



REGULATORY SERVICES COMMITTEE

12 November 2015

REPORT

Subject Heading:

P1366.15

Portman House
16-20 Victoria Road, Romford

Single Storey extension at second floor level to the rear part of the building and single storey extension at fourth level to the front part of the building to provide 5No residential units (4No 1 bed units and 1No 2 bed unit)

Ward: Romford Town

(Application received 21st September 2015)

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Policy Context:

Local Development Framework
The London Plan
National Planning Policy Framework
National Planning Policy Practice
Guidance

Financial summary:

Not relevant

The subject matter of this report deals with the following Council Objectives

Havering will be clean and its environment will be cared for	[x]
People will be safe, in their homes and in the community	[x]
Residents will be proud to live in Havering	[x]

SUMMARY

Portman House is a former office building undergoing conversion to flats in accordance with a prior approval submission. The site lies within an area where new, higher density housing development is anticipated and the principle of extending the building to provide additional residential units is acceptable. The main issues are whether the extensions would have an acceptable impact on the streetscene, provide an acceptable standard of accommodation for future residents and have an acceptable impact on nearby residential occupiers. Staff consider as a matter of judgement that the potential impacts would not be so significant such as to justify a refusal and the development is judged to be acceptable, subject to the prior completion of a S106 planning obligation to secure a contribution of £30,000 towards education needs and restriction on future occupiers applying for parking permits.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the Committee notes that the development proposed is liable for the Mayor's Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) in accordance with London Plan Policy 8.3 and that the applicable fee would be £6,100 (subject to indexation). This is based on the creation of 305 square metres of new gross internal floor space.
2. That the proposal is unacceptable as it stands but would be acceptable subject to the applicant entering into a planning obligation under S106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended), to secure the following:
 - A financial contribution of £30,000 to be used for educational purposes in accordance with the Policies DC29 and DC72 of the LDF Core Strategy and Development Control Policies Development Plan Document and the Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document.
 - All contribution sums shall include interest to the due date of expenditure and all contribution sums to be subject to indexation from the date of completion of the Section 106 agreement to the date of receipt by the Council.

- An agreement that prevents future occupiers of the development from applying for parking permits in the nearby controlled parking zone, with the exception of blue badge holders.
- The Developer/Owner to pay the Council's reasonable legal costs associated with the Legal Agreement prior to the completion of the agreement irrespective of whether the agreement is completed.
- Payment of the appropriate planning obligations monitoring fee prior to the completion of the agreement.
- That Head of Regulatory Services be authorised to enter into a legal agreement to secure the above and upon completion of that agreement, grant planning permission subject to the conditions set out below.

1. *Time limit* - The development to which this permission relates must be commenced not later than three years from the date of this permission.

Reason: To comply with the requirements of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004).

2. *Accordance with plans* - The development hereby permitted shall not be carried out otherwise than in complete accordance with the approved plans (as set out on page one of this decision notice).

Reason: The Local Planning Authority consider it essential that the whole of the development is carried out and that no departure whatsoever is made from the details approved, since the development would not necessarily be acceptable if partly carried out or carried out differently in any degree from the details submitted. Also, in order that the development accords with Development Control Policies Development Plan Document Policy DC61.

3. *Materials* - The development hereby permitted shall not be commenced until samples of all materials to be used in the external construction of the buildings and hard landscaped areas have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Thereafter the development shall be constructed with the approved materials.

Reason: Insufficient information has been supplied with the application to judge the appropriateness of the materials to be used. Submission of samples prior to commencement will harmonise with the character of the surrounding area and in order that the development accords with the LDF Development Control Policies Development Plan Document Policy DC61.

4. *Refuse and recycling* - Prior to the first occupation of the development hereby permitted provision shall be made for the storage of refuse and recycling awaiting collection according to details which shall previously have been submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: Insufficient information has been supplied with the application to judge how refuse and recycling will be managed on site. Submission of this detail prior to occupation in the case of new building works or prior to the use commencing in the case of changes of use will protect the amenity of occupiers of the development and also the locality generally and ensure that the development accords with the Development Control Policies Development Plan Document Policy DC61.

5. *Cycle storage* - Prior to completion of the development hereby permitted cycle storage of a type and in a location previously submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority shall be provided and permanently retained thereafter.

Reason: Insufficient information has been supplied with the application to demonstrate what facilities will be available for cycle parking. Submission of this detail prior to occupation in the case of new building works or prior to the use commencing in the case of changes of use is in the interests of providing a wide range of facilities for non-motor car residents and sustainability in accordance with Policy DC36 of the LDF Development Control Policies Development Plan Document.

6. *Secured by Design* - The development hereby permitted shall not be commenced until details of the measures to be incorporated into the development demonstrating how the principles and practices of the Secured by Design scheme have been included have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details, and shall not be occupied or used until written confirmation of compliance with the agreed details has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: Insufficient information has been supplied with the application to judge whether the proposals meet Secured by Design standards. Submission of a full and detailed application prior to commencement is in the interest of creating safer, sustainable communities and to reflect guidance in Policies CP17 and DC63 of the Core Strategy and Development Control Policies Development Plan Document and the NPPF.

7. *External lighting* - The development hereby permitted shall not be commenced until a scheme for the lighting of external areas of the development, including any access roads, has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme of lighting shall include details of the extent of illumination together with precise details of the height, location and design of the lights. The approved scheme shall then be implemented in strict accordance with the agreed details prior to the first occupation of that phase of the development and retained thereafter.

Reason: Insufficient information has been supplied with the application to judge the impact arising from any external lighting required in connection with the building or use. Submission of this detail prior to occupation in the case of new

building works or prior to the use commencing in the case of changes of use will protect residential amenity and ensure that the development accords with the Development Control Policies Development Plan Document Policy DC61.

8. *Hours of construction* - All building operations in connection with the construction of external walls, roof, and foundations; site excavation or other external site works; works involving the use of plant or machinery; the erection of scaffolding; the delivery of materials; the removal of materials and spoil from the site, and the playing of amplified music shall only take place between the hours of 8.00am and 6.00pm Monday to Friday, and between 8.00am and 1.00pm on Saturdays and not at all on Sundays and Bank Holidays/Public Holidays.

Reason: To protect residential amenity, and in order that the development accords with the Development Control Policies Development Plan Document Policy DC61.

9. *Vehicle Cleansing* - No works shall take place in relation to any of the development hereby approved until wheel scrubbing/wash down facilities to prevent mud being deposited onto the public highway during construction works is provided on site in accordance with details previously submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved facilities shall be retained thereafter and used at relevant entrances to the site throughout the duration of construction works.

The submitted scheme will provide the following details:

- a) A plan showing where vehicles will be parked within the site, to be inspected for mud and debris and cleaned if required. The plan should show where construction traffic will access and exit the site from the public highway.
- b) A description of how the parking area will be surfaced, drained and cleaned to prevent mud, debris and muddy water being tracked onto the public highway.
- c) A description of how vehicles will be checked before leaving the site, including their wheels, the underside of vehicles, mud flaps and wheel arches.
- d) A description of how vehicles will be cleaned.
- e) A description of how dirty/muddy water be dealt with after being washed off the vehicles.
- f) A description of any contingency plan to be used in the event of a break-down of the wheel washing arrangements.
- g) A description of how any material tracked into the public highway will be removed.

Should material be deposited in the public highway, then all operations at the site shall cease until such time as the material has been removed in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: Insufficient information has been supplied with the application in relation to wheel washing facilities. Submission of details prior to commencement will ensure that the facilities provided prevent materials from the site being deposited on the adjoining public highway, in the interests of highway safety and the amenity of the surrounding area. It will also ensure that the development accords with the Development Control Policies Development Plan Document Policies DC32 and DC61

10. *Construction methodology* - The development hereby permitted shall not be commenced until a scheme has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority making provision for a Construction Method Statement to control the adverse impact of the development on that phase on the amenity of the public and nearby occupiers. The Construction Method statement shall include details of:

- a) parking of vehicles of site personnel and visitors;
 - b) storage of plant and materials;
 - c) dust management controls
 - d) measures for minimising the impact of noise and, if appropriate, vibration arising from construction activities;
 - e) predicted noise and, if appropriate, vibration levels for construction using methodologies and at points agreed with the local planning authority;
 - f) a scheme for monitoring noise and if appropriate, vibration levels using methodologies and at points agreed with the local planning authority; siting and design of temporary buildings;
 - g) a scheme for security fencing/hoardings, depicting a readily visible 24-hour contact number for queries or emergencies;
- final disposal points. The burning of waste on the site at any time is specifically precluded.

And the development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved scheme and statement.

Reason: To protect residential amenity and in order that the development accords with the LDF Development Control Policies Development Plan Document Policy DC61.

11. *Accessibility* - All dwellings hereby approved shall be constructed to comply with Part M4(2) of the Building Regulations - Accessible and Adaptable Dwellings.

Reason: In order to comply with Policy DC7 of the Local Development Framework and Policy 3.8 of the London Plan.

12. *Renewable energy* - A renewable energy system for the development shall be installed in accordance with details previously submitted to and agreed in

writing by the Local Planning Authority and shall be made operational prior to the residential occupation of the development. Thereafter, it shall be permanently retained.

Reason: Insufficient information has been supplied with the application in relation to renewable energy to meet the requirements of Policy 5.2 of the London Plan. The submission of details prior to commencement is necessary to ensure that the proposals would meet the terms of this policy and in the interests of energy efficiency and sustainability in accordance with Policy DC50 of the LDF Development Control Policies Development Plan Document.

13. *Noise insulation* - The noise level in rooms of the development hereby permitted shall meet the noise standard specified in BS8233:2014 for internal rooms. Details shall be submitted to the local planning authority prior to first occupation of the development to demonstrate that this has been achieved.

Reason: In order to comply with Policies CP15, DC55 and DC 61 of the Local Development Framework Development Control policies Development Plan Document.

Informatives

1. *DMO Statement* - Statement Required by Article 35 (2) of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management) Order 2015. In accordance with paragraph 186-187 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2012,
2. *Mayoral CIL* - The proposal is liable for the Mayor of London Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). Based upon the information supplied with the application, the CIL payable would be £6,100 (subject to indexation). CIL is payable within 60 days of commencement of development. A Liability Notice will be sent to the applicant (or anyone else who has assumed liability) shortly and you are required to notify the Council of the commencement of the development before works begin. Further details with regard to CIL are available from the Council's website.
3. *Planning obligation* - The planning obligations required has been subject to the statutory tests set out in Regulation 122 of the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 and the obligations are considered to have satisfied the following criteria:-
 - (a) Necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms;
 - (b) Directly related to the development; and
 - (c) Fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development.
4. *Temporary use of the highway* - If any construction materials are proposed to be kept on the highway during construction works then they will need to apply for a license from the Council. If the developer requires scaffolding, hoarding or mobile cranes to be used on the highway, a licence is required and Streetcare should be contacted on 01708 434343 to make the necessary arrangements.

5. *Secured by Design* - In promoting the delivery of safer, stronger, sustainable places the Local Planning Authority fully supports the adoption of the principles and practices of the Secured by Design Award Scheme and Designing against Crime. Your attention is drawn to the free professional service provided by the Metropolitan Police Designing Out Crime Officers for North East London, whose can be contacted via DOCOMailbox.NE@met.police.uk or 0208 217 3813 . They are able to provide qualified advice on incorporating crime prevention measures into new developments.

REPORT DETAIL

1. **Site Description**

- 1.1 The application site lies on the south side of Victoria Road and comprises a former office building currently undergoing conversion to flats. Portman House is three-storey on the Victoria Road frontage with a fourth and fifth storey both set back from the main frontage. To the rear of the main building is a two-storey extension that extends southwards towards the rear boundary of the site. The building is constructed in brick with a flat roof. There is a rear yard and parking area that take access from Alexandra Road via Hearn Road.
- 1.2 The site lies on the edge of Romford town in an area that is characterised by mainly ground floor A Class uses (retail and restaurant) with residential above. The properties adjoining the site have two storeys of flats above the ground floor with a similar architectural style to Portman House. The property to the east, Victoria House also extends behind the Victoria Road frontage with three storeys of residential units. To the rear of the site the area is residential with a mixture of flats and mainly terraced dwellings.
- 1.3 The main entrance is from Victoria Road which provides access to a lift and stairs to all floors. There is also access to Portman House from the rear of the building from the parking area.

2. **Description of proposal**

- 2.1 This is a full application for the extension and conversion of the existing building to provide five flats. There would be four one-bed units and one two-bed. Three of the one-beds would be accommodated in a single storey extension above the two-storey rear section of Portman House. The two-bed unit and the remaining one-bed would be accommodated above the fourth floor of the main building. These two units would be formed by the conversion of the existing fifth floor and its extension northwards towards the Victoria Road frontage.
- 2.2 Access would be through the existing entrance onto Victoria Road and via the existing lift and stairs. There would also be access from the rear of the building. No part of the development is dependent on the conversion works currently in progress.

2.3 The extensions would be finished in a lightweight cladding to complement the existing brickwork with windows to match those to be inserted as part of the conversion.

2.4 No additional car parking spaces are proposed to the eight already approved for the main conversion.

3. **Relevant History**

3.1 P1081.15 - Erection of 2 no. mews houses - pending

3.2 P0529.15 - External changes to existing building including minor reconfiguration of window pattern, removal of M&E installations, replacement of all windows, fitting Juliet balustrade to facade and general cleaning and re-pointing of facade. New bin store at site entrance and hard and soft landscaping - approved

3.3 J0008.14 - Prior Approval application for change of use from office to residential for ground, first, second, third and fourth floors (24 residential units) - approved

4. **Consultations/Representations**

4.1 138 neighbour notification letters have been sent to local addresses. No letters of representation have been received.

4.2 Thames Water - no objections.

4.3 London Fire Brigade (Water Team) - satisfied with the proposals.

4.4 Network Rail - no objections

4.5 London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority - development should comply with relevant Building Regulation for fire access.

4.6 Streetcare (Highway Authority) - no objections, but requests S106 agreement to prevent future occupiers obtaining residents' parking permits.

4.7 Public Protection - no objections

5. **Relevant Policies**

5.1 Local Development Framework (LDF) Core Strategy and Development Control Policies Development Plan Document (DPD):- Policies CP1 (Housing Supply); CP4 (Town Centres); CP9 (Reducing the need to travel); CP10 (Sustainable Transport); CP15 (Environmental management); CP17 (Design); CP18 (Heritage); DC2 (Housing Mix and Density); DC3 (Housing Design and Layout); DC7 (Lifetime Homes and Mobility Housing); DC29 (Education Premises); DC33 (Car Parking); DC34 (Walking); DC35 (Cycling); DC36 (Servicing); DC40 (Waste Recycling); DC49 (Sustainable Design and Construction); DC50

(Renewable Energy); DC53 (Contaminated Land); DC61 (Urban Design); DC62 (Access); DC63 (Delivering Safer Places) and DC72 (Planning obligations).

- 5.2 Romford Area Action Plan:- Policy ROM14 (Housing Supply) and ROM11 (Retail Fringe).
- 5.2 In addition, the Evidence base to Planning Obligations SPD, Residential Design SPD, Designing Safer Places SPD, and Sustainable Design and Construction SPD are also material considerations.
- 5.3 London Plan: - Policies 2.15 (Town Centres) 3.3 (increasing housing supply), 3.4 (optimising housing potential); 3.5 (quality and design of housing developments), 4.7 (Retail and Town Centre Development and 8.2 (planning obligations) and the Housing Supplementary Planning Guidance.
- 5.4 The National Planning Policy Framework and the National Planning Practice Guidance are also relevant.

6. **Staff Comments**

Principle of the development

- 6.1 The application site lies within an area which is designated for higher density residential development under Policy ROM14 of the Romford Area Action Plan. Whilst the policy is not specific about how such development would be achieved it allows in principle new residential development above and outside of the fringe retail frontage defined in Policy ROM11 of the Area Action Plan.
- 6.2 The site is in a sustainable location with very good access to public transport given the proximity of Romford station (175 metres) and town centre bus services. The site is very close to the amenities provided by Romford Town Centre, including shops and entertainment facilities. The provision of new housing close to local amenities and services would, therefore, also accord with the principles of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) for sustainable development.
- 6.3 Subject to the development providing an appropriate standard of accommodation for future occupiers; having an acceptable impact on adjoining occupiers and on the character and appearance of the area the development can be considered acceptable.

Density/Site Layout

- 6.4 Policy ROM14 does not define appropriate densities for the policy area, but as the site has a PTAL value of 6 the density range of between 240-435 units per hectare for flatted development set out in Policy DC2 is considered appropriate. The conversion of Portman House to residential is permitted development, subject to a prior approval procedure. The scheme granted prior approval under J0008.14 was for 24 one and two-bed flats. The site has an area of 0.144 hectares giving a gross density of 201 units per hectare with the addition of the five flats proposed. The London Plan Housing SPG also sets out

guidance densities for new residential development which are similar to DC2 for central areas. Within the central Romford area densities for flats in excess of 200 units per hectare are indicated under this guidance. The guidance in the NPPF also encourages new higher density residential development in sustainable locations, including town centres. The density that would result from the additional flats would, therefore, be in accordance with the policies and guidance.

- 6.5 The SPG also sets minimum floorspace standards for all housing types, although these have been updated recently through the issue of national space standards. The proposed units would meet these standards. However, whilst meeting these layout parameters indicates that the development would be broadly acceptable, account also needs to be taken of the character of the local area and whether the scale of the development is appropriate in terms of its appearance in the local context. Account also needs to be taken of any adverse impact on the amenity of nearby occupiers.
- 6.6 In terms of amenity space provision each of the five flats would have their own balcony, two facing onto Victoria Road and three facing towards residential areas to the west. Three of the balconies would exceed the recommend size of 5 square metres in the London Plan SPG and the Residential Design SPD; the other two would be just below. However, the balconies would be relatively private and usable and overall the level of amenity space is considered to be appropriate in scale and layout for a town centre development.

Design/Impact on the streetscene

- 6.7 The application site is located on the edge of Romford Town Centre in an area of mixed uses with predominantly commercial on the ground floor with residential above. The two units on the Victoria Road frontage would be set back from the main elevation and whilst forward of the existing fifth floor would not be readily visible from the street. Therefore, there would be no material impact on the streetscene. The extension to the rear would not be visible from Victoria Road or from any public view points to the rear. The third floor rear extension would be visible from residential properties on either side, in particular those in Victoria House and Kingsmead Mansions. However, the extension would sit within the existing footprint of the building and given the limited scale of the extension the overall visual impact on the area is judged to be acceptable subject to the detailed approval of materials to be used.
- 6.8 The National Planning Practice Guidance states that good quality design is an integral part of sustainable development. The guidance in the NPPF is that planning permission should be refused for development of poor design that fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area and the way it functions. LDF Policy DC61 requires that new buildings and extensions to existing ones complement or improve the character of the area and respect the scale, massing and height of the surrounding physical context. The proposed extensions are judged to be of a design and scale that would be compatible with the surrounding area and would have no material adverse

impacts on the character and appearance of the area. The proposal would, therefore, be in accordance with DC61 and the guidance in the NPPF.

Impact on Amenity

- 6.9 Victoria House and Kingsmead Mansions lie on either side of the proposed third storey extension to the rear of Portman House and both have a separation of about 13 metres away from the building. This is a similar separation to that between the two buildings that make up Kingsmead Mansions. There is the potential for some adverse impact on the amenities of existing residents. The increase in height would result in some loss of light for residents of both buildings, especially those on the ground and first floors and loss of outlook for those on the second floor. However, the extension would be no higher than these properties and within the existing building footprint. Portman House is already due to be occupied for residential purposes under the prior approval; therefore, a similar relationship with nearby properties is due to occur in any event. As a matter of judgement Staff consider that the additional second floor units would not make a material difference to this situation. Therefore, whilst the extension would have some adverse impact it would not be so significant as to justify refusing permission on this ground.
- 6.10 In addition the increase in height gives rise to the potential for some overlooking and inter-looking between existing and proposed flats. No new windows are proposed in the eastern elevation facing Victoria House so these impacts would not arise. However, windows and balconies are proposed on the western elevation which would face obliquely towards Kingsmead Mansions and some of the rear gardens of houses in Kingsmead Avenue. This is a similar relationship to the units being formed within the existing fabric of Portman House under the prior approval; however, amenity considerations do not form part of prior approval determinations.
- 6.11 The proposed balconies would be set within the building rather than projecting outwards. However, there would be the potential for overlooking from some of the balconies into the nearest gardens. There would also be the potential for some inter-looking with the nearest flats in Kingsmead Mansion, some of which also have balconies at first and second floor level.
- 6.12 The area behind the main frontage in Victoria Road includes a number of residential blocks between which there are some tight relationships. However, the area is allocated for higher density residential development where new buildings are likely to be relatively close to existing ones. In this particular case it will be a matter of judgement for members as to whether the proposed balconies would have an unacceptable impact on existing residential occupiers. The alternative would be to seek the removal of the balconies, but this would leave the three flats without any amenity space. In this case Staff consider that the level of potential impact would be acceptable. The balconies would be relatively small (2.9 metres wide) and contained within the building.
- 6.13 In relation to the impact on the amenities of existing residents the rear second storey extension does give rise to the potential for adverse impacts. On balance

Staff consider that these would be acceptable, but should members judge them to be significant, then in combination could amount to a material objection to the proposals.

Parking and Highway Issues

- 6.14 The London Plan Housing SPG and the density matrix in LDF Policy DC2 indicate that less than one space per unit would be acceptable given the high public transport accessibility level (PTAL) of 6. No objections are raised by Streetcare (Highway Authority). Given the accessibility of the site to local services and public transport staff consider that the site is in a sustainable location and a car free development would be acceptable. However, as there are controlled parking zones within the vicinity of the site Streetcare recommended the S106 agreement include a restriction on applications by future residents, with the exception of Blue Badge holders.

Infrastructure impact of the development

- 6.15 Regulation 122 of the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 (CIL Regulations) states that a planning obligation may only constitute a reason for granting planning permission for the development if the obligation is:
- (a) necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms;
 - (b) directly related to the development; and
 - (c) fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development.
- 6.16 Policy DC72 of the Council's LDF states that in order to comply with the principles as set out in several of the policies in the Plan, contributions may be sought and secured through a Planning Obligation. Policy 8.2 of the Further Alterations to the London Plan states that development proposals should address strategic as well as local priorities in planning obligations.
- 6.17 In 2013, the Council adopted its Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document which sought to apply a tariff style contribution to all development that resulted in additional residential dwellings, with the contributions being pooled for use on identified infrastructure.
- 6.18 There has been a recent change to the effect of the CIL Regulations in that from 6th April 2015, Regulation 123 of the CIL Regulations states that no more than 5 obligations can be used to fund particular infrastructure projects or infrastructure types. As such, the SPD, in terms of pooling contributions, is now out of date, although the underlying evidence base is still relevant and up to date for the purposes of calculating the revised S106 contributions.
- 6.19 The evidence background to the SPD, contained in the technical appendices is still considered relevant. The evidence clearly show the impact of new residential development upon infrastructure – at 2013, this was that each additional dwelling in the Borough has a need for at least £20,444 of infrastructure. Therefore, it is considered that the impact on infrastructure as a result of the proposed development would be significant and without suitable

mitigation would be contrary to Policy DC72 of the LDF and Policy 8.2 of the London Plan.

- 6.20 Furthermore, evidence clearly shows a shortage of school places in most parts of the Borough – (London Borough of Havering Draft Commissioning Plan for Education Provision 2015/16-2019/20). The Commissioning report shows need for secondary places and post-16 places which due to their nature would serve all parts of the Borough. The Commissioning report identifies that there is no spare capacity to accommodate demand for primary and early year's school places generated by new development. The cost of mitigating new development in respect to all education provision is £8,672 (2013 figure from Technical Appendix to SPD). On that basis, it is necessary to continue to require contributions to mitigate the impact of additional dwellings in the Borough, unless the development is within an area of the Borough where there is a surplus of school places. Previously, in accordance with the SPD, a contribution of £6000 per dwelling was sought. It is considered that this is reasonable when compared to the need arising as a result of the development.
- 6.21 It would, therefore be necessary to require a contribution to be used for educational purposes. Separate monitoring of contributions would take place to ensure that no more than 5 contributions are pooled for individual projects. It is considered that a contribution equating to £6,000 per dwelling (net increase) for educational purposes would be appropriate.
- 6.22 The proposed new dwellings would result in additional demands on education provision such that a financial contribution is needed in accordance with policies DC29 and DC72. There would be a net addition of 6 units and a charge of £36,000 is considered necessary to make the development acceptable in accordance with these policies and which would need to be secured through a S106 Planning Obligation.

Affordable Housing

- 6.23 Under the prior approval procedure the Council is unable to seek any affordable housing provision where offices are being converted to residential. The current application is for five units only so in isolation would fall below the threshold in Policy DC6. However, the policy allows the Council to seek affordable housing where development is brought forward in phases under 9 units, based upon the capacity of all the phases, including those already permitted.
- 6.24 In this case the 24 units currently being developed are a conversion/change of use of the existing building while the current application is for an extension of the building. Staff are satisfied from an inspection of the building that the current development is not contingent on the prior approval scheme first being completed and could in theory be undertaken independently, even though this is unlikely given the progress in conversion works. The current proposals could be implemented using the existing access, lift and stairs and be occupied separately. In these circumstances Staff consider that it would not be appropriate to seek affordable housing under the terms of the policy as it would not apply given the particular circumstances of the overall proposals for Portman House.

7. Mayor's Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

7.1 All new floorspace is liable for Mayoral CIL, but in assessing the liability account is taken of existing usable floorspace that has been lawfully used for at least six months within the last three years. Part of the fifth floor, amounting to 37 square metres, was used as part of the former offices and is to be converted to residential. Making allowance for this there would be a net increase of 305 square metres giving a CIL liability of £6,100 at £20 per square metre (subject to indexation).

8. Conclusions

8.1 The site lies within an area identified for higher density development in the Romford Area Action Plan. The existing Portman House is currently undergoing conversion to flats under a prior approval scheme. The additional five units would, therefore, be acceptable in principle. The main issues relate to the design and scale of the new building works and their impact on the character and appearance of the area, the impact on adjoining occupiers and the standard of accommodation to be provided.

8.2 Staff consider that, as a matter of judgement the proposed development would not be materially harmful to the character and appearance of the area. It would provide an acceptable standard of accommodation for future occupants and as a matter of judgement would not have any material impact on occupiers of nearby and adjoining buildings. On the other hand should members consider that the potential impact on adjoining residential occupiers, in particularly those in Kingsmead Mansions, would be significant and amounts to a material objection to the proposals then this could form a reason for rejecting or seeking revisions to the application.

8.3 Staff consider that on balance planning permission should be granted subject to the prior completion of a S106 legal agreement to secure a financial contribution towards education costs associated with the development and a restriction on future occupiers applying for resident parking permits.

IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

Financial implications and risks:

None

Legal implications and risks:

Legal resources will be required to prepare and complete the S 106 legal agreement. The S106 contribution is lawfully required to mitigate the harm of the development, and comply with the Council's planning policies. Officers are satisfied that the

contribution required is compliant with the statutory tests set out in the CIL Regulations relations to planning obligations

Human Resources implications and risks:

None

Equalities implications and risks:

The Council's planning policies are implemented with regard to equality and diversity.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

1. Application form and plans received 21st September 2015.