

REGULATORY SERVICES COMMITTEE

REPORT

3 November 2011

Subject Heading:

P0789.11 – Former Oldchurch Hospital Site, Block X, Oldchurch Road, Romford (Date received 25/05/2011)

Proposal

The development of block X at the former Oldchurch hospital to provide 60 residential units, associated car parking, hard and soft landscaping.

Report Author and contact details:

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Policy context

**Local Development Framework
London Plan
National Planning Policy**

Financial summary

None

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

Ensuring a clean, safe and green borough	[X]
Championing education and learning for all	[]
Providing economic, social and cultural activity in thriving towns and villages	[]
Valuing and enhancing the lives of our residents	[X]
Delivering high customer satisfaction and a stable council tax	[]

SUMMARY

Members will recall that the Committee resolved to grant planning permission for the redevelopment of the eastern half of the former Oldchurch Hospital site under ref P1638.09 at its meeting of 17 June 2010 subject to the prior completion of a S106 agreement. The legal agreement was subsequently signed and the decision issued on 20 August 2010. Construction of the first phase of the development is now underway.

Planning permission is sought for the increase in height of block X from 7 storeys as approved to 10 storeys together with a corresponding increase in the number of residential units proposed therein from 45 units to 60 units. The report addresses the main issues of policy, principle of use, siting and layout, design, height and appearance, residential amenity, transport and highways considerations, housing provision and sustainability.

Staff conclude that the proposed increase in height is unacceptable and that planning permission should be refused.

Should Members agree the recommendation to refuse permission the application would need to be referred to the Mayor for London as the building would be more than 30m high and it forms part of a more substantial development.

RECOMMENDATIONS

That subject to no direction to the contrary from the Mayor for London that **planning permission be REFUSED** for the following reasons:

1. The 10 storey block would, by reason of its excessive height, bulk and mass appear as an overbearing and visually dominant feature, which would be unnecessarily prominent and out of character with the development within which it would be located contrary to Policy DC66 and DC61 of the Local Development Framework Core Strategy and Development Control Policies DPD and the Residential Design SPD.
2. The proposal fails to make adequate provision for affordable housing and as such fails to make a contribution towards meeting identified housing needs within the Borough, to the detriment of housing opportunity and social inclusion contrary to Policy DC6 and DC72 of the Local Development Framework Core Strategy and Development Control Policies Development Plan Document.

3. In the absence of a Section 106 Legal Agreement, the applicant fails to demonstrate how the impact of the development on Education provision will be provided for. In this respect, the proposal would be contrary to Policies DC29 and DC72 of the Local Development Framework Core Strategy and Development Control Policies DPD.

REPORT DETAIL

1.0 Site Description

- 1.1 The site of the former Oldchurch Hospital is located at the junction of Oldchurch Road and Waterloo Road. The whole site is roughly rectangular and has a total area of 7.76 hectares whilst the site the subject of this application has an area of 0.1 hectare. The application site is flat and is located roughly in the centre of the wider development site where it would overlook the proposed local park. To the immediate north of the application site the first 6 storey block (block 9 and 10) of the applicant's approved redevelopment is under construction. Beyond that flatted key worker housing has been constructed on the northern side of a new east/west road (Union Road) and beyond that lays the main railway line between Romford and London Liverpool Street. To the south and east beyond the construction compound and currently vacant future development phase sites there are terraced two storey residential properties fronting Oldchurch Road and Waterloo Road, with a flatted development of up to five storeys at the corner of Oldchurch Road and Rom Valley Way. The western portion of the former hospital site is currently being redeveloped and west of this are Romford gas works.

2. Background Information

- 2.1 In December 2005 outline planning permission was granted for residential development on the Oldchurch Hospital site (application reference P1635.04). The application comprised three key elements – general market housing, key worker housing and public open space.
- 2.2 Detailed designs for the key worker housing were submitted as part of the outline application and have subsequently been constructed along the northern edge of the former hospital site. In respect of the market housing only, access was considered at outline stage, with matters relating to siting, design, external appearance of the buildings and landscaping reserved for later consideration. The outline application adopted a master plan approach to the overall site and as it was subject to Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) various aspects of the resulting reserved matters applications had to comply with parameters that had been established at Outline stage. The subsequent reserved matters scheme which was approved under ref P2485.07 proved to be financially unviable following the

downturn in the housing market. A new detailed full application, which includes the current application site, comprising 493 flats in six blocks and was agreed under Planning Ref P1638.09 in June 2010.

- 2.3 In support of the current application the applicant's state that despite improvements in the scheme's overall viability, further enhancements are needed to improve the financial viability of the scheme in the current housing market and ensure the continuing delivery of the development. The potential for additional building height at the location of Block X as a feature building on the site has been identified as the applicants preferred method of increasing the number of units.
- 2.4 The application has been submitted as a fresh full application for Block X as planning permission could not be sought for three additional storeys to the block in isolation. The proposal has been screened for EIA with the conclusion that EIA was not required.

3.0 **Description of Proposal:**

- 3.1 Full planning application is sought for a 10 storey block providing 60 residential dwellings comprising 17 No. 1 bedroom flats and 43 No. 2 bedroom flats.
- 3.2 The footprint and location of the block is unchanged from that which has previously been approved. The additional units would be created by increasing the height of the block by 3 storeys, although only the central section would actually be increased by the full amount. The western elevation would be increased by two storeys, giving a two storey set back to the taller central section creating terrace for the eighth floor flats at the western end, whilst the terrace to the east would be increased by a single storey to seven storeys.
- 3.3 The materials for the block would be the same as those proposed for the overall scheme with light and dark ochre/red colour brick with a brown engineering brick proposed around ground floor entrances and balcony openings and horizontal dark brick banding to the western elevation adjacent to the proposed park. Each unit above ground floor would be provided with a balcony or terrace and ground floor units would have their own semi-private defensible space around the perimeter of the building.
- 3.4 Two parking spaces are proposed within the site boundary and a further three spaces would be accommodated elsewhere on the site. This aspect would be dealt with through an application for a Minor Material Amendment to the overall masterplan.

4. **Relevant History**

- 4.1 There is extensive history relating to the former use of the site as a hospital. Most relevant history to this application is:

P1635.04 Outline planning application for residential development (key workers and general housing) – Approved

P2103.06 Submission of reserved matters, condition 1 of application P1635.04 landscaping (key workers) – Approved

P1837.07 Reserved matters application 1 – Blocks 9, 10,11,12,13 & 14. New build residential units and car parking pursuant to outline planning permission P1635.04 – Withdrawn

P2485.07 Reserved matters application 1 – blocks 9, 10, 11, 12, 13 & 14. 502 new build residential units and car parking pursuant to outline planning permission P1635.04 - Approved

Z0006.09 - Request for screening opinion for 500 residential units and associated parking/landscaping – EIA not required

P1638.09 - Redevelopment of the former Oldchurch Hospital to provide 493 residential units, an energy centre, a local park, car parking, access and internal roads and hard and soft landscaping. – Approved

Z0006.11 – Request for a Screening Opinion for 10 storey block – EIA not required.

P0995.11 - Variation of condition 2 of P1638.09 for the addition of 4 parking spaces. – Under Consideration

5. Consultations and Representations:

- 5.1 Consultees and 369 neighbouring properties have been notified of the application. The application has been advertised on site and in the local press. No objections have been received

Consultee Responses

Borough Crime Prevention Design Advisor – Identifies a number of issues which should be addressed in respect of their impact upon the security and safety of the public and residents including the design of soft and hard landscaping, the specification of communal entrances, a postal delivery strategy, lighting, positioning of utility meters, cycle storage, car parking and the need for a CCTV system. Conditions are requested related to Secure by Design and CCTV.

Environment Agency – Request that a drainage condition be imposed should planning permission be granted.

English Heritage (GLAAS) – Advise that the area has been assessed and no significant archaeology found in that part of the site. No need to consider archaeology further on this part of the site.

Greater London Authority – Accept that the principle of the residential development is acceptable but advise that further information is required regarding housing, urban design, inclusive design, climate change and transport. Specifically the following points are raised:

- An independent assessment of the viability of the proposal is required to justify the lack of any additional affordable housing.
- The layout should be re-considered to provide individual entrances to ground floor flats and the internal layout should meet the Mayor's space standards.
- Further articulation of the building is suggested to improve its relationship with neighbouring approved buildings.
- Further information should be supplied regarding the number and location of wheelchair accessible units.
- The number of photovoltaic (PV) panels should be increased.
- Provision of 20% electric charging points and 20% passive provision should be made.

LFEPA – Is satisfied with the proposals.

London Fire Brigade – Advise that there is no need for any additional fire hydrants beyond those previously requested for the overall scheme.

Environmental Health raise no objections subject to suitable conditions.

Thames Water raise no objection but recommend that petrol / oil interceptors be fitted in all car parking areas.

5 Relevant Policies

5.1 The development plan for the area consists of the Havering Local Development Framework (Core Strategy, Development Control Policies and Site Specific Allocations) and the London Plan 2011.

5.2 Policies CP1 (Housing Supply), CP2 (Sustainable Communities), CP7 (Recreation and Leisure), CP8 (Community Facilities), CP10 (Sustainable Transport) CP9 (Reducing the need to Travel), CP10 (Sustainable Transport), CP15 (Environmental Management), CP16 (Biodiversity and Geodiversity), CP17 (Design), CP18 (Heritage) of the Local Development Framework Core Strategy are considered relevant.

5.3 Policies DC2 (Housing mix and density), DC3 (Housing Design and Layout), DC6 (Affordable Housing), DC7 (Lifetime Homes and Mobility Housing), DC20 (Access to Recreation and Leisure Including Open Space), DC21

(Major Developments and Open Space, Recreation and Leisure Activities), DC27 (Provision of Community Facilities), DC29 Educational Premises), DC30 (Contribution of Community Facilities). DC32 (The Road Network). DC33 (Car Parking), DC34 (Walking), DC35 (Cycling), DC49 (Flood Risk), DC50 Sustainable Design and Construction), DC51 (Renewable Energy), DC52 (Water Supply, Drainage and Quality), DC55 (Noise), DC58 (Biodiversity and Geodiversity), DC59 (Biodiversity in New Developments), DC60 (Trees). DC61 (Urban Design). DC62 (Access), DC63 (Delivering Safer Places), DC66 (Tall Buildings and Structures), DC67 (Buildings of Heritage Interest),), DC 72 (Planning Obligations) of the Local Development Framework Development Control Policies Development Plan Document and Policy SSA1 (Harold Wood Hospital) of the Local Development Framework Site Specific Allocations Development Plan Document are also considered to be relevant. Various Supplementary Planning Documents of the LDF are also relevant.

5.4 Following its recent adoption the London Plan July 2011 is the strategic plan for London and the following policies are considered to be relevant: 3.3 (increasing housing supply), 3.4 (optimising housing potential), 3.5 (quality and design of housing developments), 3.6 (children's play facilities), 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). There is also a range of Supplementary Planning Guidance to the London Plan including 'Providing for Children and Young People's Play and Informal Recreation'

5.5 PPS1 'Delivering Sustainable Development', PPS3 'Housing', PPS6 'Planning for Town Centres', PPG13 'Transport', PPG 15 'Planning and the Historic Environment', PPS22 'Renewable Energy', PPS25 'Development and Flood Risk' are further material considerations.

6.0 Planning Considerations

6.0.1 The main issues in this case are considered to be the principle of the development, housing density and design, site layout, massing, height and street scene implications, highways and parking, sustainability and flood risk.

6.1 Principle of Development

6.1.1 Policy CP1 supports the development of this site as a contribution to the borough's housing target of 535 new homes per year. The principle of the residential redevelopment of the site has been established by the grant of the existing full planning permission and previous outline permission and subsequent agreement of reserved matters. No objection is therefore raised to the principle of the residential development proposed.

6.2 Density, design and layout

6.2.1 The uplift in the number of residential units in Block X would increase the total number of units proposed on the site from 493 to 508. This would increase the density of the overall development from 221 to 228 dwellings per hectare. Development Control Policy DC2 Housing Mix and Density includes this site within the Romford pedshed area where densities of between 165-275 units per hectare would be appropriate for a predominantly flatted development within an urban setting. An urban setting is defined as dense development with a mixture of uses and buildings 3-4 storeys in height such as town centres and along main arterial routes. Notwithstanding the two storey housing along Waterloo and Oldchurch Roads the remainder of the surrounding environment, the railway, gas holders, new hospital, Brewery and Waterloo Road Estate give a strong urban character. On this basis it is considered that the density proposed is within the identified range for a development of this nature in the given location and no objections are raised.

6.2.2 In relation to tall buildings Policy DC66 advises that outside of Romford Town Centre buildings of 6 storeys or greater will only be granted planning permission in exceptional circumstances provided that they:

- create an attractive landmark building which would clearly improve the legibility of the area
- preserve or enhance the natural environment, the historic environment, local amenity and the local character of the area
- act as a catalyst for regeneration
- preserve or enhance views from Havering Ridge
- do not mar the skyline
- do not have a significant adverse impact on the amenity of nearby occupiers
- are appropriate to the local transport infrastructure and capacity in the area.

6.2.3 In addition, DC66 requires that all tall buildings should be of exemplary high quality and inclusive design and, in particular, they must:

- Ensure that the proposed density is suited to the site and to the wider context in terms of proportion, composition, relationship to other

buildings, streets, public and private open spaces, the waterways or other townscape elements

- Be attractive city elements as viewed from all angles and where appropriate contribute to an interesting skyline
- Create a well defined public realm with a human scale, with continuity of frontage and accessible entrances from street level
- Be sensitive to their impact on micro-climates in terms of wind, sun, reflection and overshadowing
- Contain internal spaces, which do not become redundant over time and can easily adapt to changing social, technological and economic conditions
- Be oriented and profiled taking into account the potential negative impact on aircraft, navigation and telecommunication networks

6.2.4 When considering the current approved height of Block X at 7 storeys members agreed with staff's assessment of the proposal against the criteria of DC66 and were satisfied that the design and character of Block X was both suitable for the site and well designed. It was considered that the additional storey would assist with breaking down the frontage of the development when viewed from the park and that the increased height of the block would serve as a visual reference and feature directing park users to the twin avenues linking to Waterloo Road.

6.2.5 The applicants have cited the following arguments to make their case that the increase in the height of Block X would be appropriate for the location:

- The original outline consent agreed 10 storeys for the key worker accommodation which has been constructed to the north and the precedent is therefore established.
- Block X has always been identified as a feature building.
- Block X has previously been agreed at an increased height to the rest of the development.
- The additional 3 storeys would enhance the function of the building as a landmark visual reference point.
- The central location means that the increase in height does not become incongruous when viewed from outside the site.
- The variation of materials on the elevations and the variety in articulation and details with a 2 storey setback to the upper level facing the park will reduce the overall perceived mass of the block, whilst creating a distinctive building specifically designed for the context of the site.
- The applicants also advise that the uplift in unit numbers is required to improve the financial viability of the scheme, and to enable them to continue with the development. They further advise that the scheme has been commenced in order to maintain a regional presence but that there can be no certainty of the scheme being completed without the uplift proposed.

- 6.2.6 The criteria of Policy DC66 and the justifications put forward by the applicants are open to interpretation and Member could justifiably come to a different conclusion to staff. However, staff do not consider that there is sufficient case to justify the increase in height proposed.
- 6.2.7 Looking at each of the arguments put forward by the applicants, staff do not agree that the inclusion of a 10 storey block for the key worker accommodation has set a precedent for other development of a similar height on the site. The taller blocks along the northern side of the site are located adjacent to the railway where they perform a screening function as well as being located furthest away from Oldchurch Road. They are also located closest to the longstanding tower blocks of the Waterloo Road Estate. The height parameters for the original redevelopment of the hospital site were established by the Outline permission P1635.04 which set a limit for this part of the site at 6 storeys.
- 6.2.8 Para 6.2.4 above sets out the case for the Block X at 7 storeys height which staff and members agreed. This should not however, be construed as tacit acceptance for a 10 storey block. Whilst the building both as approved and proposed would signpost proposed pedestrian routes through to Waterloo Road it is not agreed that the block needs to be increased in height in order to make the scheme more legible or to enhance any function as a landmark. Furthermore, the location is not considered to be one that plays a strategic role in the urban structure of the area nor would it emphasise a point of civic or visual significance. The Residential Design SPD and DC66 advise in relation to tall buildings that they should only be proposed where there is a clear reason to have one. On this basis it is staff's view that there is no substantive architectural or urban design justification for the location as an appropriate one for an exaggerated landmark building.
- 6.2.9 The central location of the block within the wider development site is not considered to be a justification for the increase in height proposed. Notwithstanding the argument that the increased height may not have a significant impact on distant views or residential amenity it is not considered that the additional height would assist with defining a public realm with a human scale. On the contrary, staff consider that despite efforts within the design to reduce the perceived mass of the block, that the increased height would make the building appear more overbearing and the adjacent pedestrian environment more intimidating. Staff are satisfied that design and appearance of the approved scheme is attractive and an improvement over the previous approved reserved matters scheme. However, staff do not consider that the adaptation and extension of the design as proposed displays the exemplary high quality of design needed to justify a building of even greater height. For the above reasons staff maintain an objection to the proposal on the grounds that there is insufficient case to justify the increase in height of Block X and that the proposal is therefore contrary to Policies DC66 and Dc61 and the Residential Design SPD.

6.3 Residential quality and amenity

- 6.3.1 The Residential Design Supplementary Planning Document seeks to promote best practice in residential design and layout and to ensure that new residential developments are of the highest quality. In terms of the residential amenity, the scheme is essentially the same as that which has already been approved with additional floors. All flats above ground floor would be provided with balconies or access to terrace areas with screening between balconies on the western side where these are proposed side by side. All flats, including those on the ground floor of the block would gain access via a communal entrance as per the original scheme. This is the only block within the development that has this feature and in this instance this considered to be desirable as it would give the ground floor flats access to semi-private amenity space which could be accessed internally from living rooms and bedrooms. As the remainder of ground floor units throughout the overall development would have external front doors it is not considered that there would be any detrimental impact on the level of street activity as a result of the omission of street entrances from this block.
- 6.3.2 London Plan Policy 3.5 states that all new residential developments should meet dwelling space standards set out therein. This is a policy of the most recent London Plan which was not in place when the original scheme was under consideration and the majority of the flats proposed fail to meet the standard. However, all the flats have been designed to meet Lifetime Homes Standard and are no different from the units throughout the rest of the development. On that basis it is not considered that there is any scope to maintain an objection to the unit sizes proposed.
- 6.3.3 The daylight and sunlight analysis carried out for the development has been updated to consider the impact of the increased height of Block X on the rest of the development. This demonstrates that there would be a marginal impact arising with only one additional room not receiving adequate sunlight and daylight access as a result and only minor reductions in daylight and sunlight to proposed elevations of neighbouring blocks. Given the density of the scheme and the urban setting this is considered to be acceptable and no objections are raised.
- 6.3.4 The distance of Block X from existing residential development outside of the site is such that there would be no material impact upon residential amenity.

6.4 Transportation, Highways and Parking

- 6.4.1 The Transport Assessment concludes that the increase in the number of trips as a result of the additional units would not have any significant material impact upon the operation of the highway and public transport networks within the vicinity of the site. Staff agree with these conclusions and the impact the development would have on the highway network is therefore considered to be acceptable and in accordance with Policy DC32. No changes are proposed to the access arrangements, which subject to

detailed design, are considered to be acceptable and capable of dealing with the volume of traffic predicted by the Transport Assessment.

- 6.4.2 In terms of parking, in order to maintain the ratio of parking at 0.5 spaces per unit as established by the full permission P1638.09 a total of 254 parking spaces are required. A recount of the spaces shown on the approved plans for overall development shows that there were actually 251 spaces indicated rather than the 246 referred to in the documentation and report. The additional spaces required to maintain the 0.5 space ratio would be dealt with through a minor material amendment application which would show them provided elsewhere within the overall site. Additional provision for cycle parking is also proposed which would accord with policy DC35.
- 6.4.3 If members were minded to consider approval of the application it would be necessary for the proposal to be linked to the existing S106 agreement in order to ensure that the Travel Plan for the overall development applied to Block X.

6.5 Housing

- 6.5.1 The original outline planning permission for this site was granted on the basis that 31% of the units would be provided as affordable housing, in the form of key worker accommodation with the number of market units set at 495. The provision of 31% affordable housing at that time was carefully considered and judged to be acceptable for a number of reasons, including the submission of a financial appraisal. It was also written into the original legal agreement that for any increase in dwelling numbers proposed for the market housing in subsequent reserved matters applications, that a 31% provision of affordable housing would be required as part of that increase.
- 6.5.2 The applicant submitted a financial appraisal with the most recent redevelopment proposals P1638.09 which demonstrated that the scheme was less financially viable than was previously the case and that the proposed level of affordable housing, based on the original legal agreement requirements, was the maximum reasonable quantum that the scheme could support without becoming unviable. This amounted to 11 affordable units, being 31% of the increase in the number of units beyond those approved at Outline stage. That financial appraisal was independently verified on behalf of the Council.
- 6.5.3 Subsequently the applicants have disposed of their interest in the retained buildings either side of the main entrance from Oldchurch Road and the plot of a further proposed terrace of 4 new houses at the western end of the hospital site to the developer of the western end of the site. These are to be refurbished and developed as affordable housing and S106 variations have been agreed to transfer the applicant's obligation to provide affordable housing.

6.5.4 The applicant has again submitted a financial appraisal to demonstrate that the scheme still cannot afford any additional S106 burden, either in the form of contributions or affordable housing. Independent assessment of the appraisal has also been obtained which does not fully support the case presented by the applicants. The applicants assessment is based upon the GLA 3 Dragons Model which supports the case that the scheme could not support further contributions or affordable housing. The independent assessment uses alternative methodology to interpret the financial evidence supplied by the applicants and concludes that the scheme is now more viable owing to a reduction in build costs and the replacement of the former affordable units with market housing. Financial viability is a material consideration but not one that under normal circumstances should override other policy considerations. In this instance the independent assessment does not support the applicant's case that there is an overriding financial viability justification for the additional units proposed in order to maintain the viability of the scheme.

6.5.5 It is not certain at present whether the financial appraisals are directly comparable. However the independent assessment of the financial viability case presented by the applicants supports a scenario whereby it would be reasonable for the Council to require S106 contributions and/or additional affordable housing as a proportion of the uplift in the number of residential dwellings. A reason for refusal is therefore suggested to this effect, although it is accepted that it may be possible for this matter to be overcome by reconciliation of the viability assessments, acceptance of the independent viability assessment or by appropriate provisions of a legal agreement should either members be minded to approve or the applicants choose to appeal against refusal.

6.6 Sustainability

6.6.1 The application is accompanied by a Sustainability Statement, an Energy Strategy Report and a Code for Sustainable Homes Pre-Certification Assessment Report. In line with the requirements of the London Plan and Policies DC49 and DC50 of the LDF, the proposal is required to meet high standards of sustainable design and construction, as well as to demonstrate a reduction in predicted carbon dioxide emissions by at least 20%.

6.6.2 The development would achieve Code for Sustainable Homes Level 3. The sustainability strategy for the building would be to plug into the proposed district heating network that is currently being installed in the energy centre being constructed within Block 9. The development would also incorporate measures in line with the London Plan Energy Hierarchy as set out for the overall development as well as providing additional PVs in order to maintain the previously agreed levels of renewable technologies. No objections are raised.

6.7 Other Considerations including planning obligations

6.7.1 Matters relating to Secure by Design, flood risk, drainage, bio diversity and nature conservation, and landscaping could all be adequately addressed through conditions in the event that Members were minded to grant planning permission. Provision for local services and Education would be provided for through the S106 Legal Agreement as detailed in the original report for the outline application.

6.8 Conclusions

6.8.1 Detailed planning permission has previously been granted for the residential redevelopment of the overall development site including the application site, Block X, as a 7 storey building. The proposals the subject of this application seek full permission for Block X as a 10 storey block.

6.8.2 The proposals have been considered in detail in respect of a number of key issues, including the principle of use, siting and layout, design, height and appearance, residential amenity, transport and highways considerations, housing provision and sustainability. The applicant's have put together a case which seeks to justify the proposal both in architectural, urban design and viability. However, staff conclude that the proposal fails to satisfy the requirements of Policy DC66 necessary to justify a tall building outside of Romford Town Centre and that there are no other overriding reasons to justify the grant of planning permission. It is recommended that planning permission be refused.

IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

Financial implications and risks:

The only financial implications and risks for the Council are associated with the potential non-completion of the development, in which case triggers for the payment of financial contributions may not be reached.

Legal implications and risks:

This application needs to be tied into the Section 106 planning obligation for the Outline planning application P0702.08. This is nearing completion but will need to be finalised and signed prior to the issue of the planning permission.

The heads of the agreement are the same as those for P0702.08 and are set out in the Annex to this report.

Human Resources implications and risks:

There are no human resources and risks directly related to this report.

Equalities implications and risks:

The Council's policies and guidance, the London Plan and government guidance all seek to respect and take account of social inclusion and diversity issues. In the event that members were minded to grant permission conditions would be required relating to accessibility, access statements, wheelchair housing and lifetime homes.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

1. The planning application as submitted or subsequently revised including all forms and plans.
2. The case sheet and examination sheet.
3. Ordnance survey extract showing site and surroundings.
4. Standard Planning Conditions.
5. Copy of all consultations/representations received and correspondence, including other Council Directorates and Statutory Consultees.
6. The relevant planning history.
7. Relevant details of Listed Buildings, Conservation Areas, Article 4 Directions.
8. Copy of all consultations/representations received and correspondence, including other Council Directorates and Statutory Consultees.