

Planning Applications Sub Committee 28 November 2005 Item No. 1

**REPORT FOR CONSIDERATION AT PLANNING APPLICATIONS SUB COMMITTEE**

**Reference No:** HGY/2005/1633

**Ward:** Fortis Green

**Date received:** 31/08/2005

**Last amended date:** N/A

**Drawing number of plans:** 001-L-06A, 07A, 08A, 09A, 10A & 11A.

**Address:** The Lodge, Creighton Avenue N10

**Proposal:** Demolition of existing park keeper's lodge and erection of 2 x 2 storey four bedroom dwelling houses with rooms at lower ground and first floor level, with associated car parking and landscaping.

**Existing Use:** Park keeper's lodge and public toilets

**Proposed Use:** Residential

**Applicant:** HartmannGentilini/Hartmann/Hente/McGregor

**Ownership:** Council

**THIS ITEM WAS DEFERRED ON 31 OCTOBER 2005 FOR MEMBERS SITE VISIT, WHICH TOOK PLACE ON 9 NOVEMBER**

**PLANNING DESIGNATIONS**

Coldfall Wood – Ecologically Valuable Site - Borough Grade 1

Coldfall Wood and Coldfall School playing fields - Metropolitan Open Land

**Officer Contact:** David Paton

**RECOMMENDATION**

GRANT PERMISSION subject to conditions

**SITE AND SURROUNDINGS**

The application site, on the north side of Creighton Avenue, comprises land on the edge of Coldfall Wood, between one of the footpath entrances and 80 Creighton Avenue, opposite an entrance to Fortismere School. It has a fairly narrow road frontage of 8m. and widens out to 19m. at the rear of the site. The western side runs along the footpath into the Wood, and 80 Creighton Avenue is to the east. At present the site is occupied by a vacant park keeper's lodge with closed public toilets and an open fronted shelter on the ground floor abutting the public footpath, and dormer windows and rooms in a

fairly steeply pitched roof. The lodge is set back from the road by approximately 26m., and is built between 5m. and 9m. off the side boundary with no. 80. It is of red brick and tiles. The site falls from the front where it is at street level to the rear. There is a difference in levels between the site and no. 80 which increases from front to back, the house at no. 80 being about 1.9m. higher than the ground level of the application site. The site has been heavily dumped particularly to the rear of the building where dumping includes three Reliant Robin cars.

80 Creighton Avenue is a 2 storey house, which was originally a single storey bungalow, and is set back from the street by 19m, and has a total depth of 12m. It is built up to within 1m. of the side boundary with The Lodge, and on this side has, at the front, a kitchen/dining room, with a glass brick window in the flank wall. Behind this is a large single storey conservatory with a glazed flank wall overlooking the application site and glass roof, as well as glazing to the rear looking straight down the garden. There are no flank wall windows at first floor, but a front bedroom and adjacent dressing room have windows close to the site boundary, facing the road, and at the rear there are a bathroom and a bedroom close to the boundary with windows looking straight down the garden.

At the front of The Lodge is what was once a front garden, now overgrown, but containing Leyland Cypress trees and some shrubs. The rear garden includes an Oak, a Hornbeam, an Ash and a Wild Cherry.

Coldfall Wood is designated as Metropolitan Open Land and as an Ecologically Valuable Site of Borough (Grade 1) importance. The site itself is however not included in either of these designated areas.

## **PLANNING HISTORY**

June 2005 application for 3 new houses - withdrawn

## **DETAILS OF PROPOSAL**

The proposal is to demolish the existing building and to erect 2 two storey 4 bedroom houses.

House A would be set back into the site by 24m. and would be built along the site boundary with the footpath into the Wood. The ground floor of this house would be at the same level as the ground level in the Wood. There would be a study at the front and a living/dining room to the rear on the ground floor. The study and the living room would have windows facing forwards and rearwards, and there would be a row of high level windows in the wall on the boundary with the Wood. The wall below these windows would be finished as a gobion wall and planted. At first floor there would be 4 bedrooms. The bedrooms at the front and at the back would each have a window looking to the front and to the rear. There would be 2 bedrooms in the middle of the house

which would look into the Wood. All the bedrooms, and a bathroom and the stairs, would have windows in the flank wall along the boundary with the Wood. These windows would have electrically operated external wooden shutters. Above them, between them and the eaves of the roof would be a row of clerestory windows. This house would be the same height as the ridge of the existing building.

House B would be set 7m. further forward than House A, to line up with the front of no. 80 and would be 18m. deep. It would extend rearwards some 6m. further than no. 80, and would be set in 1.5m. from the boundary with and about 2.5m. from the flank wall of that house. The closest point of House B to the Wood would be 2.5m. from the boundary.

The ground floor of House B would be at the same level as the ground floor of no. 80, but about 2m. higher than the ground floor of House A. This allows the first floor of House B to look out over the roof of the first floor of House A. The ground floor of this house would comprise a study at the front, with a kitchen in the middle and a living/dining room at the rear. Only the dining area would have a window in the flank wall looking directly towards no. 80. The first floor would comprise 4 bedrooms, a bathroom and an en-suite shower/W.C. All these rooms and the staircase would have windows, with electronic external wooden shutters, looking out over House A towards the Wood. As with House A there would be a row of clerestorey windows between the main windows and the eaves. There would be no first floor windows facing no. 80. Both houses would have rooflights over the staircase.

There would be vehicle access from Creighton Avenue next to the boundary with no. 80, and 2 parking spaces. Both houses would have adequate rear gardens.

House A would have a shallow monopitch roof sloping down to a valley gutter against the flank wall of House B. House B would have a similar shallow monopitch roof leading to a near vertical metal clad "wall" from first floor eaves to ground level, interrupted at ground floor by 3 wall panels. The section of House A that projects to the rear beyond House B is similarly designed and clad. These roof slopes and walls would be metal clad.

## **CONSULTATION**

16/09/2005

Adjoining occupiers – 32 nearby residents

Friends of Muswell Hill Playing Fields and Coldfall Wood

Muswell Hill and Fortis Green Association

Fortismere School

Coldfall School

Highways and Transportation

Arboricultural Officer

Building Control

## RESPONSES

Adjoining occupiers – objections received on behalf of the occupier of no. 80 on the following grounds:

- non-compliance with the brief with regard to the enlarged footprint and greater bulk and massing of the new buildings compared to the existing lodge
- overdevelopment
- visual impact and loss of outlook
- potential loss of sunlight and daylight
- contrary to the Council's planning policies relating to Metropolitan Open Land and ecologically valuable sites

Friends of Muswell Hill Playing Fields and Coldfall Wood – object for the following reasons:

- overdevelopment
- proposed buildings have a larger footprint than existing building
- windows would intrude on the Wood and on the privacy of users of the Wood, and introduce an element of light pollution.

Muswell Hill and Fortis Green Association

– object on the grounds that the scheme does not fully comply with the Brief particularly in regard to it having greater bulk than the existing building, that the proposal constitutes overdevelopment, and that the outlook from the rear rooms and garden of no. 80 will be adversely affected.

Fortismere School

- object on the following grounds:
- scheme out of character with street and woodland
  - new vehicle access opposite the school would be dangerous, especially as Creighton Avenue is used as a rat-run
  - concerns about the growing density of house building when the Council is having difficulty meeting demand for school places, and would cause light pollution in the Wood.

- the area is designated as Metropolitan Open Land.
- development will damage the special character of the Wood.

Highways – no objection

Arboricultural Officer – no objection to removal of Cypress trees; a specification for tree protection measures must be submitted, approved and implemented.

Building Control – proposals meet access for fire service requirements.

Note: the application site is not MOL nor is it included in the Coldfall Wood ecologically valuable site designation.

## **RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY**

UNITARY DEVELOPMENT PLAN 1998

OP 3.4 Development Adjacent To Green Belt, Metropolitan Open Land Of Significant Local Open Land

OP 4.1 Protection Of Ecologically Valuable Sites & Ecological Corridors

DES 1.1 Good Design & How Design Will Be Assessed

DES 1.2 Assessment Of Design Quality (1) Fitting New Buildings Into The Surrounding Area.

DES 1.3 Assessment Of Design Quality (2) Enclosure, Height & Scale

DES 1.5 Assessment Of Design Quality (3) Building Lines, Layout, Form

DES 1.9 Privacy & Amenity Of Neighbours

DES 1.10 Overdevelopment

DES 5.1 Character Of Residential Areas

HSG 2.2 Residential Densities

Haringey Unitary Development Plan-Revised Deposit Consultation Draft 2004:

UD 3 Quality Design

UD 9 Parking For Development

Appendix 1 Parking Standards

SPG 1A Design Guidance & Design

HSG 8 Density Standards

SPG 3A Density, Dwelling Mix, Floorspace Minima, Conversions, Extensions, & Lifetime Homes.

OS 4 Development Adjacent To Open Spaces

SPG 1A Design Guidance & Design

## **ANALYSIS/ASSESSMENT OF THE APPLICATION**

The main issues in this case are the degree of compliance with the planning brief, the effect of this proposal on the adjoining house and on Coldfall Wood, and the design and its effect on the character of the street.

### ***The planning brief***

The planning brief was prepared to provide general guidance for potential buyers of the site. It indicated that the impact on Coldfall Wood and its ecological and Metropolitan Open Land status is of the utmost importance. This, together with the relationship of the site to the houses in Creighton Avenue indicated a development restricted to 2 storeys. It also suggested that the building be sited "further away" from the footpath into the Wood with good fencing or screen planting on the boundary and that it should have a similar footprint to the Lodge, although there might be some flexibility in regard to bringing the building line forward. Overshadowing and overlooking of No. 80 had to be avoided.

Both the new houses would be 2 storey. One (House A) is shown right on the boundary with the Wood. However, the use of timber cladding and the planted gobion wall at ground floor level would mitigate the effect of this on the Wood. The scheme exceeds the footprint of the existing building. In particular, the new houses would be closer to no. 80, which would increase the impact on this house. The new houses would also be brought considerably further forward towards the road, although still respecting the building line of No. 80 next door.

### ***Density***

The density of the proposed development is 190 hrh. and complies with the current statutory Unitary Development Plan which gives a density range of 175 hrh. to 250 hrh. The scheme's density is just below the 200-400 hrh range specified in the 2004 draft Unitary Development Plan and complies with SPG 3a which specifies a maximum of 300 hrh for family accommodation (and is slightly below the minimum density of 200 hrh contained in the SPG). The

density of the scheme is therefore rather low when assessed against the latest policies, but the nature of the site mitigates against a higher density.

### ***Effect on Coldfall Wood***

The existing building is in effect part of the access to the wood, fronting the access path. It is built in red brick and has a red tiled roof. The new development comprises House A built right on the boundary with the Wood, 2 storeys high and 18m. long. The ground floor on the boundary would be in the form of a gabion wall, that is made up of loose natural stones contained in wire containers, and planted to integrate with the woodland. Above this the building would be largely clad in timber, again to integrate with the Wood. The front corner of House B, also 2 storeys high, would be 2.5m. from the boundary with the Wood. Whilst there are a number of first floor windows right on the boundary with the Wood, the use of timber shutters, presumably closed at night, will eliminate the light pollution referred to by the Friends of Coldfall Wood. Also, the overlooking introduced by the new houses might increase users' sense of security in this part of the Wood.

### ***Effect on neighbouring house at 80 Creighton Avenue***

The new houses would lie to the west of No. 80, and the rear of these properties faces due north. It is therefore likely that evening sunlight to No. 80 would be adversely affected by the new development, which would cause some overshadowing. The relationship between the new development and No. 80 would be similar to that between No. 80 and No. 78 in that No. 80 projects beyond the main rear wall of No. 78 by some 8m. The outlook from the large glass conservatory at the rear of No. 80 would also be affected in that part of the oblique view to the Wood would be interrupted. However, some of this outlook would remain. The view to the side of the conservatory would be of the near vertical metal clad "wall" of House B, about 3m. away.

### ***Design***

The design of the new houses is modern, and not in the traditional style of the houses in the street, which have brick or rendered walls and tiled pitched roofs. However the site presents a relatively narrow frontage to the street, widening out considerably to the rear, which identifies it as "different" in the context of the street scene. Although houses in the street are of traditional style, they are of differing designs, and frontage widths differ considerably, with site width at No. 80 being 15m., at No. 78 12m. and No. 72 17m. The Lodge has a site width at the front building line of about 9m. No. 80, originally a single storey bungalow, is of an obviously different style compared to neighbouring houses, and is set well back behind the general building line of those nearby houses. These characteristics indicate that the site could probably accommodate buildings of a different design.

The metal cladding for roofs and walls is likely to be turn-coated steel, or zinc, both of which require seams, have a dull finish and, after weathering, resemble lead. There is some concern about the appearance, viewed from No. 80, of the metal-clad flank wall of House B, although this is punctuated by a timber or rendered ground floor wall panel. The side elevation facing the Wood is 2 storeys high (inline with the brief) and with the planted gabion wall at ground level and timber cladding above should integrate reasonably well.

### ***Ecology and sustainability***

The applicants submitted an ecological survey and assessment. The site has a limited area of habitat which has been subject to severe disturbance including fly-tipping. Leyland Cypress trees line the boundary with the Wood between the Lodge and the road, and 4 of these trees also divide the front garden: all of these trees would be removed. There are a number of native trees in the rear garden area, including Pendunculate Oak, Hornbeam, Ash, and Wild Cherry: these trees are to be retained. There is Japanese Knotweed on the site which will require treatment and removal.

The site, being adjacent to the Wood is without doubt used to some extent by species living in the Wood. There is evidence that the Lodge is or has been visited by bats, but there are presently no roost sites in the buildings or trees. The site provides limited nesting and foraging for birds, but ideally any removal of shrubs or trees should be undertaken outside the nesting season, or, at the least, trees, shrubs and structures should be inspected for nesting birds prior to any work commencing (nesting birds are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act).

It is not considered that the proposed development will be detrimental to the ecology of the site or the surrounding area.

The houses will use highly insulated solid timber panel construction and are designed to achieve an “Excellent” rating under the BRE EcoHomes assessment (of the environmental performance of new housing). The development has been assessed by a registered ecological consultant under the EcoHomes guidance with regard to 4 ecological components of the EcoHomes assessment.

### ***Parking and Traffic***

Two parking spaces are provided with room for turning on site. Maximum current parking requirements are 3 spaces for 2 detached or semi-detached houses. The additional traffic generation from 2 houses will not be significant in a road where the main traffic generators are use of Creighton Avenue as a rat run and Fortismere School.

## **SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION**



The scheme does not fully comply with the planning brief in particular in that the new buildings would cover a larger footprint than the existing, and this brings them closer to no. 80. However, it is considered that, although there will be some loss of outlook from the large conservatory at the rear of No. 80, the impact on this house is acceptable, and complies with Policy DES 1.9 'Privacy & Amenity Of Neighbours'. The development will not damage the ecology of the site or the surrounding area, and the impact of the building on Coldfall Wood is also acceptable, with the possible benefit of providing a greater sense of security for users of this part of the Wood, and the proposals therefore comply with Policies OP 3.4 "Development Adjacent To Green Belt, Metropolitan Open Land Or Significant Local Open Space" and OP 4.1 "Protection Of Ecologically Valuable Sites & Ecological Corridors". Although the brief encouraged a traditional style of building, the characteristics of the site indicate that it should be able to accommodate a modern design with contemporary materials without adversely affecting the street scene, and therefore the development largely complies with Policies DES 1.2 'Assessment Of Design Quality: Fitting New Buildings Into The Surrounding Area' and DES 1.3 'Assessment Of Design Quality: Enclosure, Height & Scale'.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

### **GRANT PERMISSION**

Registered No. HGY/2005/1633

Applicant's drawing Nos. 001-L-06A, 07A, 08A, 09A, 10A & 11A

Subject to the following conditions:

1. The development hereby authorised must be begun not later than the expiration of 5 years from the date of this permission, failing which the permission shall be of no effect.

Reason: This condition is imposed by virtue of Section 91 of the Town & Country Planning Act 1990 and to prevent the accumulation of unimplemented planning permissions.

2. The development hereby authorised shall be carried out in complete accordance with the plans and specifications submitted to, and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In order to ensure the development is carried out in accordance with the approved details and in the interests of amenity.

3. Samples of all materials to be used for the external surfaces of the development shall be submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority before any development is commenced.

Samples should include sample panels or brick types and a roofing material sample combined with a schedule of the exact product references.

Reason: In order for the Local Planning Authority to retain control over the exact materials to be used for the proposed development and to assess the suitability of the samples submitted in the interests of visual amenity.

4. A specification for tree protection measures, including protection for the oak tree inside Coldfall Wood between the site boundary and the public footpath and adjacent to Creighton Avenue, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority prior to any demolition or other building works commencing on site. Such specification to include details of design, height and distances from tree stems of the proposed protection, and an illustrative site plan. Such tree protection measures as approved to be fully implemented under the supervision of the Council's Arboriculturalist prior to any works commencing on site.

Reason: In order to ensure that appropriate protection measures are implemented to satisfactory standards prior to the commencement of works so as to safeguard existing trees on site.

5. Notwithstanding the details of landscaping referred to in the application, a scheme for the landscaping and treatment of the surroundings of the proposed development to include detailed drawings of:

- a. those existing trees to be retained.
- b. those existing trees to be removed.
- c. those existing trees which will require thinning, pruning, pollarding or lopping as a result of this consent. All such work to be agreed with the Council's Arboriculturalist.
- d. Those new trees and shrubs to be planted together with a schedule of species shall be submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority prior to the commencement of the development. Such an approved scheme of planting, seeding or turfing comprised in the approved details of landscaping shall be carried out and implemented in strict accordance with the approved details in the first planting and seeding season following the occupation of the building or the completion of development (whichever is sooner). Any trees or plants, either existing or proposed, which, within a period of five years from the completion of the development die, are removed, become damaged or diseased shall be replaced in the next planting season with a similar size and species. The landscaping scheme, once implemented, is to be maintained and retained thereafter to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In order for the Local Authority to assess the acceptability of any landscaping scheme in relation to the site itself, thereby ensuring a satisfactory setting for the proposed development in the interests of the visual amenity of the area.

6. Notwithstanding the details of parking shown on the approved drawings, further details for the provision of 2 parking spaces and on-site turning area shall be submitted to and approved by the local planning authority prior to work commencing on site. Such parking as approved shall be laid out prior to occupation of the houses and shall be retained thereafter.

Reason: In order to ensure that the proposed development does not prejudice the free flow of traffic or the conditions of general safety along the neighbouring highway, and to ensure the safety and well being of the Oak tree referred to in Condition 4.

7. The construction works of the development hereby granted shall not be carried out before 0800 or after 1800 hours Monday to Friday or before 0800 or after 1200 hours on Saturday and not at all on Sundays or Bank Holidays.

Reason: In order to ensure that the proposal does not prejudice the enjoyment of neighbouring occupiers of their properties.

8. Details of proposed boundary treatment including all walls, fencing, gateways and means of enclosure shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority prior to completion of the development hereby approved, such detailed work to be carried out as approved prior to occupation of the houses.

Reason: To ensure a satisfactory appearance and to protect the visual amenity and appearance of the locality.

9. Vehicle wheel washing facilities shall be provided on site prior to the commencement of any demolition or building work, and no work shall take place at any time that such wheel washing facilities are not operating.

Reason: To ensure that the implementation of this permission does not prejudice conditions of safety on the adjacent highway.

INFORMATIVE: The new development will require naming/numbering. The applicant should contact the Transportation Group at least six weeks before the development is occupied (tel. 020 8489 5573) to arrange for the allocation of a suitable address.

## REASONS FOR APPROVAL

It is considered that, although there will be some loss of outlook from the large conservatory at the rear of No. 80, the impact on this house is acceptable, and

complies with Policy DES 1.9 'Privacy & Amenity Of Neighbours'. The development will not damage the ecology of the site or the surrounding area, and the impact of the building on Coldfall Wood is also acceptable, with the possible benefit of providing a greater sense of security for users of this part of the Wood, and the proposals therefore comply with Policies OP 3.4 "Development Adjacent To Green Belt, Metropolitan Open Land Or Significant Local Open Space' and OP 4.1 'Protection Of Ecologically Valuable Sites & Ecological Corridors'. The characteristics of the site indicate that it should be able to accommodate a modern design with contemporary materials without adversely affecting the street scene, and therefore the proposal largely complies with Policies DES 1.2 'Assessment Of Design Quality: Fitting New Buildings Into The Surrounding Area' and DES 1.3 'Assessment Of Design Quality: Enclosure, Height & Scale'.