

DEVELOPMENT CONTROL COMMITTEE
18 JULY 2023

SPECIFIC QUESTIONS

THE FOLLOWING QUESTION HAS BEEN SUBMITTED FOR ORAL REPLY

From Mr Nick Smith to the Development Control Committee

Question: With regard to Item 5: (21/05794/FULL1) – Devonshire House, 29-31 Elmfield Road, Bromley, BR1 1LT:

The officer report states “Recommendation Permission to be refused” whereas the November 2022 design exercise (including revised massing options, daylight reports and models) were openly discussed resulting in a scheme where officers were “broadly supportive of the revised height, scale and massing”. Given the now stated reasons for refusal are for conditions noted and assessed prior to this statement, why has the LA not advised the applicant the scheme is no longer supported prior to the publication of the officer report, thus avoiding considerable additional costs?

Reply: *An informal meeting was held with the applicant and planning agent in the Devonshire House Marketing Suite on 1 November 2022, post-application submission, and a summary response was provided by email on 3 November 2022. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the scale and form (design) of the building with the aid of the revised 3D model. Any feedback offered by officers during the course of an application is informal, designed to assist applicant’s in making a scheme more acceptable and are without prejudice to the officers’ final recommendation.*

The informal response stated that whilst officers were broadly supportive of the revised height, scale and massing which represented an improvement on earlier iterations, the applicant should progress with further detailed design work including a revised townscape impact assessment (in order to inform/assess the impact of the final design proposal).

Whilst the dialogue with the officers continued throughout the application process, the applicant was advised that officers would only re-consult once the complete suite of amended documents had been received and no formal re-consultation took place until June 2023, once all of the supporting technical documents had been updated to reflect the revisions to the scheme and the recent changes to policy requirements.

As no formal re-consultation and re-assessment was carried out until June 2023, officers were not in a position to formulate a recommendation up to that point, and no confirmation on the final view was provided. The overall acceptability of the proposed development was reassessed as part of the final assessment of the final scheme proposal (revised plans received June 2023).

Supplementary Question: Can you clarify the material difference made by the consultation documents that changed the broadly supportive Officer assessment in December 2022?

Reply: *I refer you to my previous response outlining information that was not provided in a timely manner.*