

<b>Committee Date</b>	08.02.2024	
<b>Address</b>	Betts Park Croydon Road Penge London	
<b>Application Number</b>	23/03655/FULL1	<b>Officer</b> - Louisa Bruce
<b>Ward</b>	Crystal Palace And Anerley	
<b>Proposal</b>	Erection of a cast stone obelisk with concrete core on an existing stone plinth, to create a monument of approximately 6m in height	
<b>Applicant</b>	<b>Agent</b>	
Mr Alan Pottinger 17 Ridsdale Road London SE20 8AG		
<b>Reason for referral to committee</b>	Council owned land	<b>Councillor call in</b> No

<b>RECOMMENDATION</b>	PERMISSION
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<p>KEY DESIGNATIONS</p> <p>Area of Deficiency in Access to Nature Article 4 Direction Biggin Hill Safeguarding Area London City Airport Safeguarding Renewal Area Sites of Interest for Nat. Conservation Smoke Control SCA 32 Urban Open Space Views of Local Importance</p>
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<b>Representation summary</b>	<i>A site notice was displayed on the notice board on Anerley Road on the 31<sup>st</sup> October 2023.</i>	
Total number of responses		3
Number in support		1
Number of objections		2

## 1. SUMMARY OF KEY REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

- The applicant has evidenced why the obelisk statue has been chosen to be installed within the centre of Betts Park. Furthermore, the proposed statue has been sensitively designed to limit the impact on the Urban Open Space.
- The scale, height, layout and appearance of the proposed development would respond appropriately to its setting and given its siting would not cause undue harm to neighbouring amenity.
- It is considered the proposed development would be built from appropriate material and is recommended for permission.

## 2. LOCATION

- 2.1 Betts Park is a small public park in Anerley, London SE20 with a free outdoor gym, children's playground, basketball courts and football field, set across 13 acres of the ancient Penge Common.
- 2.2 Betts Park is owned by the London Borough of Bromley. *Friends of Betts Park* is a community volunteer organisation dedicated to maintaining and improving the park.
- 2.3 The park is located between Seymour Villas and Anerley Road. The site is designated as lying within an Area of Urban Open Space.



*Figure 1 – Site location plan*



*Figure 2 – photograph of the existing plinth*



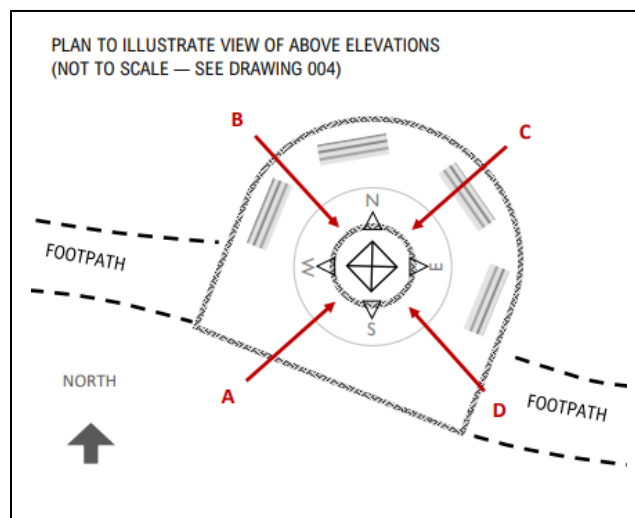
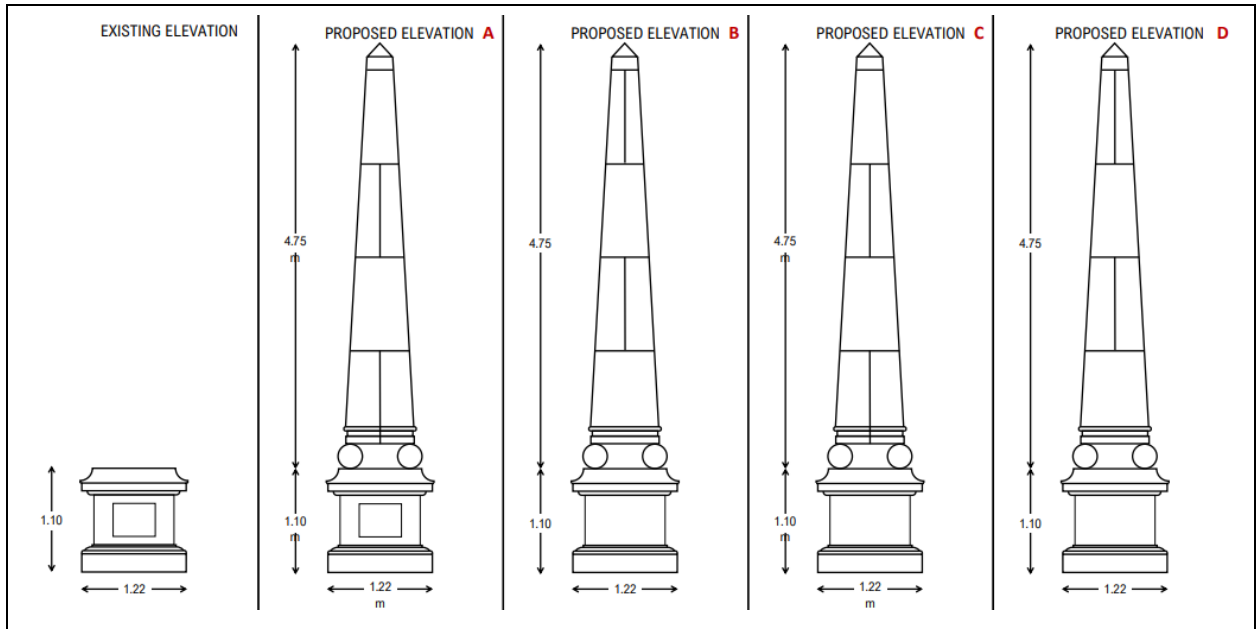
*Figure 3 – photograph of Betts Park*



*Figure 4 – wider photograph of Betts Park (including the existing plinth)*

### 3 PROPOSAL

- 3.1 Planning permission is sought for the erection of a cast stone obelisk with concrete core on an existing stone plinth to create a monument of approximately 6m in height.



#### **4. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY**

4.1 No recent planning history

#### **5. CONSULTATION SUMMARY**

##### **A) Statutory**

Heritage & Conservation Officer – *no objection*

No heritage objections.

Metropolitan Police (Secure by Design Officer) – *no objections*

Having looked at the proposal it would not be something I would be commenting on.

Highways – *no objections*

TfL – *no objections*

Having assessed the proposals, we can confirm that TfL has no comments to make on this planning application regarding strategic transport issues. We would, however, expect the application to be determined in line with relevant London Plan policy and guidance plus that issued by TfL including the Mayor's Transport Strategy.

##### **B) Local Groups**

No comments were received from any local residents groups.

##### **C) Adjoining Occupiers**

Nearby owners/occupiers were notified of the application and several letters of objection and support were received, which can be summarised as follows:

###### Objection

- The park is an open space of natural beauty in the midst of a concrete jungle. The last thing needed is more concrete imposed on it, never mind the environmental damage.
- It will ruin the view of the trees in the park. Obelisks are traditionally used to commemorate something, which this does not.

###### Support

- A great addition to a gem of a park in Penge

## **6. POLICIES AND GUIDANCE**

6.1 Section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) sets out that in considering and determining applications for planning permission the local planning authority must have regard to:-

- (a) the provisions of the development plan, so far as material to the application,
- (b) any local finance considerations, so far as material to the application, and
- (c) any other material considerations.

6.2 Section 38 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004) makes it clear that any determination under the planning acts must be made in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

6.3 The National Planning Policy Framework was updated on the 19<sup>th</sup> December 2023.

6.4 The development plan for Bromley comprises the Bromley Local Plan (Jan 2019) and the London Plan (Mar 2021). The NPPF does not change the legal status of the development plan.

6.5 The London Plan 2021

- D1 London's form and characteristics
- D4 Delivering Good Design
- D8 Public Realm
- HC1 Heritage conservation and growth
- G4 Open Space
- G7 Trees and woodlands

6.6 Bromley Local Plan 2019

- 37 General Design of Development
- 45 Historic Parks and Gardens
- 46 Ancient Monuments and Archaeology
- 55 Urban Open Space
- 73 Development and Trees
- 79 Biodiversity and Access to Nature

6.7 Bromley Supplementary Guidance

Bromley Council's Urban Design Guidance – July 2023

## **7. ASSESSMENT**

### **7.1 Background**

7.1.1 The friends of Betts Park applied for funding from the Council's Platinum Jubilee Parks Fund to restore the historic monument. The friends have been working with Iverde and the Council to obtain quotes from Stonemasters to carry out the works.

Should planning permission be granted Idverde would procure the works on behalf of the Council.

- 7.1.2 The specific location was chosen as it was the site of the 1960 Penge Urban District Council diamond jubilee monument, celebrating independence from Battersea - the existing plinth held an armillary sundial which was removed by the new Bromley Council in 1965 (probably for safety reasons).
- 7.1.3 Betts Park is the only remaining undeveloped fragment of the original Penge Common, dating back to 956AD. This end of the park is significant as it has original trees from the Common, the last remaining canal in south London, and was where the town of Anerley was founded in 1827.
- 7.1.4 An obelisk was selected as the Friends of Betts park wanted a monument that was non-religious and non-military, yet would link Anerley to its Victorian heritage, to the Crystal Palace, and to the inter-war period when the current Betts Park was established in 1928 - Egyptomania was a strong influence throughout this period and will neatly link to the *art deco* "King George V" gates at the Croydon Road end of the park (when they are refurbished and reinstated under a separate project).
- 7.1.5 The group wanted a monument that references the 1960s sundial by casting a shadow on the points of the compass that remain around the old plinth, and that is bold enough to act as a statement for the *Heart of Anerley Campaign* during the bicentenary in 2027.
- 7.1.6 To this purpose the obelisk will be dedicated at the bicentenary to *all the people whose names never appear on memorials*. It is intended to publicly represent the past, present and future of all the diverse people who built own small town, connected by one timeless symbolic.

## **7.2 Principle of development/Land use - *Acceptable***

- 7.2.1 The site is located within land designated as Urban Open Space (UOS), Policy 55 of the Bromley Local Plan sets out that “proposals for built development in Urban Open Space (UOS) will be permitted only under the following circumstances:
  - a - The development is related to the existing or allocated use (in this context, neither residential nor indoor sports development, other than sports development related to educational use on the site, will normally be regarded as being related to the existing use); or
  - b - The development is small scale and supports the outdoor recreational uses or children's play facilities on the site; or
  - c - Any replacement buildings do not exceed the site coverage of the existing development on the site”.
- 7.2.2 The proposed statue whilst not related to education or outdoor sport of children’s play facilities it can be considered small scale and does not exceed the sites coverage. The proposed development will allow users to observe a statue which is



dedicated at the bicentenary to all the people whose names never appear on memorials.

### **7.3 Design – Layout, scale height and massing - *Acceptable***

- 7.3.1 Paragraph 131 of the NPPF (2023) states that the creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities.
- 7.3.2 London Plan and Bromley Local Plan policies further reinforce the principles of the NPPF setting out a clear rationale for high quality design.
- 7.3.3 Policy D3 of the London Plan relates to 'Optimising site capacity through the design-led approach' and states that all development must make the best use of land by following a design-led approach that optimises the capacity of sites. Form and layout should enhance local context by delivering buildings and spaces that positively respond to local distinctiveness through their layout, orientation, scale, appearance and shape. The quality and character shall respond to the existing character of a place by identifying the special and valued features and characteristics that are unique to the locality and respect, enhance and utilise the heritage assets and architectural features that contribute towards the local character.
- 7.3.4 Policy 37 of the Bromley Local Plan requires a high standard of design and layout in all new development which should complement adjacent buildings and areas and positively contribute to the existing street scene and/or landscape and respect important views, heritage assets, skylines, landmarks or landscape features. Space about buildings should also provide opportunities to create attractive settings with hard or soft landscaping (including enhancing biodiversity) and should allow for adequate daylight and sunlight to penetrate in and between buildings. Suitable access should also be provided for people with impaired mobility and meet the principles of inclusive design. In addition, Policy 37 highlights that development proposals should also respect non designated heritage assets and should be accompanied by a written statement setting out design principles and illustrative material showing the relationship of the development to the wider context.
- 7.3.5 The statue will be located in the park at the convergence of several pathways. Presently there is a plinth which was erected on the site in the 1960's which originally held a brass type armillary sundial. It is proposed to retain and reuse the existing plinth for the new installation.
- 7.3.6 The obelisk will be installed on top of the existing stone plinth which measures approximately 1.2m in width x 1.1m in height. The stone obelisk will measure approximately 6m in height (including the height of the plinth).
- 7.3.7 The obelisk will be constructed from a cast stone shell, infilled with poured concrete for strength.

7.3.8 It is intended that the base plinth will eventually have a plaque in the existing recess that once held a brass badge of Penge Council. The plaque will be added at a later date to coincide with the bicentenary of Anerley in 2027.

#### **7.4 Impact on Neighbouring Amenity - *Acceptable***

7.4.1 Policy 37 (e) of the Bromley Local Plan seeks to protect existing residential occupiers from inappropriate development. Issues to consider are the impact of a development proposal upon neighbouring properties by way of overshadowing, loss of light, overbearing impact, overlooking, loss of privacy and general noise and disturbance.

7.4.2 The proposed obelisk statue would be sited away from the boundaries of the site, with the closest residential properties being located on Seymour Villas, Croydon Road and Anerley Road. Given the separation and the relatively modest height of the obelisk, there is not considered to be any significant adverse in impact on light, outlook or privacy resulting from the proposed development.

7.4.3 Concerns have been raised locally in respect of the proposed statue and its impact of the statue on the open nature of the park. The objections in this regard have been considered and in view of the relatively slender nature of the obelisk it is not considered to impact detrimentally upon the views across the park.

### **8. CONCLUSION**

8.1 The Friends of Betts Park have provided evidence behind the reasoning for the installation of the obelisk structure. The scale, height, layout and appearance of the structure would respond appropriately to its setting and given its siting would not cause any undue harm to neighbouring amenity. The proposed structure has also been sensitively designed to limit the impact on the Urban Open Space and it is considered that the proposed development is acceptable.

### **RECOMMENDATION: Permission**

#### Conditions

1. Time Period
2. Compliance with approved plans
3. In accordance with submitted materials

Any other planning condition(s) considered necessary by the Assistant Director (Planning and Building Control).