policy D1A** set out above to ascertain whether the proposal is **SUSTAINABLE** taking account of **cumulative developments** and **planned future supporting infrastructure, including PTAL?**

These **new requirements** are **NEVER** considered by the **Case Officer(s)** in order to determine whether a proposal meets these parameters for the **"Design-Led-Approach"** – to establish if the proposal is **"SUSTAINABLE"** in terms of **available** and/or **planned supporting infrastructure!**

As the Croydon LPA **NEVER** consider individual proposals against these criteria, the **cumulative unsustainability** of many recent developments is a cause for **legitimate significant concern** to us and our local residents. You seem to pick and choose only those policies and parts of those policies that allow **uncontrolled densities** to be accepted, which **significantly undermines** the policies and the **management of development proposals in the borough.**

These new **London Plan Policies** are a reflection of the **NPPF guidance at Para 122.**

Achieving appropriate densities

122. Planning policies and decisions should support development that makes efficient use of land, taking into account:

- a) the identified need for **different types of housing** and other forms of development, and the availability of land suitable for accommodating it;
- b) local market conditions and viability;
- c) **the availability and capacity of infrastructure and services** – both existing and proposed – as well as their potential for further improvement and the scope to promote sustainable travel modes that limit future car use;
- d) the desirability of **maintaining an area's prevailing character and setting** (including residential gardens), or of promoting regeneration and change; and
- e) the importance of securing well-designed, attractive and healthy places.

Which means:

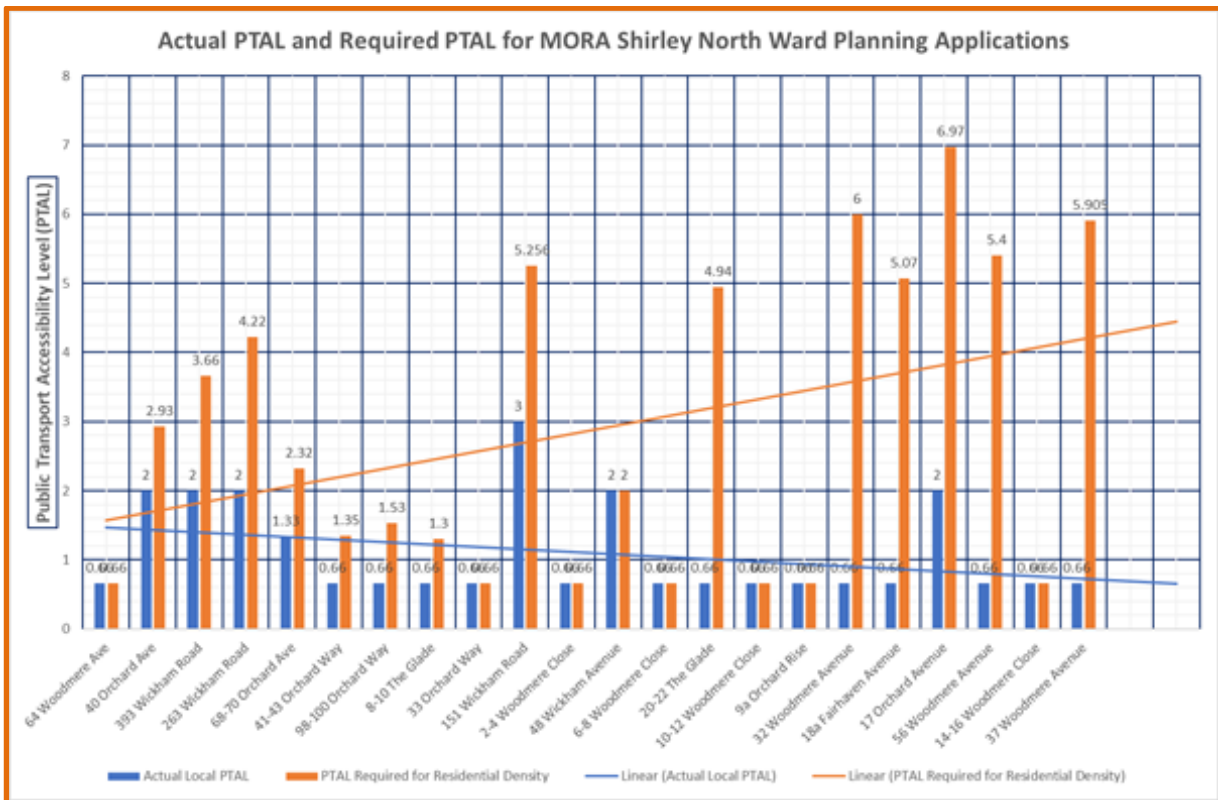
- a) **Not All "Flatted" developments**, but a **suitable mix** to meet requirements of a cross section of housing needs, with **sustainable infrastructure**;
- c) the **availability of public Transport Accessibility** and other services i.e. **sustainable** for the available or **planned infrastructure**;
- d) the existing character and **setting** (suburban, urban etc) i.e. maintaining an area's **prevailing character and setting**.

Instead of regularly responding that the **Density Matrix** is **not now** an appropriate policy, and ignoring our recorded **histogram** which illustrates the **PTAL requirements** of **cumulative developments**, would it not be possible for you to acknowledge there is a **replacement policy**

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which requires **consideration** and **evaluation** which defines parameters for input into a **“design-led-approach”** to ensure **sustainable developments** take account of **available and planned infrastructure!** We might **NOT** then have to Complain so regularly.

The cumulative effect of ignoring the policy is shown on our recorded histogram below which you have yet to acknowledge.



Excessive PTAL Requirement above the Local available PTAL (Based upon TfL WebCAT) due to Increased Densities of Applications in the MORA Post Code Area showing the ongoing PTAL linear trend.

Your Response:

“A critical consideration in this case (as was highlighted on numerous occasions during the Planning Committee debate) was the site’s location within a Focussed Intensification Area which in itself, highlights the opportunity for significant increases in density, bearing in mind the close proximity of the site to Shirley Local Centre. With increased density comes increased scale of development, both in terms of height and building footprint which we are obliged to manage as part of the planning application process. Policy DM10.11 confirms that development may be significantly larger than existing and should be double the existing predominant height and should take the form of medium rise blocks with associated grounds and should assume suburban character with spaces between buildings. It also recognises that there will be a gradual change in character. I am fully satisfied that this proposal complied with this local plan policy.”

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Our Response:

SPD2 Chapter 3 - Areas of Focussed Intensification

Section 3.2. General Guidance

Para 3.2.1 States:

*“3.2.1 Development within the Areas of **Focussed Intensification** should primarily refer to the guidance within this chapter and, where relevant, refer to guidance within previous **‘Chapter 2: Suburban Residential Development’**. The guidance on materials & external appearance, site **Layout** and **outdoor amenity space** within **Chapter 2** **remain relevant**. ...”*

And at Chapter 4 section 4.22 Extending Upwards at para 4.22.2 states:

*“4.22.2 Where **additional storeys** would result in the creation of **additional units**, they should refer to the **guidance** in **Chapter 2 with regard to Site Layout & Servicing and Landscaping & provision of Outdoor Amenity Space ...”***

There is NO indication in either SPD2 Chapter 3 - “Areas of Focussed Intensification or Chapter 4 – “Residential Extensions and Alterations” - that the “guidance of SPD2 Chapter 2 para 2.11” should NOT be observed in Areas of “Focussed Intensification”. In fact, the opposite is inferred!

Therefore, the fact that this proposal is located in an area designated for **Focussed Intensification** does **NOT preclude** observance of **Policy SPD2 - 2.11 the – (vertical) 45 - Degree Rule**. Also, any increase in height of any proposal should still **respect adjacent property Amenity and Daylight Requirements** whether the proposal is in a **“Focussed Intensification” Zone or elsewhere**.

It would be extremely helpful if “Development Management” and The Planning Committee were fully aware of the detail of **all current adopted and approved Planning Policies** before making recommendations or determinations.

It is a concern that Spatial Planning are reviewing the Croydon Local Plan when the current policies are not understood by the decision makers.

Density Calculations

“There is no clear guidance as to how one should treat an open plan living/kitchen/dining area as part of a residential density calculation although earlier in my career (many years ago when quantitative density calculations were more accepted) we tended to treat open living/dining areas in excess of 35 square metres as two habitable rooms. This is not the case in this instance, as part of these open plan spaces is also used as a kitchen. In any event, these detailed points are somewhat outdated (for the reasons outlined above) and I see no need for further analysis and/or consideration.”

Our Response:

As with all our observations on planning guidance, “**Development Management**” are reducing development Policy requirement parameters to the detriment of living conditions for future occupants without acknowledging the consequences of so doing and all sensible reasoning for policy enforcement is totally rejected. The parameter for **Residential Density** should NOT be a measure of “Habitable Rooms” as Rooms do **NOT** require infrastructure – **PEOPLE DO** – so the measure should be: **Bed-Spaces per hectare** of the Site Area which would immediately overcome the “Habitable Room” anomaly for Open Plan accommodation.

The Policies for the Planning Professionals are descending into a farcical intolerance if it wasn't so important for future occupants, local residents and **future** social cohesion!

Your Response:

Scale and Impact on Neighbours

“The adopted Focussed Intensification Area policy (Policy DM1.10) takes precedence over any supplementary planning guidance contained in the Suburban Design Guide, which is there to inform and guide policy compliance rather than compete with it.”

“However, I accept that the report did not go into full details of the 45 degree “rule of thumb” approach to neighbour impact, as informed by the Suburban Design Guide. The presenting officer provided details of the 45-degree line (taken horizontally) but not vertically and I accept that there was a break in the 45-degree line, taken vertically from neighbouring windows. I recall this point being raised by the objector (who addressed the Planning Committee) as well as Councillor Bennett (as Referring Councillor). Members were clearly made aware of the issue and were in a position to further interrogate if they had cause.”

“In many ways, such a situation is likely to be commonplace in Focussed Intensification Areas, especially in cases where development is proposed in close proximity to lower buildings. This is the primary reason why DM1.10 rightly takes precedence over guidance contained within the Suburban Design Guide and it is relevant that the 45-degree approaches are not specifically referred to in the Chapter which deals with Focussed Intensification, with a recognition that greater flexibility will be required when responding to existing character.”

Our Response:

Where does it state that: *“The adopted Focussed Intensification Area policy (Policy DM1.10) takes precedence over any supplementary planning guidance contained in the Suburban Design Guide”*? If that is the case why have the LPA prepared and adopted the Supplementary Design Guide SPD2?

Policy DM10 states:

“The following policies DM10.1 to DM10.10 apply in circumstances other than those where “intensification policies” (DM10.11) and place-specific policies (DM34 to DM49 and Table 11.1) specify otherwise and will be interpreted with reference to the description of each of the

Places of Croydon set out in the introduction to each policy DM34 to DM49 and in the Council's Borough Character Appraisal and by reference to Table 6.5."

DM10.11 states: *"Developments in **"focussed intensification"** areas should **contribute to an increase in density and a gradual change in character**. They will be **expected to enhance and sensitively respond to existing character** by being of high quality and **"respectful" of the existing place in which they would be placed.**"*

Thus, developments in areas of **"Focussed Intensification"** **DO NOT** preclude the requirements of any **Supplementary Planning Guidance** on adjacent dwellings but should **"sensitively respond" to existing adjacent dwellings!**



I am afraid you seem to be making up policy as you go. **None** of what you have stated is borne out by reading and interpreting the substance of the policies. The illustration above clearly shows the failure of the proposal to meet the 45°- (vertical) Degree policy of SPD2. These Policies have gone through extensive consultation and examination prior to approval and there has been ample time to modify those policies or provide **"tolerances"** prior to adoption. But you continually develop arguments or reasons to **circumvent the implementation** of these approved and **adopted** stated policies.

Your Response

*"The officer's report advises that the impact of this development on immediate neighbours, in view of the Focussed Intensification Zone context was **"acceptable"**. The issues were fully debated and I stand by the officers' recommendation and the resolution taken on the 6th November 2019."*

Our Response:

By what **"justification"** was this considered **"acceptable"**. As previously stated, the case officer and Development Management have interpreted the policy **subjectively** (as **"acceptable"**) when there is **no tolerance specified or allowed in the policy definition**

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and **no justifiable reason** has been given for **non-compliance**. Again, circumventing an **adopted policy** in order to meet **housing targets** and not for the benefit of **future occupants** or “**sensitively responding**” to adjacent local **residential dwellings** (DM10.11).

Your Response:

Prioritisation of the Planning Balance – Delivery of New Homes

“I make no apology for seeking to deliver new homes across the borough – which represents a weighty consideration in the planning balance. It is recognised that changes to the “status quo” might have some effects on the character of areas and the amenities of neighbours. However, I must take issue with your suggestion that we are not implementing adopted planning policy.”

Our Response:

We understand that Croydon LPA are seeking to deliver more homes across the borough. However, the evidence is becoming overwhelming that Policies are being ignored or circumvented by Planning Officers and for reasons which are not quite apparent as:

- a) The **Target recommended** by the **Draft London Plan Inspector’s Report** (8th October 2019) has **reduced in-fill** and redevelopment **windfall sites** for **Outer London Boroughs** by up to **≈ 60%**; and,
- b) It is quite obvious that if a decision for a **refusal** were made on non-compliance to planning policies, applicants would modify their proposals to take account of the reasons for a refusal and re-apply to provide the much needed dwellings, but re-presenting a proposals that **met the policies** and **accommodation standards appropriate for the locality**, the **future occupiers** and local **adjacent residents**. (i.e. to meet the planning policies defined for exactly that purpose)!

Your Response

“As previously advised, when determining planning applications, it is important that the decision-taker considers the development plan as a whole, recognising that some policy considerations might not totally align with other issues and approaches. It is for this reason why some decisions are taken in the balance, with greater weight being given to certain consideration over others.

In most cases we feel that the need to deliver more housing, especially within a designated Focussed Intensification Area, should reasonably counter density, car parking or amenity effects (unless serious harm is caused by the scale of development for whatever reason). Of the schemes determined in Shirley, we are satisfied that we have struck the appropriate balance and are content with the scale and effects of the flatted schemes granted to date. I appreciate that this might run counter to your own position (and those of Shirley residents) but I stand by our recommendations to grant planning permission and the eventual decision (invariably taken by the Council’s Planning Committee).”

Our Response:

Thus, it is **“Development Management’s”** view that it is **preferable** to allow **inferior proposals, which are inappropriate to an area and have unacceptable accommodation standards**, in order **to meet housing targets** rather than require applicants to **re-assess** their proposals to meet **adopted planning policies** to provide the **much-needed** housing but **NOT** of **more appropriate design** and **supported by the available or planned infrastructure**.

If such is the case, why is the Spatial Planning Team bothering to review the **Croydon Local Plan** if the emphasis is **meeting housing targets** in spite of **any policies to mitigate against inappropriate proposals?**

We recognise that more houses are needed and that redevelopment in residential areas may be required to meet that demand. Where we differ is that we believe that **Planning Policies** are defined – **“for a purpose”** – and that purpose is to **ensure**:

- That new dwellings are **sustainable**;
- Have appropriate **accommodation and amenity standards** for future and existing occupiers;
- That dwellings and their residents have appropriate **supporting infrastructure** – including Public Civic Services which include adequate GP Surgeries, schools etc. to support the additional incoming population increase for the area;
- Have appropriate **Public Transport Accessibility** for the additional residents; and,
- Maintain local **character** such that the area retains its character for the existing residential population who have invested their money and dreams to live in such a locality for their wellbeing and livelihood.

We therefore accept redevelopments within the **constraints imposed by the Policies**. Thus, when approvals disregard the policies as we have set out above, we believe proposals should be **refused** to allow applicants to **modify** their proposals to fully meet the **Planning Policies** and re-apply with modified application proposals which can be approved and thus provide the much needed Housing – **but importantly** – those dwellings would be **“sustainable”** and meet the policies and be **more appropriate** for the future occupants, the locality and local residents.

The record of the Planning Committee does NOT seem to be very Policy dependent as the record shows an uncanny number of politically motivated decisions.

The voting record of 6:4 on numerous occasions shows a **biased response** and very infrequently varies from these politically appointed Councillors' results at **6:4 for approval**. The committee members do not assess proposals on Planning Policy or proper planning criteria.

The only criteria seem to be whether the proposal provides more housing - whether this is the most suitable housing for the future occupants of the proposal or for the existing local residents or to respect the character of the locality is NOT considered of any significant importance. The evidence is mounting.

Can you not appreciate that **each Policy** ignored or disregarded **without credible justification** sets a **precedent** which subsequent applicants can allude to for equal reason to disregard or breach the **Policy**, ultimately resulting in a **Local Plan with Policies that cannot be enforced**. Developers are likely assessing the **Croydon LPA's lax approach** to proposals and are **taking advantage with their inferior development proposals** for the highest profit and **least quality developments** – and Croydon LPA approve them all without question!

The **Local Plan Review** consultation might just result in a **Plan** without any possible **enforceable Policies** to **manage development proposals to meet the housing targets** as the policies become **less and less enforceable**.

We (MORA) appreciate your response but it is very distressing that our concerns are not addressed or even considered as reasonable. We are therefore compelled to escalate the complaint to Stage 2 as these issues are fundamental to the concerns of Shirley Residents.

This response has been agreed and authorised by all members of the MORA Executive Committee.

Kind Regards



Derek (MORA Planning Adviser).

Derek Ritson I. Eng. M.I.E.T.

MORA Planning



Sony Nair

Chairman, Monks Orchard Residents' Association.

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On behalf of the Executive Committee, MORA members and local residents.

Cc: Sarah Jones MP Croydon Central
Steve Dennington Head of Spatial Planning (Croydon LPA)
Steve O'Connell GLA Member (Croydon & Sutton)
Cllr. Sue Bennett Shirley North Councillor
Cllr. Richard Chatterjee Shirley North Councillor
Cllr. Gareth Streeter Shirley North Councillor

Bcc: MORA Executive Committee
Chair - Shirley Planning Forum (SPF)
Local Residents & Interested Parties