

<p>To: Complaints Department London Borough of Croydon Bernard Weatherill House 8 Mint Walk Croydon CR0 1EA</p> <p><a href="mailto:complaints@croydon.gov.uk">complaints@croydon.gov.uk</a></p>	<p>Monks Orchard Residents' Association Planning</p> <p>4<sup>th</sup> July 2019</p> <p><a href="mailto:planning@mo-ra.co">planning@mo-ra.co</a> <a href="mailto:hello@mo-ra.co">hello@mo-ra.co</a> <a href="mailto:charirman@mo-ra.co">charirman@mo-ra.co</a></p>
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**Stage 1 Complaint – Planning Application Ref: 19/00783/FUL - 32 Woodmere Avenue, Croydon, CR0 7PB.**

Dear Sir/Madam

Please consider this letter as a formal Stage 1 Complaint against the approval at Planning Committee on 20<sup>th</sup> June 2019 of Planning Application **Reference 19/00783/FUL** at **32 Woodmere Avenue**, Croydon CR0 7PB - for the Demolition of the existing property and the erection of a replacement detached two storey building with accommodation in the roof-space, comprising 7 self-contained flats (2 x 1 bedroom, 3 x 2 bedroom and 2 x 3 bedroom) with 5 off street car parking spaces, bike store, integrated refuse store and site access.

Our complaint relates to the interpretation of current adopted planning policies to ensure cumulative development proposals fully meet the requirements for the localities existing and planned public transport infrastructure.

The Planning Policy to mitigate over-development for a locality is the current adopted London Plan Policy 3.4 Optimising housing potential in a locality relating to the setting and Public Transport Accessibility. The current cumulative effect of overdevelopments is having a significant detrimental effect on the local community provision of supporting infrastructure.

The allowed cumulative increase of Housing and Residential Densities for the locality at low PTALs, without reasonable justification, is overdevelopment of the site and does NOT meet the policy as defined by the London Plan Supplementary Planning Guidance (Housing) as set out in Paragraphs 1.3.50 to 1.3.55.

Para 7.8 of the Case Officer's Report for this application acknowledges the proposal would exceed the recommended density range in the London Plan Table 3.2 but does not provide reasonable justification for this excessive density and for not meeting the policy.

The Case Officer states that it is not appropriate to apply Table 3.2 mechanically and that it is necessary to take account of other factors relevant to Optimising potential such as the local context and design.

These other factors are set out in the London Plan Supplementary Planning Guidance at paragraph 1.3.8 which states:

*"guidance on considering schemes above or below the ranges in the density matrix is provided below in paras 1.3.50 to 1.3.55."*

### **Developments above the density ranges:**

**Para 1.3.50** ..."as confirmed in section 1.1, meeting London's housing requirements will necessitate residential densities to be optimised in appropriate locations with **good public transport access**. Consequently, the London Plan recognises the particular scope for higher density residential and mixed-use development in ***town centres, opportunity areas and intensification areas, surplus industrial land and other large sites***<sup>103</sup>. in addition, the Plan confirms that the housing SPG will provide general and geographically *specific guidance on the justified, exceptional circumstances* where the density ranges **may be exceeded**<sup>104</sup>."

The Public Transport Accessibility at this location is 1a in the ranges 0 to 6 and as such is in the lowest category range – 0 1a 1b 2 ... to 6a 6b.

Also, this location is NOT in a *"town centre, an opportunity area or a designated intensification area, and NOT surplus or industrial land or other large site*<sup>103</sup>*" and therefore does not meet any of the exceptional circumstances where the density ranges may be exceeded.*

### **SPG Housing (2016) Para 1.3.51 states:**

**1.3.51** In appropriate circumstances, it may be acceptable for a particular scheme to exceed the ranges in the density matrix, **providing important qualitative concerns are suitably addressed**. However, to be supported, schemes which **exceed the ranges in the matrix must** be of a high design quality and should be tested against the following considerations:

- the factors outlined in Policy 3.4, including local context and character, public transport capacity and the design principles set out in chapter 7 of the London Plan;
- the location of a site **in relation to existing and planned public transport connectivity (PTAL)**, social infrastructure provision and other local amenities and services;
- the need for development to achieve high quality design in terms of livability, public realm, **residential and environmental quality**, and, in particular, accord with the housing quality standards set out in Part 2 of this SPG;
- a scheme's overall contribution to local **'place making'**, including where appropriate the need for 'place shielding';
- depending on their particular characteristics, the potential for large sites to define their **own setting and accommodate higher densities**;

- the residential mix and dwelling types proposed in a scheme, **taking into account factors such as children's play space provision, school capacity and location;**
- the need for the appropriate management and design of refuse/food waste/recycling and cycle parking facilities; and
- **whether proposals are in the types of accessible locations the London Plan considers appropriate for higher density development (e.g. town centres, opportunity areas, intensification areas, surplus industrial land, and other large sites).**

**1.3.52** where these considerations are satisfactorily addressed, the London Plan provides sufficient flexibility for such higher density schemes to be supported. It should, however, be recognised that this is not an exhaustive list and other more local or site-specific factors may also be given appropriate weight, taking into account the particular characteristics of a proposed development and its impact on the surrounding area.

The case officer's report stated:

*"The development which would demolish the existing dwelling and replace it with a two storey building with accommodation in the roof-space containing 7 flats would **respect the character and amenity of this residential area, would not impact on local amenity and would provide good standard of accommodation for future residents.** New development contributes toward local infrastructure through Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and new services and infrastructure will be delivered in line with the Infrastructure Delivery Plan (2017)."*

This proposal has a significant increase in footprint and mass compared to any local surrounding property and therefore does **NOT** respect the character of the locality of mainly detached, semi-detached houses and bungalows by any stretch of the imagination and therefore does significantly impact on the local amenity.

The locality has had significant cumulative increased densities but has NOT seen any improvement of infrastructure and any Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) has NOT contributed to the improvement of local lack of Infrastructure or Services.

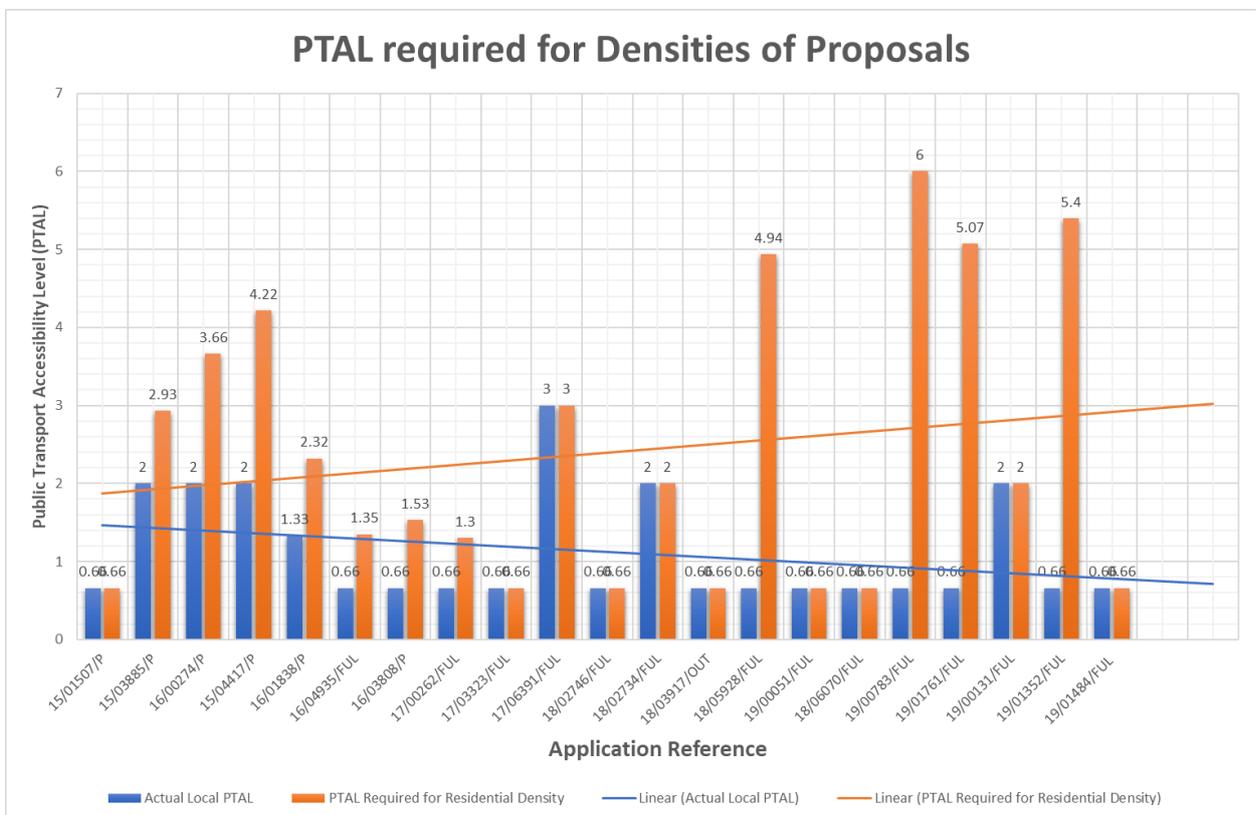
These reasons for approval did not include the provisions of SPG paras 1.3.50 to 1.3.52 with regard to:

- The proposal is **NOT** in a *"town centre, opportunity areas or an intensification area, or is surplus industrial land or other large sites"*<sup>403</sup>
- Did not consider *"planned public transport connectivity (PTAL)"*
- Did not consider the loss of *"residential and environmental quality"*
- Did not consider the *"scheme's overall contribution to local place making"*

- Did not consider "the residential mix and dwelling types proposed in a scheme, taking into account factors such as (designated area in m<sup>2</sup>) for children's play space provision, school capacity and location;"
- Did Not consider whether "the proposal is in the types of accessible location the London Plan considers appropriate for **higher density development** (e.g. the proposal is NOT in a **town centre, opportunity area, intensification area, or surplus industrial land, or other large sites**)."

Also, the Shirley North Ward has not visibly seen **any** infrastructure improvement over the previous decade as a result of cumulative CIL contributions for any of the following approved applications which have significantly increased local Densities, inappropriate for the local available Public Transport Accessibility (PTAL). In addition, during this period, two GP Surgeries have closed for Shirley Residents, one in the Shirley North Ward and one in the Shirley South Ward and the increase in population has exacerbated access availability to GP surgeries, appointments and waiting times.

Where is the "Planned Increase in Infrastructure" from any of these recent CIL contributions?

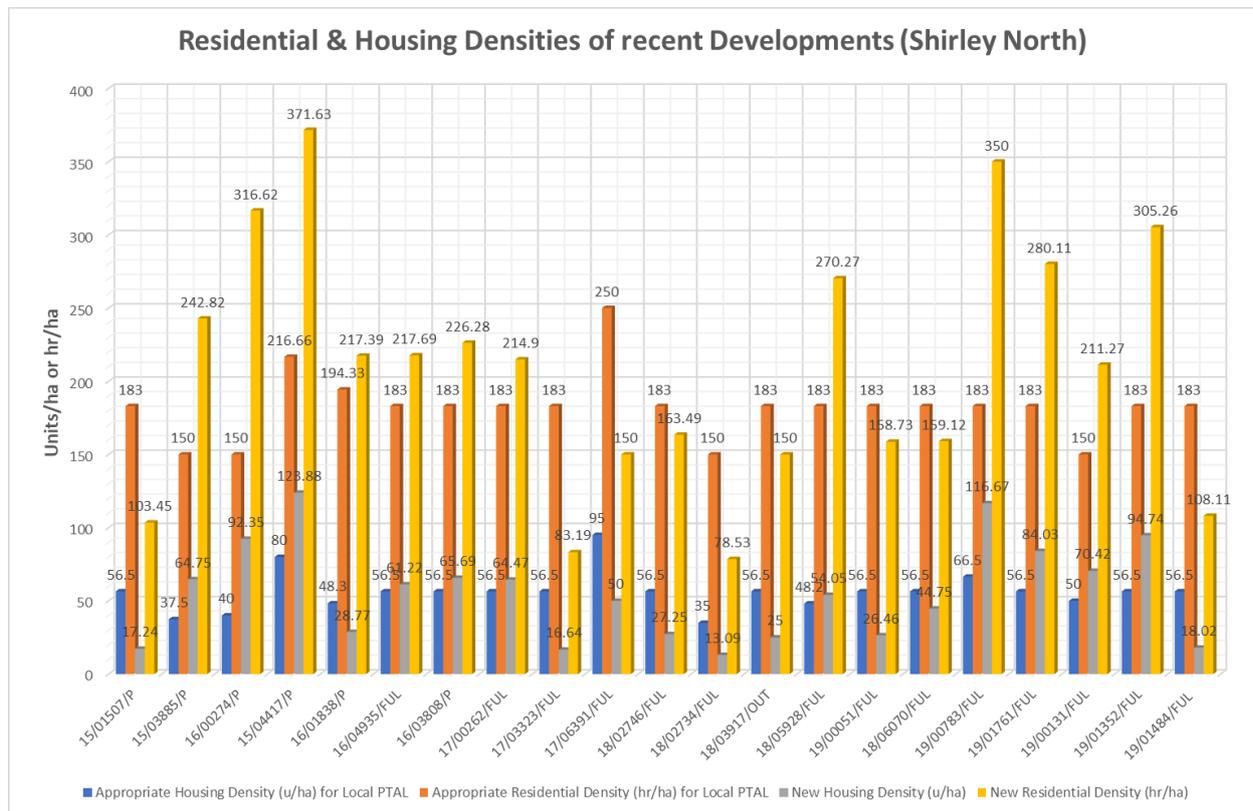


**Illustration of excessive PTAL Requirement above the Local PTAL available for Approved Applications in the MORA Post Code Area**

If the appropriate Housing and Residential Densities are NOT observed, the Public Transport becomes oversubscribed at the higher density localities and cannot meet the required demand and the route becomes overcrowded. The Monks Orchard Residents' Association Post Code Area

has a single bus route 367 and is a single decker service through a residential area, within a road network which is not suitable for large double decker buses. The passenger capacity is limited and infrequent and the buses get full at the sites of inappropriate high residential densities such that, as the bus travels through the residential area, the route becomes full to capacity during busy periods and does not stop to pick up waiting passengers as it proceeds through the residential area. As the service is only 20min intervals at best, these waiting passengers become frustrated and eventually resort to other means of transport which is likely their personal car which is a significant waste of available road space for only one driver and thus contributes to local traffic congestion.

TfL are NOT proposing to improve public transport accessibility at this location prior to 2031. The cumulative uncontrolled high Residential Density developments cumulatively increases public transport occupancy to the extent that further usage is limited by capacity and users revert to other means of transport – their car.



**Illustration of excessive Housing and Residential Densities for Approved Applications in the MORA Post Code Area**

**Croydon Local Plan Policy 6.41** States:

National Planning Policy Framework in paragraph 50 encourages local authorities to plan for the delivery for a wide choice of high-quality homes and sustainable communities. It advises that in doing so, development plans should be based on **evidence of local needs and demands**. The notions of balance and risk are also recognised in the **National Planning Policy**

**Framework**, which states that the **cumulative impact of standards and policies** should not put the **implementation of the plan at serious risk** (NPPF March 2012 paragraph 174).

**NPPF 2019 para 49 & 180 state:**

49. However, in the context of the Framework – and in particular the presumption in favour of sustainable development – arguments that an application is premature are unlikely to justify a refusal of planning permission other than in the limited circumstances where both:

- a) the development proposed is so substantial, or its **cumulative effect** would be so significant, that to **grant permission would undermine the plan-making process** by predetermining decisions about the **scale, location or phasing** of new development that are central to an emerging plan; and ...

180. Planning policies and decisions should also ensure that new development is appropriate for its location taking into account the likely effects (**including cumulative effects**) of pollution on health, living conditions and the natural environment, as well as the potential sensitivity of the site or the **wider area to impacts that could arise from the development**.

Therefore, the **cumulative effect** of **Not observing the London Plan Policy 3.4 – Optimising Housing Potential** and granting approval for this application is an **over development for the locality** and there are no extenuating circumstances, as defined in SPG Housing para 1.3.50 for not meeting the broad ranges of Table 3.2. If this is the interpretation of the London Plan Policy 3.4 then its guidance is worthless as its guidance is being totally ignored. The main problem is that the local infrastructure to support the proposal is NOT available and is getting worse. TfL are not planning increased public transport locally as PTAL is forecast to remain at 1a up until 2031.

The responsibility of "Development Management" should be to actually "*manage*" increases in population densities and their implications on the wider aspects of neighbourhoods, and not to just assess each individual planning application in isolation of these issues. Development Management is simply assessing each application individually in total isolation of the implications on the wider community availability of public services and infrastructure.

Yours sincerely



Derek C. Ritson - I. Eng. M.I.E.T. (MORA Planning).



Sony Nair – Chairman, Monks Orchard Residents' Association.  
On behalf of the Executive Committee, MORA members and local residents.



**Cc:**

Sarah Jones MP

Mr. Pete Smith

Steve O'Connell

Cllr. Sue Bennet

Cllr. Richard Chatterjee

Cllr. Gareth Streeter

Croydon Central

Head of Development Management (LPA)

GLA Member (Croydon & Sutton)

Shirley North Ward Councillor

Shirley North Ward Councillor

Shirley North Ward Councillor

**Bcc:**

MORA

Local Residents & Interested Parties

Executive Committee