



REGULATORY SERVICES COMMITTEE

17 July 2014

REPORT

Subject Heading:

**P0615.14: 102-120 Victoria Road,
Romford**

**Residential development consisting of
a two and three storey building (with
apartments in the roof) comprising
17no. apartments and a two storey
building comprising 7no. apartments.
(Application received 2 May 2014)**

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Policy context:

**Local Development Framework
London Plan, Planning Policy
Statements/Guidance Notes**

Financial summary:

None

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

Clean, safe and green borough	<input type="checkbox"/>
Excellence in education and learning	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Opportunities for all through economic, social and cultural activity	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Value and enhance the life of every individual	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
High customer satisfaction and a stable council tax	<input type="checkbox"/>

SUMMARY

The proposal is for the erection of a residential development at the site of the former petrol filling station on Victoria Road, Romford, consisting of a part two and three storey building (with apartments in the roof) fronting onto Victoria Road and a two storey building to the rear of the site.

The development will comprise of 17no. apartments in the front block and 7no.apartments in the rear block, giving a total of 24no. units, of which 50% will be affordable.

In 2008 the Council reached a resolution to approve planning application P1980.07 subject to the completion of a legal agreement for erection of 2 and 3 storey block of flats consisting of 24 units. The necessary legal agreement was not completed and the application was eventually withdrawn in September 2009.

The proposed development draws on the principles of the previous proposals. It raises considerations in relation to the impact on the character and appearance of the streetscene and the impact on the amenity of the neighbouring residents.

On balance the proposal is considered to be acceptable in all material respects and it is recommended that planning permission is granted subject to conditions and the applicant entering into a Section 106 Agreement.

RECOMMENDATIONS

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 £38,758, subject to indexation. This is based on the creation of 1,937.9 square metres of new gross internal floor space.

That the proposal is unacceptable as it stands but would be acceptable subject to the applicant entering into a Section 106 Legal Agreement under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended), to secure the following:

- The provision on site of 50% of the units within the development as affordable housing (comprising 12 no. apartments) of which 70% (8 units) will be rented (with 50% of this provision capped rent and the other 50% discounted rent) and the remaining 30% (4 units) will be shared ownership.

- A financial contribution of £144,000 to be used towards infrastructure costs and paid prior to the commencement of development in accordance with the Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document.
- A financial contribution of £9,456 to be used towards the “Community Sustainable Energy Fund” in lieu of the shortfall of 3.94 tonnes CO2/yr in achieving the required 40% CO2 reduction target, to be paid by the developer prior to commencement of the development.
- 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.
- To pay the Council’s reasonable legal costs in association with the preparation of a legal agreement, prior to completion of the agreement, irrespective of whether the legal agreement is completed.
- Payment of the appropriate planning obligations/ monitoring fee prior to completion of the agreement.

That staff be authorised to enter into a legal agreement to secure the above and upon completion of that agreement that the Committee delegate authority to the Head of Regulatory Services to 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 Act 1990 (as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004).

2. In Accordance with Plans

The development hereby permitted shall not be carried out otherwise than in complete accordance with the plans detailed on page 1 of the decision notice approved by the Local Planning Authority.

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.

3. Parking Provision

Before any of the flats hereby permitted are first occupied, the car park to the rear shall be laid out to the full satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority and be made available for 22no. car parking spaces and thereafter this car parking provision shall remain permanently available for use, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure that car parking accommodation is made permanently available to the standards adopted by the Local Planning Authority in the interest of highway safety, and that the development accords with the Development Control Policies Development Plan Document Policy DC33.

4. External Materials

The development hereby permitted shall be constructed in accordance with the approved external materials as detailed in the submitted external materials schedule, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To safeguard the appearance of the premises and the character of the immediate area, and that the development accords with the Development Control Policies Development Plan Document Policies DC61 and DC54.

5. Landscaping

Notwithstanding the details in drawing 14139_PL05 Revision B, no development shall take place until there has been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority a detailed scheme of hard and soft landscaping, including full details of planting varieties, quantities and landscaping specifications. All planting, seeding or turfing comprised within the scheme shall be carried out in the first planting season following completion of the development and any trees or plants which within a period of 5 years from completion of the development die, are removed or become seriously damaged or diseased shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of a similar size and species, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the local Planning Authority.

Reason: In accordance with Section 197 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and to enhance the visual amenities of the development, and that the development accords with the Development Control Policies Development Plan Document Policy DC61.

6. Refuse and Recycling

Prior to the first occupation of the development hereby permitted, the siting and location of refuse storage and recycling awaiting collection shall be provided in accordance with the details in Drawing No. 14139_PL05 Revision B and permanently available for use and retained thereafter.

Reason: In the interests of amenity of occupiers of the development and also the visual amenity of the development and the locality generally, and in order that the development accords with the Development Control Policies Development Plan Document Policy DC61.

7. Cycle Storage

Prior to the first occupation of the development hereby permitted, the proposed cycle storage provision shall be provided in accordance with the details in Drawing No. 14139_PL05 Revision B and made permanently available for use and retained thereafter.

Reason: In the interests of providing a wide range of facilities for non-motor car residents, in the interests of sustainability.

8. Balcony Screening Panel

Prior to occupation of the development a partition screening panel shall be installed on the balcony associated with flat 3 (as indicated on Drawing No. 14139_PL03 Revision B), adjacent to the boundary with 100 Victoria Road in accordance with details previously submitted to and agreed by the Local Planning Authority. Following installation, the screening panel shall remain in place permanently.

Reason: In the interests of the amenity of the occupiers of neighbouring dwelling, and in order that the development accords with the Development Control Policies Development Plan Document Policy DC61.

9. Noise Insulation

The buildings shall be constructed as to provide sound insulation of 45 DnT, w + Ctr dB (minimum value) against airborne noise to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To prevent noise nuisance to adjoining properties in accordance with Development Control Policies Development Plan Document Policy DC55.

10. 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.

11. External Lighting Scheme

No development shall take place until a scheme for external lighting has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved scheme of lighting shall include the low level lighting of the access road and details of continuing maintenance. The approved scheme shall be implemented in full prior to commencement of the development hereby approved and permanently maintained in accordance with the approved scheme to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In the interests of security and residential amenity and in order that the development accords with the LDF Development Control Policies Development Plan Document Policies DC61 and DC63.

12. Pedestrian Visibility Splay

The proposals should provide a 2.1 by 2.1 metre pedestrian visibility splay on either side of the proposed access, set back to the boundary of the public footway. There should be no obstruction or object higher than 0.6 metres within the visibility splay.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety, and in order that the development accords with the Development Control Policies Development Plan Document Policy DC32.

13. Vehicle Access

The necessary agreement, notice or licence to enable the proposed alterations to the Public Highway shall be entered into prior to the occupation of development.

Reason: In the interests of ensuring good design and ensuring public safety and to comply with policies of the Core Strategy and Development Control Policies DPD, namely CP10, CP17, and DC61.

14. Wheel Washing

Before the commencement of any phase of the development hereby permitted, details of wheel scrubbing/wash down facilities to prevent mud being deposited onto the public highway during construction works of that phase shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved facilities shall be permanently retained and used at relevant entrances to the site throughout the course of construction works.

Reason: In order to 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 and in order that the development accords with Policies DC61 and DC32 of the LDF Development Control Policies DPD.

15. Contaminated Land

(1) Prior to the commencement of any works pursuant to this permission the developer shall submit for the written approval of the Local Planning Authority (the Phase I and Phase II Reports having already been submitted to the Local Planning Authority);

a) A Phase III (Remediation Strategy) Report as the Desk Study Report confirms the possibility of a significant risk to sensitive receptors and Phase II Report (Geo-environmental and geotechnical interpretative report) confirm the presence of a significant pollutant linkage requiring remediation. A detailed remediation scheme to bring the site to a condition suitable for the intended use by removing unacceptable risks to all receptors must be prepared, and is subject to the approval in writing of the Local Planning Authority. The scheme must include all works to be undertaken, proposed remediation objectives and remediation criteria, timetable of works, site management procedures and procedure for dealing with previously unidentified any contamination. The scheme must ensure that the site will not qualify as contaminated land under Part 2A of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 in relation to the intended use of the land after remediation.

b) Following completion of measures identified in the approved remediation scheme mentioned in 1(a) above, a "Verification Report" that demonstrates the effectiveness of the remediation carried out, any requirement for longer-term monitoring of contaminant linkages, maintenance and arrangements for contingency action, must be produced, and is subject to the approval in writing of the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To protect those engaged in construction and occupation of the development from potential contamination and in order that the development accords with Development Control Policies Development Plan Document Policy DC53.

16. Contaminated Land

a) If, during development, contamination not previously identified is found to be present at the site then no further development (unless otherwise agreed in writing with the local planning authority) shall be carried out until a remediation strategy detailing how this unsuspected contamination shall be dealt with has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The remediation strategy shall be implemented as approved.

b) Following completion of the remediation works as mentioned in (a) above, a 'Verification Report' must be submitted demonstrating that the works have been carried out satisfactorily and remediation targets have been achieved.

Reason: To ensure that any previously unidentified contamination found at the site is investigated and satisfactorily addressed in order to protect those engaged in construction and occupation of the development from potential contamination.

17. Air Quality

(a) Prior to the commencement of the development, an air quality assessment report shall be submitted to and agreed by the LPA. The report shall detail: how the development may impact upon local air quality, model the future impact, identify mitigation measures, provides full details of measures that will be implemented or continue to be implemented after development to protect the internal air quality of buildings and to improve air quality in the vicinity of the development.

(b) All measures identified within the approved air quality assessment that are to be installed during the course of the development shall be fully implemented. No occupation of the development shall take place until a report demonstrating that each measure is fully implemented has been provided to the Local Planning Authority for its approval in writing.

Reason: To protect the amenity of future occupants and/or neighbours and in the interests of the declared AQMA.

18. Piling Work Risk Assessment

Piling or any other foundation designs using penetrative methods shall not be permitted at any time other than with the express written consent of the Local Planning Authority, which may be given for those parts of the site where it has been demonstrated that there is no resultant unacceptable risk to groundwater. The development shall be carried out in strict accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To protect controlled waters by ensuring that the risks to groundwater are considered before any piling is undertaken.

19. Boundary Screening/ Fencing

The development hereby permitted shall be constructed in accordance with the approved measures for boundary screening and screen walling, as detailed in the submitted Landscape Plan (Drawing No. 14139_PL05 Revision B) unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority, and shall be permanently retained and maintained thereafter to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To protect the visual amenities of the development and to prevent undue overlooking of adjoining properties.

20. Construction Methodology

Before development is commenced, a scheme shall be 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 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) scheme for monitoring noise and if appropriate, vibration levels using methodologies and at points agreed with the Local Planning Authorities;
- g) siting and design of temporary buildings;
- h) scheme for security fencing/hoardings, depicting a readily visible 24-hour contact number for queries or emergencies;
- i) details of disposal of waste arising from the construction programme, including 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 the Development Control Policies Development Plan Document Policy DC61.

21. Hard Surfacing

The access drive, car park and vehicle turning area shall be surfaced in accordance with the approved surfacing materials as detailed in the submitted external materials schedule, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Once constructed, the extended part of the access road and vehicle turning area shall be kept permanently free of any obstruction (with the exception of the car parking areas shown on the plans) to prevent their use for anything but turning and access.

Reason: To ensure that the appearance of the proposed development will harmonise with the character of the surrounding area and in the interests of highway safety.

22. Sustainable Homes

No occupation of the development shall take place until the developer has provided a copy of the Interim Code Certificate confirming that the development design achieves a minimum Code for Sustainable Homes 'Level 3' rating. The development shall be carried out in full accordance with the agreed Sustainability Statement. Also before the proposed development is occupied the Final Code Certificate of Compliance shall be provided to the Local Planning Authority in order to ensure that the required minimum rating has been achieved.

Reason: In the interests of energy efficiency and sustainability in accordance with DC49 Sustainable Design and Construction and Policies 5.1, 5.2 and 5.3 of the London Plan.

23. Renewable Energy and Low Carbon

The renewable energy / low carbon system shall be installed in strict accordance with the agreed details and shall be operational to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority prior to the occupation of any part of the development.

Reason: In the interests of energy efficiency and sustainability in accordance with DC50 Renewable Energy and Policies 5.1, 5.2, 5.3 and 5.7 of the London Plan.

24. Secure By Design

Prior to the commencement of the development hereby approved a full and detailed application for the Secured by Design award scheme shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority, setting out how the principles and practices of the Secured by Design Scheme are to be incorporated. Once approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority in consultation with the Metropolitan Police Designing Out Crime Officers (DOCOs), the development shall be carried out in accordance with the agreed details.

Reason: In the interest of creating safer, sustainable communities, reflecting guidance set out in the National Planning Policy Framework, Policy 7.3 of the London Plan, and Policies CP17 Design and DC63 Delivering Safer Places of the LBH LDF.

25. Topsoil Condition

Before any part of the development is occupied, site derived soils and/or imported soils shall be tested for chemical contamination, and the results of this testing together with an assessment of suitability for their intended use shall be submitted and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Without prejudice to the generality of the foregoing, all topsoil used for gardens and/or landscaping purposes shall in addition satisfy the requirements of BS 3882:2007 "Specification of Topsoil".

Reason: To ensure that the occupants of the development are not subject to any risks from soil contamination in accordance with Development Control Policies Development Plan Document Policy DC53.

INFORMATIVES

1. A fee is required when submitting details pursuant to the discharge of conditions. In order to comply with the Town and Country Planning (Fees for Applications, Deemed Applications, Requests and Site Visits) (England) Regulations 2012, which came into force from 22.11.2012, a fee of £97 per request or £28 where the related permission was for extending or altering a dwellinghouse, is needed.
2. Statement Required by Article 31 (cc) of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management) Order 2010: No significant problems were identified during the consideration of the application, and therefore it has been determined in accordance with paragraphs 186-187 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2012.
3. **Changes to the public highway (including permanent or temporary access)**
Planning approval does not constitute approval for changes to the public highway. Highway Authority approval will only be given after suitable details have been submitted considered and agreed. If new or amended access as required (whether temporary or permanent), there may be a requirement for the diversion or protection of third party utility plant and it is recommended that early involvement with the relevant statutory undertaker takes place. The applicant must contact Engineering Services on 01708 433751 to discuss the scheme and commence the relevant highway approvals process. Please note that unauthorised work on the highway is an offence.
4. **Highway legislation**
The developer (including their representatives and contractors) is advised that planning consent does not discharge the requirements of the New Roads and Street Works Act 1991 and the Traffic Management Act 2004. Formal notifications and approval will be needed for any highway works (including temporary works of any nature) required during the construction of the development. Please note that unauthorised work on the highway is an offence.
5. **Temporary use of the public highway**
The developer is advised that if 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. Please note that unauthorised use of the highway for construction works is an offence.
6. 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 £38758.00 (subject to indexation). Further details with regard to CIL are available from the Council's website.

7. The planning obligations recommended in this report have 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.

REPORT DETAIL

1. Site Description

- 1.1 The application relates to the site at 102-120 Victoria Road, Romford. This is a cleared and vacant site, having a former use as a petrol filling station. The site has been cleared and it is understood that some remediation works have taken place.
- 1.2 The site is located within an area of mixed residential and commercial uses, just to the east of the Romford town centre boundary. The site has an extensive 42 metre frontage onto Victoria Road, adjacent to a terrace of two storey houses to the west and the Victoria Public House to the east. The remaining site boundaries are shared with the rear gardens of residential properties at George Street to the west, a workshop and residential gardens at Albert Road to the east, and a light industrial premises located off Albert Road to the south.
- 1.3 The rectangular shaped site is relatively flat and covers an area of 2410m² (0.241 ha).

2. Description of Proposal

- 2.1 The proposal is for the erection of a residential development consisting of a part two and three storey building (including apartments in the roof space) fronting onto Victoria Road and a two storey building (including apartments in the roof space) to the rear of the site.
- 2.2 The development will comprise of two separate buildings with block 1, the more substantial of the pair, consisting of 17no. apartments and block 2 consisting of 7no.apartments, giving a total of 24no. new residential units of which 50% will be affordable.

- 2.3 In terms of accommodation the proposal will create 2no. one-bedroom flats and 22no. two-bedroom flats.
- 2.4 Block 1 will be sited along the main frontage onto Victoria Road, occupying an 'L-shaped' footprint of approximately 473 square metres. To the front, the proposed building will be formed of three elements; a central three storey section flanked by two storey sections on either side with accommodation within the roof space. As such the block will incorporate varying roof ridge lines with a maximum height of 14.3 metres in the central section. The roof will include a hipped, pitched design and a crown section on the western wing.
- 2.5 At the rear an additional three-storey section, with accommodation in the roof space, will project 10.6 metres towards the centre of the site. As with the other sections of the building the roof design will include hipped pitched features with differing ridge heights rising to a maximum height of 14 metres.
- 2.6 Block 1 will be accessed by a doorway leading from Victoria Road at the front and from two doorways at the rear of the site.
- 2.6 External balconies will be installed to the front on three of the apartments in the upper floors and to six apartments to the rear. Each of the five ground floor flats will benefit from an external terrace providing 7 square metres of private amenity space.
- 2.7 The four apartments contained within the roof space will be served by dormer windows and velux style roof lights.
- 2.8 Block 2 will be located in the southern section of the site, occupying a 'T-shaped' footprint covering approximately 273 square metres. The building will incorporate a hipped pitched roof design with a ridge height of 10.7 metres.
- 2.9 The block and apartments will be accessed through a centrally located doorway and stairwell. At ground floor each of the three apartments will be served by an external terrace providing 7 square metres of private amenity space. The three first floor flats will also benefit from external balconies offering 7 square metres of external amenity space. The second floor flat, located within the roof space will be served by dormer windows to the front and velux style roof lights to the rear.
- 2.10 All dwellings will have a dual aspect and will be designed to the London Plan minimum internal spacing standards and Lifetime Homes Standard.
- 2.11 The car park and servicing area will be laid out centrally within the site to the rear of the main building, block 1, and to the foreground of block 2 sited to the rear. A total of 22no. parking spaces will be provided which will include 2no. dedicated disabled user bays.

- 2.12 Vehicular access will be provided via an existing cross-over onto Victoria Road in the northern corner of the site adjacent to the Victoria Public House. The access road will abut the eastern site boundary and sweep around into the central section of the site providing a turning head to facilitate the manoeuvring of resident's cars and service vehicles.
- 2.13 The remainder of the site will be landscaped to provide communal amenity space and planting to soften the extent of the hardstanding.
- 2.14 A single refuse store will be provided adjacent to the western boundary of the site, within accessible distances from the proposed flats and in a suitable location for refuse vehicles
- 2.15 Secure cycle storage providing space for up to 24no. cycles will be set out in 2no. cycle stores located to the rear of block 1 and to the western flank of block 2.

3. Relevant History

- 3.1 P1980.07 - Erection of 2 and 3 storey blocks of flats with units to roof area (24 Units). 1 and 2 bed flats with parking and amenity – Resolution to approve but withdrawn following failure to sign legal agreement
- 3.2 P0949.05 - Erection of 2 and 3 storey flat blocks with units to roof area. (24 units). 1 & 2 bed flats with parking & amenity – Refused
- 3.3 P1473.03 - Erection of 1 No. one-bedroom and 35 No. 2 bedroom flats with amenity and parking – Refused

4. Consultations/Representations

- 4.1 Neighbour notification letters were sent to 147 properties and a site notice was displayed. 4 letters of objection have been received as a result of the consultation raising the following issues:
- The development will result in overlooking and loss of privacy to neighbouring gardens.
 - There are already far too many flats in Romford and the local amenities are struggling to cope.
 - The proposal will create additional traffic problems.
 - The proposed bin store is located too close to the neighbouring houses.
- 4.2 Essex and Suffolk Water have raised no objections to the proposal.
- 4.3 The Metropolitan Police - the Designing Out Crime Officer is satisfied that the proposal meets Secure by Design principles.
- 4.4 Regeneration & Partnerships – no comments.

- 4.5 The Council's Highway Authority has raised no objections to the proposal and have requested standard conditions and informatives relating to visibility splays, access and wheel washing are included in any approval notice.
- 4.6 Environmental Health have raised no objections to the scheme and have requested the inclusion of conditions relating to noise insulation and reduction measures and contaminated land issues.
- 4.7 The Designing Out Crime Officer has raised no objections to the scheme.

5. Relevant Policies

- 5.1 Policies CP1 (Housing Supply), CP2 (Sustainable Communities), CP17 (Design), DC2 (Housing Mix and Density), DC6 (Affordable Housing), DC11 (Non-designated Sites) DC33 (Car Parking), DC34 (Walking), DC35 (Cycling), DC36 (Servicing), DC53 (Contaminated Land), DC55 (Noise), DC61 (Urban Design), DC63 (Delivering Safer Places) and DC72 (Planning Obligations) of the Local Development Framework Core Strategy and Development Control Policies Development Plan Document are considered to be relevant.
- 5.2 Other relevant documents include the Residential Design SPD, Sustainable Design and Construction SPD and the Planning Obligations SPD.
- 5.3 Policies 3.3 (increasing housing supply), 3.4 (optimising housing potential), 3.5 (quality and design of housing developments), 3.8 (housing choice), 3.9 (mixed and balanced communities), 3.10 (definition of affordable housing), 3.11 (affordable housing targets), 3.12 (negotiating affordable housing), 3.13 (affordable housing thresholds), 5.2 (minimising carbon dioxide emissions), 5.3 (sustainable design and construction), 5.7 (renewable energy), 5.12 (flood risk management), 5.13 (sustainable drainage), 5.16 (waste self sufficiency), 5.21 (contaminated land), 6.1 (strategic transport approach), 6.3 (assessing effect on transport capacity), 6.9 (cycling), 6.10 (walking), 6.13 (parking), 7.3 (designing out crime), 7.4 (local character), 7.6 (architecture), 7.8 (heritage assets and archaeology), 7.14 (improving air quality), 7.15 (reducing noise and enhancing soundscapes), 7.19 (biodiversity and access to nature) and 8.2 (planning obligations) of the London Plan, are material considerations.
- 5.4 The National Planning Policy Framework, specifically Sections 1 (Building a strong, competitive economy), 4 (Promoting sustainable transport), 6 (Delivering a wide choice of high quality homes), 7 (Requiring good design), 8 (Promoting healthy communities) and 10 (meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change) are relevant to these proposals.

6. Staff Comments

- 6.1 The main considerations relate to the impact on the character and appearance of the street scene, the implications for the residential amenity

of occupants of nearby houses and the suitability of the proposed parking and access arrangements.

7. Principle of Development

- 7.1 The NPPF and Policy CP1 support an increase in the supply of housing in existing urban areas where development is sustainable. The site is located on the fringe of Romford town centre within easy reach of good public transport links.
- 7.2 The proposal is for the redevelopment of a former commercial site to provide residential accommodation. The site is not designated as Green Belt land, an employment area, or within Romford town centre in the Development Plan. Therefore policy DC11 supports the redevelopment of commercial sites for housing when they become available.
- 7.3 On this basis the proposal is considered to be policy compliant in landuse terms and the residential use is therefore regarded as being acceptable in principle.

8. Density/ Layout

- 8.1 Policy DC2 of the LDF provides guidance in relation to the dwelling mix within residential developments. Policy DC61 states that planning permission will not be granted for proposals that would significantly diminish local and residential amenity.
- 8.2 The proposal would provide 24 no. flats consisting of 2no one-bedroom and 22 no. two-bedroom units at a density equivalent to around 99 dwellings per hectare. This complies with the aims of Policy DC2 which states that a dwelling density of between 80 to 275 dwellings per hectare would be appropriate in this location.
- 8.3 Policy 3.5 of the London Plan advises that housing developments should be of the highest quality internally, externally and in relation to their context and to the wider environment. To this end Policy 3.5 requires that new residential development conforms to minimum internal space standards. For one-bedroom flats for two occupants the spacing requirement is set at 50 square metres. For two-bedroom flats the minimum standard is set at 61 square metres for 3 occupants and 70 square metres for 4 occupants.
- 8.4 In both blocks 1 and 2 the proposal will provide units with varying floor space sizes all of which meet or exceed the respective minimum standards as per the proposed number of rooms and number of occupants they are intended to serve. Given this factor it is considered that the proposed development would be in accordance with Policy 3.5 of the London Plan and the apartments would provide an acceptable amount of space for day to day living.

- 8.5 The Residential Design SPD states that private amenity space should be provided in single, usable, enclosed blocks which benefit from both natural sunlight and shading. External terraces and balcony areas accessed from the living rooms with an area of 7 square metres will be provided to the 19 apartments forming the ground, first and second floor areas of blocks 1 and 2. The ground floor terraces will include hedging and fencing offering an extra degree of privacy and security. The 5 flats in the roof space areas of both blocks 1 and 2 will have no private external amenity space, but will have a dual aspect including large dormer windows and roof lights to enable an unobstructed outlook and good levels of daylight entering the living areas.
- 8.6 Full details of hard and soft landscaping measures have been submitted as part of the proposals. An area of approximately 280 square metres around block 1 and approximately 385 square metres around block 2 will be landscaped and set out as communal shared amenity space, offering varying levels of privacy to users depending on which part they use. As previously stated, 5 of the proposed flats will not include an area of private external amenity space associated with the apartment. However, given the proposed shared amenity areas to the front, sides and rear of both blocks 1 and 2, it is considered that occupants of these flats will have access to a reasonable provision of outdoor amenity space.
- 8.7 It is considered that the proposed amenity space would be of a suitable form and size and would therefore result in acceptable living conditions for future occupants. All of the proposed dwellings would have adequate access to sunlight and daylight. Therefore the general site layout is considered to be in accordance with Policy DC61 and The Residential Design SPD.
- 8.8 Staff are aware that the Borough Designing Out Crime Officer has been consulted on the proposals prior to their submission. This has enabled a number of detailed matters relating to community safety to be addressed in the submitted application. The Borough DOCO has raised no specific objections to the proposal, subject to planning conditions. The proposal is considered to respond in principle to the requirements of the NPPF, Policy 7.3 of the London Plan and LDF Policy DC63. Staff are satisfied that reasonable measures have been undertaken to make the development as safe as possible and recommend conditions relating to Secured by Design and other community safety measures.
- 8.9 The development is designed to Lifetime Homes standard and the units are designed to be adaptable to wheelchair housing standards. Accordingly the scheme is in accordance in principle with Policy DC7 of the LDF and the requirements of Policy 3.8 of the London Plan.

9. Design/Impact on Street/Garden Scene

- 9.1 Policy DC61 states that development must respond to distinctive local buildings forms and patterns of development and respect the scale, massing and height of the surrounding context.
- 9.2 The application site occupies a prominent location, with an extensive 42 metre frontage onto Victoria Road. The former petrol filling station site has been derelict for a number of years, with a previous apartment led scheme from 2007 failing to materialise due to financial constraints. As a result the site has remained boarded up and become neglected which has attracted anti-social behaviour causing disturbance and nuisance to local residents.
- 9.3 The main impact in terms of the street scene at Victoria Road relates to the character and appearance of block 1. The proposed block fills the majority of the site frontage and rises up to three-storeys high with a mansard roof. Given the immediate surroundings the scale and height of the proposed building will be more noticeable when viewed in contrast to the adjacent Victoria Public House to the east and the two-storey terrace houses to the west.
- 9.4 The proposed front elevation of block 1 will respect the building line of the adjacent properties and the side flanking sections have been designed to step down to two-storey level (with the eastern wing slightly higher to accommodate the two-bedroom apartment) to acknowledge the diminishing scale and height of the terrace row and pub. It is considered that this design feature will serve to soften the relationship between the adjacent buildings and the proposal, whilst enabling the development to maintain the rhythm of the building heights at the adjacent properties. This will also create a feature leading up to the taller central section of the proposed block.
- 9.5 This relationship will form a key aspect of the streetscene along this section of Victoria Road. However, an important consideration in this respect is the degree to which the proposed development would maintain or enhance the character and appearance of the streetscene. In assessing this aspect it is essential to consider the wider context of the site setting and give some acknowledgment to the town centre fringe location.
- 9.6 Directly opposite the site, the three-storey apartment blocks at Jane Court and Pamela Court frame the entrance into Corbridge Mews. As such this section of the north side of Victoria Road is characterised by a series of taller blocks stepping down to the more traditional two-storey terraced commercial units adjacent to the prominent cross road intersection of Mercury Gardens and Victoria Road. It is considered that this arrangement forms a key aspect of the local character where by buildings are not of uniformed scale and massing but are more of a varied design, appearance and height.
- 9.7 In addition to this the apartment development at Mercury Court lies on the opposite side of the cross roads junction. This development is of

considerable scale and height and demonstrates alternating four and three storey high sections which arc around to complement the curved site frontage. This neighbouring site can be regarded with some degree of separation in comparison to the application site, but nevertheless it is within a setting of traditional two-storey dwellings and commercial units and presents a positive and key component in enhancing the streetscene character in a gateway location into Romford town centre.

- 9.8 Some 75 metres further along from the cross roads junction on Victoria Road, there are further examples of taller buildings within the traditional two-storey setting, with the three-storey apartments at Centreview Court providing an important part of the local streetscene character. To the north of the site, just a short distance beyond the railway bridge over Mercury Gardens the average scale and heights of the buildings increases considerably providing a positive contribution to the character of the town centre fringe.
- 9.9 Within its immediate context, adjacent to the terraced houses and detached public house building, block 1 would appear as a much larger and dominant structure. However, it is noted that the design of the building includes elements that break down its perceived bulk, for example the stepped ridge height, the proposed window heights and proportions, front elevation detailing and the inclusion of balconies. These are judged to avoid the building having an overly dominant appearance.
- 9.10 Taking into consideration the wider character of the area along Victoria Road, an important element of the streetscene is the juxtaposition of taller three or four storey buildings in relation to the more traditional two storey terrace buildings. This relationship appears to form a key characteristic of the local streetscene and makes a positive contribution to the local character. It is therefore considered that block 1 of the proposed development would adhere to these characteristic principles, without excessively or unduly impacting on its immediate setting within Victoria Road.
- 9.11 Block 2 will be located to the south of the site and to the rear of block 1 and as such it will not be visible from Victoria Road. The proposed building will however be visible from the rear of houses on George Street and Albert Road and will form a prominent feature in the rear garden setting.
- 9.12 The proposed two-storey building with accommodation in the roof space will have a ridge height of 10.7 metres incorporating a hipped pitched roof design. In comparison the surrounding terraced houses at George Street and Albert Road are around 7.5 metres in height. There is also the rear of a single storey workshop unit abutting the site boundary, which is accessed from George Street and single storey light industrial units to the south.
- 9.13 The application site is effectively an infill plot and consequently the rear block does not necessary relate to the layout of the surrounding street pattern. In terms of the impact on the surrounding setting the proposed

building will occupy a currently vacant area of land which lies between the rear garden boundaries of the terraced houses on George Street and Albert Road. As a result the relatively open aspect from the rear gardens of these houses will be reduced to some degree. However, the building will be set well within the site boundaries and located some 18 metres from the rear of the Albert Road houses and 25 metres from the rear of the properties at George Street. The proposed block will therefore be well spaced between the neighbouring buildings and will not unduly encroach on the setting of the rear gardens. In this respect it is considered that the siting and appearance of block 2 would be sympathetic to its immediate surroundings and would serve to maintain and enhance the character of the rear garden setting.

- 9.14 On balance it is considered that the proposed development would serve to regenerate a vacant and neglected site, thereby enhancing the character and appearance of the surrounding area. The scale, bulk, height and massing of block 1 would form a prominent building in the streetscene, especially in relation to the immediately adjacent buildings. However, other taller buildings within the vicinity contribute positively to the local character and in this sense it is considered that the proposed development of both block 1 and block 2 would be sympathetic to the wider setting, resulting in a positive impact on the character and appearance of the streetscene and garden setting.

10. Impact on Amenity

- 10.1 Policy DC61 considers that new developments should not materially reduce the degree of privacy enjoyed by the occupants of adjoining properties and should not have an unreasonably adverse effect on sunlight and daylight to adjoining properties..
- 10.2 The main consideration in terms of residential amenity relates to the impact on the occupants of 100 Victoria Road (located to the west of block 1), 9 to 15 (odds) George Street (located to the west of block 2) and 2 to 10 (evens) Albert Road (located to the east of block 2).
- 10.3 Block 1 will be situated approximately 1 metre from the boundary with 100 Victoria Road, with the proposed building not projecting beyond the rear building line of the neighbouring house. The proposed first floor rear balcony serving flat 3 would be located some 3 metres from the boundary with No.100. Staff have concerns that the location of the balcony at first floor level raises issues in relation to privacy and the potential for overlooking. Therefore it is considered reasonable and necessary to include a condition requiring the balcony to include a side screening panel to prevent views west towards the neighbouring garden. It is considered that this measure would alleviate any undue impact and ensure that privacy levels between the properties are maintained.
- 10.4 The western elevation would contain a ground and first floor window serving the kitchen areas of flats 1 and 3 respectively. These secondary room windows will have an outlook onto the blank gable elevation of No.100 and it

is not considered that the positioning will result in any undue loss of privacy or overlooking to the occupants of No.100.

- 10.5 The windows in the rear elevation of block 1 would face directly into the south of the site and would only offer views at an oblique angle over to the neighbouring garden at No.100 to the west. This arrangement is similar to the current situation in respect of the neighbouring houses in the terrace row and it is therefore considered that occupants of No.100 would not experience any greater loss of privacy to the rear garden than they currently experience from the existing neighbouring houses.
- 10.6 Block 1 would be located away from the adjacent public house premises to enable suitable vehicular access to the car park and servicing area. It is not considered that the proposed development would unduly impact on the neighbouring commercial use, and is of a sufficient distance from the pub not to present potential noise and disturbance issue to future occupants of the flats.
- 10.7 The western flank elevation of block 2, containing 1 no. single pane window serving a first floor kitchen, will be located approximately 28 metres from the first floor rear habitable room windows at nos. 9, 11 & 13 George Street. The elevation will then cut in to form the rear section of the block creating the 'T-shaped' footprint. The side elevation of the rear section will include a first floor balcony and full height patio doors located some 33 metres from rear habitable room windows at No.15 George Street. This feature presents some concerns in relation to overlooking and creating a sense of obtrusiveness on the rear garden at No.15. Whilst Members will wish to consider the acceptability of this relationship, Staff have taken into consideration the distance between the balcony and the rear garden boundary No.15 of some 8.7m and the length of the neighbours rear garden, approximately 19m. On balance, these separation distances are considered to be sufficient so as not to result in a detrimental loss of privacy or overlooking.
- 10.8 The distances displayed between the proposed development at block 2 and the houses at George Street are considered to be acceptable in order to maintain outlook and privacy between the new apartment block and the neighbouring residents. As such it is not considered that the proposed development will result in any undue impact on the privacy of the occupants of the houses at George Street.
- 10.9 The eastern flank elevation of block 2, containing 1no. single pane window serving a first floor kitchen will be located approximately 18 metres from first floor rear habitable room windows at No.s 2, 4 & 6 Albert Road. As with the western flank wall, the eastern elevation will then cut in to form the rear section of the block. The side elevation of the rear section will include a first floor bathroom window and bedroom window located some 23 metres from rear habitable room windows at No.s 8 & 10 Albert Road.

- 10.10 As with the western flank, the distances displayed between the proposed development at block 2 and the houses at Albert Road are considered to be acceptable in order to maintain outlook and privacy between the new apartment block and the neighbouring residents. As such it is not considered that the proposed development will result in any undue impact on the privacy of the occupants of the houses at Albert Road.
- 10.11 Block 2 is two storeys high. It is set in from the boundary with the neighbouring properties in both George Street and Albert Road and has a staggered building line, which offsets its overall bulk and massing. Having regard to these factors, it is considered that the scale, height and bulk of the proposed building would be suitable and would not unduly impact on the rear of the houses at Albert Road and George Street by way of overbearing impact, overshadowing or a loss of daylight.
- 10.12 On balance, it is considered that the proposed extensions would not harm the amenities of neighbouring properties and would provide acceptable living conditions for the future occupants. The proposal is therefore in accordance with Policy DC61 and the intentions of the NPPF.

11 Environmental Issues

- 11.1 The site is a former petrol filling station and as such advice has been sought from the Council's Environmental Protection team. In relation to the former use a land contamination desk top and site investigation study have been carried out. This has been considered by Staff and a series of conditions have been recommended in respect of land contamination issues.
- 11.2 The site is not located within a Flood Zone and presents no issues in relation to flood risk.
- 11.3 The proposal is not considered to give rise to any significant noise issues subject to conditions required by Environmental Health.

12. Parking and Highway Issues

- 12.1 Policy DC33 seeks to ensure all new developments make adequate provision for car parking. Under Policy DC2 the Public Transport Accessibility Level (PTAL) is set at 5-6 and classifies the site as being within an Urban/Suburban setting. Therefore flatted residential development in this location is required to provide a low car parking provision of less than 1no. space per unit.
- 12.2 As part of the proposed development for 24.no flats a total of 22 no. parking spaces will be provided which will include 2 no. dedicated disabled user bays. The car park and servicing area will be laid out centrally within the site to the rear of the main building, block 1, and to the foreground of block 2 situated to the south of the site.

- 12.3 Vehicular access will be provided via an existing cross-over onto Victoria Road in the northern corner of the site adjacent to the boundary with the Victoria Public House. The access road will abut the western site boundary and sweep around into the central section of the site providing a turning head to facilitate the manoeuvring of resident's cars and service vehicles. The remainder of the site will be landscaped to provide communal amenity space and planting to soften the extent of the hardstanding.
- 12.4 The Local Highway Authority has raised no objection in relation to the proposed amount of car parking provision and the access and servicing arrangements from Victoria Road.
- 12.5 It is therefore considered that the proposed car parking and access arrangements are acceptable and would not result in highway safety or parking/ servicing issues.
- 12.6 In terms of public transport the site is located in an accessible location with a bus stop positioned immediately to the front of the site which is served by several bus routes. In addition the site lies approximately 400 metres from Romford Train Station.
- 12.7 The proposal can demonstrate adequate provision of secure bicycle storage with space for up to 24 no. cycles set out in 2no. cycle stores located to the rear of block 1 adjacent to the western boundary and to the side of the western flank elevation of block 2. The cycle stores will be sited in an accessible location with good surveillance adjacent to the shared amenity area and car park.
- 12.8 The proposed development includes provision for an enclosed refuse store adjacent to the western boundary of the site, within accessible distances from the proposed flats and in a suitable location for refuse vehicles.
- 12.9 Concerns have been raised from neighbours due to the proximity of the refuse store to the site boundary. Staff are of the view that given that the store would be fully enclosed and set-in approximately 1 metre from the boundary with 100 Victoria Road, the location of the refuse store would be acceptable in these circumstances. However, if members were minded to disagree with Staff's views on the location a condition could be included in any approval notice requesting further details of a suitable location for the refuse store, away from the neighbouring dwellings.

13. Affordable Housing

- 13.1 The proposal results in development for which an affordable housing provision is required in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework and the London Plan. Policies CP2 and DC6 set out a borough wide target of 50% of all new homes built in the borough to be affordable.

13.2 A provision of 50% affordable housing (12 units) will be provided in accordance with Policies CP2 and DC6. Of this 50% affordable provision the mix will breakdown as follows:

- 70% (8 units) will be rented - with 50% of this provision capped rent and the other 50% discounted rent.
- The remaining 30% (4 units) will be shared ownership.

13.3 The applicant indicates that the proposal will address issues of local need and help to counteract the imbalance of social rented housing in this part of the Borough.

13.4 The Council's Homes and Housing team are satisfied with the proposed affordable housing mix.

14. Community Infrastructure Levy and Developer Contributions

14.1 The proposed development will create 24 no new residential units with 1,937.9 square metres of new gross internal floorspace. Therefore the proposal is liable for Mayoral CIL and will incur a charge of £38,758 based on the calculation of £20.00 per square metre.

14.2 Under the provisions of Policy DC72 of the LDF and the Planning Obligations SPD a payment of £6,000 should be made for each new dwelling in respect of the infrastructure costs arising from the development. The proposal would create 24 no. new dwellings and would therefore be subject to a legal agreement to provide a contribution of £144,000.

15. Conclusion

15.1 Having regard to all relevant factors and material planning considerations Staff are of the view that this proposal would be acceptable.

15.2 Staff consider that the proposed development raises considerations in relation to the impact on the character and appearance of the streetscene and the impact on the amenity of the neighbouring residents. On balance the proposal is considered to be acceptable in all material respects.

15.3 Staff are of the view that the siting, scale and location of the proposal would not be disproportionate or have a harmful impact on the character of the street scene or result in a loss of amenity to neighbouring occupiers. The proposal is considered to be acceptable in all other respects and it is therefore recommended that planning permission be granted subject to conditions and the applicant entering into a Section 106 Agreement.

IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

Financial implications and risks:

Financial contributions will be sought through the legal agreement.

Legal implications and risks:

Legal resources will be needed to draft the legal agreement.

Human Resources implications and risks:

None.

Equalities implications and risks:

The Council's planning policies are implemented with regard to equality and diversity. The development includes a mix of unit types, including units that provide for wheelchair adaptable housing, and units which are designed to Lifetime Homes standards. The development also includes the provision of an element of affordable housing, thus contributing to the provision of mixed and balanced communities.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Application form, drawings and supporting statements received on 2 May 2014 and 19 May 2014.