



**REGULATORY
SERVICES
COMMITTEE**

REPORT

15 March 2012

Subject Heading:

P1558.11 – Plot 1, Former Whitworth Centre, Noak Hill Road, Romford

Demolition of existing buildings and redevelopment of the site to create 144 no. one, two, three and four bedroom houses and apartments, plus associated roads, paths, car parking, garages, other ancillary structures and landscaping. (Application received 27th October 2011 and revised plans received 20 January, 27 February and 2 March 2012).

Report Author and contact details:

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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

- | | |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| Ensuring a clean, safe and green borough | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Championing education and learning for all | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Providing economic, social and cultural activity in thriving towns and villages | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| Value and enhance the life of our residents | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| Delivering high customer satisfaction and a stable council tax | <input type="checkbox"/> |

SUMMARY

The application is for the demolition of the buildings forming part of the former Whitworth Centre site and residential development of 144 units, comprising a mix of houses and apartments. The proposal is considered acceptable in all material respects, including design and layout, impact on neighbouring amenity, environmental impact and parking and highway issues. A viability assessment has been submitted by the applicant to justify the level of affordable housing and the amount of Section 106 contributions arising from the development and, following independent appraisal, has been found to be sound. The proposal is judged to be acceptable in all other material respects and, subject to a legal agreement and conditions, it is recommended that planning permission is granted.

RECOMMENDATIONS

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 15% of the units within the development (comprising 20 no. two bed apartments and 2 no. 1 bed apartments) as affordable shared ownership units and should any owners of shared equity units staircase to 100% equity provision shall be made for any subsidy (if relevant) to be recycled for alternative affordable housing provision in accordance with Annexe B of PPS 3 .
- The payment of a financial contribution within a timeframe acceptable to the Council of £871,056, to be used for additional primary and secondary school places within the Borough and local highway improvements, the apportionment of such payments to be determined by the Head of Development and Building Control in consultation with the Heads of Streetcare and Head of Learning and Achievement.
- A travel plan to encourage the use of sustainable modes of transport, including a scheme for submission, implementation, monitoring and review.
- The contribution sums shall be subject to indexation on the basis of the Retail Price Index or an alternative index acceptable to the Council from the date of the agreement to the date of payment.
- All contribution sums once received shall include any interest accrued to the date of expenditure.

- The Council's legal fees for preparation of the agreement shall be paid on or prior to completion and the Council's planning obligation monitoring fees shall be paid as required by the agreement.

That Staff be authorised to enter into a legal agreement to secure the above and upon completion of that agreement, grant planning permission subject to the conditions set out below.

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

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

2. Accordance with plans - The development hereby permitted shall not be carried out otherwise than in complete accordance with the following plans and documents:

Location Plan PH107-P01 rev. B
 Proposed Development Layout PH107-P02 rev. F
 Detailed Development Layout PH107-P03 rev. D; PH107-P04 rev. C;
 PH107-P05 rev. C
 Boundary Treatment Details PH107-P06
 Colour & Materials Layout PH107-P07 rev. D
 Refuse Strategy PH107-P08 rev. D
 Highways Detailed Layout PH107-P09 rev. D
 Proposed Levels (Preliminary) PH107-P10 rev. C
 Street Scene Elevations PH107-03-10 rev. C; PH107-03-11 rev. C; 2 rev. C;
 13 rev. C; rev. B and 15 rev. C
 Proposed Section PH107-03-16 rev. B
 House Type Plans and Elevations PH107-51-01;02; 03; 04; 07; 08;09 rev. A
 10 rev. A; 11 rev. A; 21; 22; 23; 24; 12 rev. B; 13; 05 rev. A; 06; rev. B; 17
 rev. B; 18 rev. B; 19 rev. B; 15
 Bin Store and Timber Pergola, Plans and Elevations PH107-51-20
 Garage Types Sg1 and Sg2, Plans and Elevations PH107-51-25
 Garage Sg3, Plans and Elevations PH107-51-27
 Plots 4 to 14, Elevations PH107-61-07 rev. D
 Plots 4 to 14, Floor Plans PH107-61-08 rev. B
 Plots 56 to 67, Elevations and Sections PH107-61-04 rev. A
 Plots 56 to 67, Ground Floor and First Floor Plans PH107-61-05
 Plots 56 to 67, Second Floor and Roof Plans PH107-61-06
 Plots 114 to 127, Elevations and Sections PH107-61-01 rev. A
 Plots 114 to 127, Ground Floor and First Floor Plans PH107-61-02
 Plots 114 to 127, Second Floor and Roof Plans PH107-61-03
 Proposed Landscaping Layout PH107-LS-01 rev. C; 02 rev. C; 03 rev. C; 04
 rev. B
 Affordable Housing Statement (dated 19 December 2011)
 Air Quality Assessment (reference DMB/770005/R1/F)

Archaeological Desk Based Assessment (dated March 2011, updated July 2011)
Design and Access Statement (dated August 2011)
Ecology Scoping Survey and Biodiversity Statement (dated 01 March 2011)
Flood Risk Assessment (reference SJC/662625/JOH)
Addendum to the Flood Risk Assessment (letter dated 19 January 2012)
GLA Development Control Toolkit (dated January 2012)
Landscape Management Plan (reference JCN/1044/11)
Noise Impact Assessment (reference DMB/770005/R1/MCH)
Phase II Geoenvironmental Report (reference DMB/770005/R3)
Safer Places Statement
Site Waste Management Plan
Sustainable Design, Energy and Construction Statement
Transport Statement (reference TC/662625/LAB rev. A)
Travel Plan (reference 2011.397 rev. A)
Tree Survey, Arboricultural Implication Assessment and Method Statement (ref. 2485)
Written Scheme of Investigation for Archaeological Trial Trenching (dated June 2011)

Reason: To accord with the submitted details and LDF Development Control Policies Development Plan Document Policy DC61.

3. Car parking - Before the buildings hereby permitted are first occupied, the areas set aside for car parking shall be laid out and surfaced to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority. The parking areas shall be retained permanently thereafter for the accommodation of vehicles visiting the site and shall not be used for any other purpose. The pergolas shall also be erected prior to first occupation and retained permanently thereafter.

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 in order that the development accords with the LDF Development Control Policies Development Plan Document Policy DC33.

4. Car Park Pergolas – The pergolas within the car parking area areas shall be erected prior to the first residential occupation of the relevant buildings and shall be permanently retained thereafter.

Reason: To enhance the visual amenities of the development in accordance with the LDF Development Control Policies Development Plan Document Policy DC61.

5. Materials - Before any of the development hereby permitted is commenced, samples of all materials to be used in the external construction of the buildings shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Thereafter the development shall be constructed with the approved materials.

Reason: To ensure that the appearance of the proposed development will harmonise with the character of the surrounding area and in order that the development accords with the LDF Development Control Policies Development Plan Document Policy DC61.

6. Landscaping - No development shall take place until there has been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority a scheme of hard and soft landscaping, which shall include indications of all existing trees and shrubs on the site, and details of any to be retained, together with measures for their protection in the course of development. 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 LDF Development Control Policies Development Plan Document Policy DC61.

7. Works to Protected Trees: Works on site shall be carried out in accordance with the Haydens Tree Survey, Arboricultural Implication Assessment & Method Statement, dated 14 April 2011 and received on 17 October 2011.

Reason: To protect the trees on the site subject to a Tree Preservation Order.

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

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 LDF Development Control Policies Development Plan Document Policy DC61.

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

Reason: In the interests of providing a wide range of facilities for non-motor car residents, in the interests of sustainability and in order that the development accords with the LDF Development Control Policies Development Plan Document Policy DC36.

10. Boundary treatment – The development shall be carried out in accordance with the details of boundary treatment shown on drawing numbers PH107-P02E and PH107 P06 hereby approved unless alternative drawings are otherwise submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The boundary treatment shall be installed prior to occupation of the development and retained thereafter in accordance with the approved plans.

Reason: In the interests of privacy and amenity and to accord with Policies DC61 and DC63 of the LDF Development Control Policies Development Plan Document.

11. 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 Havering Crime Prevention Design Advisor the development shall be carried out in accordance with the agreed details.

Reason: In the interest of creating safer, sustainable communities and to reflect guidance in PPS1 and Policies CP17 and DC63 of the LDF Core Strategy and Development Control Policies Development Plan Document.

12. External lighting - Prior to the commencement of the development a scheme for the lighting of external areas of the development including the access road shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The scheme of lighting shall include details of the extent of illumination together with precise details of the height, location and design of the lights. The approved scheme shall then be implemented in strict accordance with the agreed details prior to the first occupation of the development and retained thereafter to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety and amenity. Also in order that the development accords with Policies DC32 and DC61 of the LDF Development Control Policies Development Plan Document.

13. Biodiversity – Prior to the commencement of the development a method statement shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority outlining details of how the recommendations and associated habitat enhancement measures set out in the submitted Ecological Scoping Survey and Biodiversity Statement dated February

2011, received 17 October 2011 will be implemented. The development shall thereafter be carried out in accordance with the agreed details.

Reason: In order to ensure that the proposed development has an acceptable impact on biodiversity and in order that the development accords with the LDF Development Control Policies Development Plan Document Policies DC58 and DC59.

14. Hours of construction - No construction works or construction related deliveries into the site shall take place other than between the hours of 08.00 to 18.00 on Monday to Friday and 08.00 to 13.00 hours on Saturdays unless agreed in writing with the local planning authority. No construction works or construction related deliveries shall take place on Sundays, Bank or Public Holidays unless otherwise agreed in writing by the local planning authority.

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

15. Wheel washing - Before the development hereby permitted is first commenced, details of wheel scrubbing/wash down facilities to prevent mud being deposited onto the public highway during construction works 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.

16. 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 authority; siting and design of temporary buildings;
- g) scheme for security fencing/hoardings, depicting a readily visible 24-hour contact number for queries or emergencies;

- h) 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 with the LDF Development Control Policies Development Plan Document Policy DC61.

17. Land contamination - 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 Report having already been submitted to the Local Planning Authority):

- a) A Phase II (Site Investigation) Report if the Phase I Report confirms the possibility of a significant risk to any sensitive receptors. This is an intrusive site investigation including factors such as chemical testing, quantitative risk assessment and a description of the site ground conditions. An updated Site Conceptual Model should be included showing all the potential pollutant linkages and an assessment of risk to identified receptors.

- b) A Phase III (Risk Management Strategy) Report if the Phase II Report confirms the presence of a significant pollutant linkage requiring remediation. The report will comprise two parts:

Part A - Remediation Scheme which will be fully implemented before it is first occupied. Any variation to the scheme shall be agreed in writing to the Local Planning Authority in advance of works being undertaken. The Remediation Scheme is to include consideration and proposals to deal with situations where, during works on site, contamination is encountered which has not previously been identified. Any further contamination shall be fully assessed and an appropriate remediation scheme submitted to the Local Planning Authority for written approval.

Part B - Following completion of the remediation works a 'Validation Report' must be submitted demonstrating that the works have been carried out satisfactorily and remediation targets have been achieved.

- c) If during development works any contamination should be encountered which was not previously identified and is derived from a different source and/or of a different type to those included in the contamination proposals, then revised contamination proposals shall be submitted to the LPA; and

- d) If during development work, site contaminants are found in areas previously expected to be clean, then their remediation shall be carried out in line with the agreed contamination proposals.

For further guidance see the leaflet titled, 'Land Contamination and the Planning Process'.

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

18. Archaeology - A) the applicant should secure the implementation of a programme of archaeological field evaluation and survey in accordance with a written scheme for investigation which has been submitted by the applicant and approved by the Local Planning Authority.
B) The results of the field evaluation should inform a mitigation strategy to either conserve archaeological assets or ensure their recording through excavation prior to the development.
C) The investigation results should be assessed, any significant results analysed and published, and the archive securely deposited.
The archaeological works shall be carried out by a suitably qualified investigating body acceptable to the Local Planning Authority."

Reason: Important archaeological remains may exist on this site. Accordingly the planning authority wishes to secure the provision of archaeological evaluation to inform determination of any detailed planning consent.

19. Sustainability - No development shall be commenced 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 thereafter be carried out in full accordance with the agreed Sustainability Statement. 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 Policy DC49 of the LDF Development Control Policies Development Plan Document.

20. Renewable energy - The renewable energy system shall be installed in strict accordance with the agreed details and operational to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority prior to the residential occupation of any part of the development. Thereafter, it shall be permanently retained.

Reason: In the interests of energy efficiency and sustainability in accordance with Policy DC49 of the LDF Development Control Policies Development Plan Document.

21. No additional flank windows - Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 (as amended), no window or other opening (other than those shown on the approved plans), shall be formed in the flank walls of the dwellings hereby permitted, unless specific permission under the provisions of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 has first been sought and obtained in writing from the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In order to ensure a satisfactory development that will not result in any loss of privacy or damage to the environment of neighbouring properties which exist or may be proposed in the future.

22. Flood Risk - The development shall only be carried out in accordance with the approved Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) letter reference JNR/662625/MB dated 19 January 2012 compiled by MLM Consulting and the MLM On-Site civil Engineering General Arrangement drawings, 1 of 2 and 2 of 2, reference 662625/301 (Rev. P1) and 662625/302 (Rev. P1) respectively which includes the following mitigation measures detailed within the FRA:

- Provision of primary above ground surface water storage with associated overflow weir to secondary underground storage system.
- Maximum restricted surface water discharge rate from Plot 1 of 43.5 litres per second (approximately 12.9 liters per second per hectare for a 1:100 year storm event).

Reason: To prevent the increased risk of flooding, to improve and protect water quality, improve habitat and amenity, and ensure future maintenance of these.

23. Surface Water Drainage - Development shall not begin until a surface water drainage scheme for the site, based on sustainable drainage principles and an assessment of the hydrological and hydrogeological context of the development, has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The scheme shall subsequently be implemented in accordance with the approved details before the development is completed.

Reason: To prevent the increased risk of flooding, to improve and protect water quality, improve habitat and amenity, and ensure future maintenance of the surface water drainage system.

24. Details of ground levels - Prior to the commencement of the development details of the proposed finished ground levels of the site, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall then be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To ensure that the work is carried out at suitable levels in relation to the highway and adjoining land having regard to drainage, gradient of access, amenities of adjoining properties, and appearance of the

development. Also in order that the development complies with Policy DC61 of the LDF Development Control Policies Development Plan Document

25. Highway Alterations - The proposed alterations and additions to the Public Highway shall be submitted in detail for approval prior to the commencement of the development.

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

26. Highway Licence - The necessary agreement, notice and/or licence to enable the proposed alterations to the Public Highway shall be entered into prior to the commencement of the development.

Reason: To ensure the interests of the travelling public and are maintained and comply with policies of the Core Strategy and Development Control Policies, namely CP10, CP17 and DC61.

27. Road Safety Audit (RSA) The changes to the access junction on Noak Hill Road should be subjected to the 4-stage full road safety audit procedure as defined in HD 19/03 of the Design Manual for Roads & Bridges and recommendations reasonably dealt with. A Stage 2 RSA must take place prior to commencement of development.

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

28. Site Waste Management – The development hereby approved shall be carried out in accordance with the submitted Site Waste Management Plan received on 27 October 2011 unless otherwise submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety and sustainable development practices.

29. Sub-station Noise – The houses hereby permitted shall be so constructed as to provide sound insulation of 45 DnT,w + Ctr dB (minimum value) against airborne noise and the flats shall be so constructed as to provide sound insulation of 45 DnT,w + Ctr dB (minimum value) against airborne noise and 62 L'nT,w dB (maximum values) against impact noise to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To prevent noise nuisance to adjoining properties in accordance with the recommendations of Planning Policy Guidance Note 24 'Planning and Noise'

INFORMATIVES

1. The applicant is advised that four additional private fire hydrants will be required by the London Fire Brigade (Water Office).
2. In order to discharge condition 22, the Environment Agency requires the following information to be provided:
 - A) A clearly labelled drainage layout plan showing pipe networks and any attenuation ponds and drainage storage tanks. This plan should show any pipe 'node numbers' that have been referred to in network calculations, indicate any primary and secondary attenuation features and it should also show invert and cover levels of manholes.
 - B) Confirmation of the critical storm duration.
 - C) Where on site attenuation is achieved through attenuation ponds or tanks, calculations showing the volume of these are also required.
 - D) Where an outfall discharge control device is to be used such as a hydrobrake or twin orifice, this should be shown on the plan with the rate of discharge clearly stated.
 - E) Calculations should demonstrate how the system operates during a 1 in 100 year critical duration storm event. If overland flooding occurs in this event, a plan should also be submitted detailing the location of overland flow paths.
3. The applicant is advised that 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. The Highway Authority requests that these comments are passed to the applicant. Any proposals which involve building over the public highway as managed by the London Borough of Havering, will require a licence and the applicant must contact StreetCare, Traffic & Engineering on 01708 433750 to commence the Submission/ Licence Approval process.
4. The developer, their representatives and contractors are advised that this permission does not discharge the requirements under 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) required during the construction of the development.
5. In aiming to satisfy condition 10 above, the applicant should seek the advice of the Borough Crime Prevention Design Advisor. He can be contacted through either via the London Borough of Havering Planning Control Service or Romford Police Station, 19 Main Road, Romford, Essex, RM1 3BJ.
6. The development of this site is likely to damage archaeological remains. An archaeological field evaluation will establish the extent and significance of

any surviving remains and enable the mitigation of the impact of the development to be planned as part of detailed planning consent.

7. Reason for Approval:

The proposal is considered to be in accordance with Policies CP1, CP4, CP9, CP10, CP15, CP17, CP18, DC2, DC3, DC7, DC20, DC30, DC32, DC33, DC34, DC36, DC40, DC48, DC49, DC50, DC51, DC52, DC53, DC55, DC58, DC59, DC60, DC61, DC62, DC63, DC67, DC70 and DC72 of the Local Development Framework (LDF) Core Strategy and Development Control Policies Development Plan Document. The provision of affordable housing while not in strict accordance with Policies CP 2 and DC6 is considered acceptable having regard to the viability assessment submitted by the applicant and the provision of shared equity units only is on balance considered to be acceptable as it would complement the existing and substantial provision locally of affordable rented units.

In addition, the proposal is considered to comply with Policy SSA2 of the Site Specific Allocations DPD, as well as the Residential Design Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), Designing Safer Places SPD, Protecting and Enhancing the Borough's Biodiversity SPD, Protection of Trees During Development SPD, Heritage SPD and Sustainable Design and Construction SPD.

The development is considered to accord with the provisions of PPS1, PPS3, PPS5, PPS9, PPS10, PPG13, PPS22, PPS23, PPG24 and PPS25 (Development and Flood Risk), as well as Policies 3.3, 3.4, 3.5, 3.6, 3.8, 3.9, 3.10, 3.11, 3.12, 3.13, 5.2, 5.3, 5.7, 5.12, 5.13, 5.16, 5.21, 6.1, 6.3, 6.9, 6.10, 6.13, 6.14, 7.3, 7.4, 7.6, 7.8, 7.14, 7.15, 7.19 and 8.2 of the London Plan. The proposal is considered to be consistent with Policies 3.9 and 3.12 of the London Plan, which requires the maximum reasonable amount of affordable housing to be sought. A development viability appraisal has been submitted with the application, justifying the amount of affordable housing provided.

Planning Obligations

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 site has an area of 03.22 hectares and is located on the south-eastern side of Noak Hill Road. To the immediate east of the site is a grassed area of open space, which has been used in the past (although not recently) as playing fields. Further east of this are residential properties in Hitchin Close and Sevenoaks Close, beyond which Noak Hill Road takes on a more rural character and is designated Green Belt land. West of the site is Noak Hill Road, which is generally characterised by residential development. There is a travellers site located on the western side of Straight Road close to the junction with Noak Hill Road. South of the site there are residential properties in Appleby Drive and Stephens Close. To its immediate south-western corner the site is adjoined by an electricity sub-station. Opposite the site, to the northern side of Noak Hill Road, is the former Broxhill Centre. This is a dilapidated, vacant three storey building, originally constructed as a school although more recently used as Council offices and for community purposes. There are existing sports facilities within the Broxhill site, including a bowls club. The Broxhill Centre is also situated within the Metropolitan Green Belt.
- 1.2 Levels across the site vary significantly. Generally the site rises to the south, gradually levelling off towards the southern boundary. There is also a fall in levels from the west to the east of the site. Neighbouring properties in Appleby Drive are sited on a lower level than the application site. The site is subject of a Tree Preservation Order (7/10), which principally protects a group of trees to the southern side of the site and individual trees to the northern and western site boundaries. There are a number of buildings within the site, ranging up to three storeys in height. The site was originally used for education purposes when first developed in the 1960's. More recently it has been used as Council offices. The buildings on the site are all vacant. There is extensive hard surfacing within the site, particularly to its north-west and western sides.
- 1.3 Vehicular access to the site is currently taken from Noak Hill Road. There is a mini-roundabout at the entrance to the site. The existing access is situated approximately 150m from the signal controlled junction of Noak Hill Road with Broxhill Road and Straight Road. There is an existing pedestrian footbridge spanning Noak Hill Road.
- 1.4 The site is allocated for development in the Site Specific Allocation Development Plan Document (DPD) and subject of Policy SSA2. The site has been removed from the Green Belt on the basis of the requirements of Policy SSA2.

2. Description of Proposal

- 2.1 The application proposes the removal of all existing buildings from the site. The existing footbridge across Noak Hill Road is also proposed to be removed and buildings on the site of the former Broxhill Centre, opposite the application site, will also be demolished under separate contractual arrangements.
- 2.2 The application proposes re-development of the site to create 144 new dwellings. The application relates principally to land on the western side of the Whitworth Centre site and is referred to within the application as Plot 1. The layout of the proposed development is designed so as not to preclude future development to the eastern side of the site.
- 2.3 The application proposes the retention of the existing site access from Noak Hill Road. The access would however be altered and the existing mini-roundabout modified to improve the junction with Noak Hill Road and improve visibility. A new pedestrian crossing is also proposed some 300m west of the site vehicular access across Noak Hill Road.
- 2.4 From the site entrance, the main access route will run in a southerly direction, with a spine road extending westwards from the main route across the centre of the site. There will be changes to the levels across the site from the current situation. Most notably, this will result in the finished floor level of the proposed houses fronting Appleby Drive being, on average, some 300mm to 500mm higher than current ground levels. Flanking the entrance to the site, it is proposed to construct two apartment blocks, each 2.5 storeys high, including accommodation within the roof. The blocks are generally of traditional design, finished externally with a combination of brick and white Marley Eternit Cedral Weatherboarding and tiled pitched roofs. Each block contains 12 units, some with balconies, and the remainder with access to communal amenity areas. The majority of the flats have two bedrooms. Parking for the flats is located within courtyards adjacent to the blocks, including some covered pergolas. Parking is provided at a ratio of one space per flat with a couple of visitor parking bays. A third apartment block is proposed at the western end of the site, fronting on to Straight Road. This takes a similar design approach to the other apartment blocks, although it is designed to turn the corner of the site from Straight Road on to Noak Hill Road. External materials are the same as for the other apartment blocks and parking is also provided in separate courtyards behind the block, at a ratio of one space per flat.
- 2.5 The remainder of development within the site is single family housing, ranging between 2, 3 and 4 bedrooms. The houses are a mix of architectural styles, although built on traditional lines, ranging between short terraces, semi-detached and linked semi's and detached housing. A number of the dwellings within the development front onto Straight Road and Noak Hill Road. In addition, the development includes short terraces of dwellings directly fronting on to Appleby Drive. The development proposes a range of different house types, having separate external materials,

detailing etc. The houses are almost all two storey, although they generally have steep roof pitches, which could potentially accommodate roof space accommodation in the future. There are 14 wheelchair accessible units within the development. External materials have been submitted and comprise multi red and buff coloured bricks and red roof tiles, with some units within the development finished with Marley Eternit Cedral Weatherboarding. Windows, fascias and soffits are proposed to be white uPVC with black rainwater goods.

- 2.6 In respect of parking arrangements, all of the dwellings have off street parking. Some dwellings have parking within the front curtilage, others have garages/carports to the side of the house enabling in-tandem parking. Additionally, some houses are provided with parking within rear or side courtyards, some with covered pergolas, such as plots 1-3, 18-20 etc. The houses fronting Appleby Drive will have parking spaces within the front curtilage accessed directly from Appleby Drive. The dwellings either have one or two parking spaces per unit (one space per unit is provided for each flat) giving a parking ratio of 1.45 spaces per unit across the development as a whole.
- 2.7 The development includes the retention of TPO trees to the southern side of the site, which will be maintained within an undeveloped, landscaped area. Two protected oak trees to the western side of the site will also be retained. A scheme of hard and soft landscaping is proposed throughout the site.
- 2.8 The application is accompanied by a suite of supporting documents including a planning statement, heritage statement, viability appraisal, arboricultural study, bat survey, contamination desk study, daylight/sunlight assessment, design and access statement, energy statement, flood risk assessment, noise assessment, sustainability statement and transport assessment and travel plan.

3. Relevant History

- 3.1 The site was originally developed as a secondary school but has subsequently been used as an adult education college and, more recently, as offices. The buildings on the site are now currently un-used.
- 3.2 Previous applications which are of specific relevance to the application:

Z0004.11 EIA screening opinion for demolition of the Whitworth Centre and residential development – EIA not required.

D0199.11 Determination whether prior approval is required for the demolition of the Whitworth Centre – Prior approval required and granted subject to conditions.

4. Consultations/Representations

4.1 The application has been advertised on site and in the local press as a major development and neighbour notification letters have also been sent to 725 local addresses. 13 letters of representation have been received objecting to the proposal on the following grounds:

- building was originally a grammar school – loss of schools and open space for housing is unacceptable
- where will children go to school or for recreational facilities
- should not be building on areas of open space
- site not large enough for amount of housing proposed
- proposal will add to parking difficulties in Appleby Drive and remove existing on street parking places
- Appleby Drive unsuitable for works traffic
- difficulties with refuse collection in Appleby Drive, should perhaps be a one way road
- new properties will create extra noise
- footpaths into Appleby Drive will create congestion areas and rat runs and be unsafe
- loss of light to properties in Appleby Drive and Stephens Close and loss of privacy through interlooking
- thought this was Green Belt land
- proposal will devalue property
- better public consultation should have been carried out
- loss of privacy
- increase in traffic, noise and fumes
- dangerous traffic conditions on Noak Hill Road would be increased
- smells will affect people's wellbeing
- should take care that green area does not become place for anti-social behaviour
- do not agree with Council's Site Specific Allocation policy and who was consulted on this?
- no need to build on the open space as does not form part of Borough's housing capacity target
- is local infrastructure sufficient?
- should retain a landscaped buffer zone instead of developing entire site to contribute to natural environment and bio-diversity.

4.2 English Heritage (GLAAS) advises that the proposal may affect remains of archaeological significance and should be subject of a condition requiring a programme of archaeological work to be undertaken.

4.3 The Borough Crime Prevention Design Advisor has met with the applicant to discuss areas of concern and the proposal has been revised to address these matters. On this basis no objections are raised to the development subject to conditions relating to community safety.

4.4 Environmental Health request conditions relating to land contamination, noise insulation and working hours if permission is granted.

- 4.5 Highways raise no objection to the proposals and are satisfied in principle with the proposed highway works. They require a minimum of 1.5 spaces average across the development and have requested a contribution of £144,000 towards highway improvements locally.
- 4.6 Thames Water have no objections to the impact on sewerage infrastructure.
- 4.7 The Fire Brigade (Water) require the installation of four additional hydrants.
- 4.8 The Fire Brigade (Access) has commented that the access to some plots does not appear to meet Building Regulations standards.
- 4.9 The Environment Agency objected to the originally submitted proposals on the basis that the Flood Risk Assessment was inadequate. Further discussions have taken place between the application and the Environment Agency and revised proposals have now been submitted. The Environment Agency has now confirmed that the revised proposals are acceptable.

5. Relevant Policies

5.1 National Planning Policy

PPS1 (Delivery Sustainable Development), Planning and climate Change (Supplement to PPS1), PPS3 (Housing), PPS5 (Planning for the Historic Environment), PPS9 (Biodiversity and Geological Conservation), PPS10 (Planning for Sustainable Waste Management), PPG13 (Transport), PPS22 (Renewable Energy), PPS23 (Planning and Pollution Control), PPG24 (Planning and Noise), PPS25 (Development and Flood Risk) are material planning considerations.

5.2 Regional Planning Policy

Policies 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), 6.14 (freight), 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.

There is also a range of Supplementary Planning Guidance to the London Plan.

5.3 Local Planning Policy

Policies CP1, CP2, CP4, CP9, CP10, CP15, CP17, CP18, DC2, DC3, DC6, DC7, DC20, DC30, DC32, DC33, DC34, DC36, DC40, DC48, DC49, DC50, DC51, DC52, DC53, DC55, DC58, DC59, DC60, DC61, DC62, DC63, DC67, DC70 and DC72 of the Local Development Framework (LDF) Core Strategy and Development Control Policies Development Plan Document (DPD) are material considerations.

Policy SSA2 of the Site Specific Allocations DPD is also a material consideration.

In addition, Residential Design Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), Designing Safer Places SPD, Protecting and Enhancing the Borough's Biodiversity SPD, Protection of Trees During Development SPD, Heritage SPD and Sustainable Design and Construction SPD are material considerations.

6. **Staff Comments**

6.1 The issues arising from this application are the principle of development, the density and layout of the new development and the impact of its design, scale and massing on the character and amenity of the locality, the quality of the proposed residential environment, parking and highway matters, the impact on local residential amenity, environmental issues, affordable housing and the impact on community infrastructure.

6.2 **Principle of Development**

6.2.1 The application site is identified within the Site Specific Allocations (SSA) DPD as a development site. Policy SSA2 refers specifically to the site. This policy treats both the site of the former Whitworth Centre and also the Broxhill Centre, which is situated on the northern side of Noak Hill Road, as a single development site. Although the application site was formerly within the Metropolitan Green Belt it was de-designated as part of the LDF process due to the developed nature of much of the site and the contribution it is able to make to housing delivery targets in the Borough. However, to avoid unchecked urban sprawl and the merging of green belt into neighbouring developed area the revised Green Belt boundary was drawn along Noak Hill Road, excluding the Whitworth Centre site. This enabled the existing quantum of development north of Noak Hill Road, to be transferred to south of Noak Hill Road but also enabled the re-provision of the playing field on the Whitworth Centre site as part of a new and improved public open space on the Broxhill Centre site.

6.2.2 The Broxhill Centre and Whitworth Centres sites are therefore treated as one SSA, with the public open space and park facilities on the Broxhill Centre required to be provided through cross subsidy from the redevelopment of the Whitworth Centre. The applicant is required, through separate contractual agreement with the Council, to demolish the existing

buildings on the Broxhill site and also to remove the existing footbridge over Noak Hill Road. The Council is committed to the works to the Broxhill site to provide enhanced leisure facilities.

- 6.2.3 By virtue of the SSA and the linked works to the Broxhill centre the proposal is considered to be acceptable in principle in land use terms. The proposal would contribute to the provision of housing within the Borough and therefore complies in principle with Policy CP1 of the LDF, the SSA and Policies 3.3. and 3.4 of the London Plan.
- 6.2.4 The former Whitworth centre building was originally constructed as a school in the 1960's, with various alterations since it was first built. Consideration has previously been given to the acceptability of demolition of the existing building under a related EIA screening opinion (Z004.11) and prior approval request for demolition (D0199.11) and loss of the buildings has been judged to be acceptable. Prior approval has also been given for the demolition of the former Broxhill centre buildings. The buildings on the application site are not considered to be of any significant architectural or historic value and redevelopment of the site is considered to be acceptable in principle. There are trees which will be lost from the site but those of most significant amenity value will be retained. There is, therefore, no objection to the principle of residential development on this site.

6.3 Density and Site Layout

- 6.3.1 With regard to Development Control Policy DC2, this site is outside the PTAL zone identified on the proposals map and therefore is classified as 'rest of the borough' where a density range of 30-50 units per hectare applies. The application site has an area of 03.22 hectares and proposes 144 new dwellings. This equates to a development density of 44.7 units per hectare and is within the range specified both in Policy DC2 and SSA2.
- 6.3.2 In addition to density requirements and the works to the Broxhill Centre, Policy SSA2 sets out the following criteria that new development is expected to achieve:
- In its design, layout and boundary treatment the residential development at the Whitworth Centre minimises its impact on the Green Belt to the north by using a lower building profile and achieves a more sympathetic boundary treatment than currently exists.
 - Pedestrian and cyclist links are provided through to Appleby Drive to enable convenient access to Harold Hill District Centre.
- 6.3.3 The development proposes a mix of houses and flats and provides units ranging from 1 to 4 bedrooms, with the majority of the units providing family housing. This complies in principle with the aims of Policy DC2 in respect of dwelling mix. Internal unit sizes comply with Policy 3.5 of the London Plan.

- 6.3.4 In respect of site layout, the application proposes a relatively conventional arrangement with a central access road running southwards from the principal access on Noak Hill Road and a spine road extending westwards through the development from which cul-de-sacs and parking areas lead off. The layout of the site is considered to be acceptable in principle and to lead to a reasonably spacious arrangement of the dwellings. The units to the Noak Hill Road and Straight Road frontage of the development are set back from the site boundaries within landscaped settings, which is considered to accord with the requirements of Policy SSA2 in terms of respecting the proximity of the development to the Green Belt and the quality of the boundary treatment.
- 6.3.5 The principal access to the development is from Noak Hill Road, where the current site access is situated. This is considered acceptable in principle from a layout perspective. The development proposes a flatted block, 2.5 storeys high, on either side of the principal access to the development. In terms of forming a 'gateway' into the development this is considered to be acceptable. Issues relating to the scale, massing and design of the flats will be addressed elsewhere in this report. The remainder of the development is principally family housing, although there is an additional flatted block to the western side of the site. In layout terms, Staff consider the arrangements of the buildings to be acceptable, with a reasonable degree of spaciousness from the site boundaries, commensurate with surroundings. The dwellings to the north and south facing boundaries are outward facing, providing a strong active frontage to the development and, in particular, creating a streetscape to the northern side of Appleby Drive.
- 6.3.6 Each of the dwellings has access to private, screened amenity space of adequate size, which is considered to meet the requirements of the Residential Design SPD. The flatted units are set within landscaped settings, which are considered to be acceptable. Some of the flats have external balconies, although the architects have elected not to provide all flats with balconies for aesthetic reasons and also because the flats face onto heavily trafficked road (Straight Road and Noak Hill Road). The development includes a landscaped area, where a number of TPO trees have been retained, but no designated children's play facilities. Staff consider, on balance, this to be acceptable as the development will facilitate the provision of enhanced sports and leisure facilities on the Broxhill Road Centre to the north of the site which will adequately compensate for an absence of communal play facilities within the development itself.
- 6.3.7 One of the key objectives of Policy SSA2 is to ensure pedestrian and cyclist links through the site, giving access to the proposed sports facilities to the north and through to Appleby Drive and local amenities to the south. The development provides three points of access through the site from Appleby Drive and will include the provision of a new pedestrian crossing across Noak Hill Road. Staff therefore consider the proposal responds well to the requirement for connectivity between the site and surrounding facilities and complies with Policies DC33 and 34 as well as Policies 6.9 and 6.10 of the London Plan.

6.3.8 Although Staff are aware of the concerns of local residents regarding the potential for anti-social behaviour, particularly around the landscaped area on the southern side of the site, the advice of the Borough Crime Prevention Design Advisor has been sought and the proposals have been revised to accord with the advice given, including to make the proposed parking courtyards safer by ensuring they benefit from natural surveillance and restricted access. Staff are satisfied that all 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.

6.3.9 It is noted that the layout of the development does rely to some extent on the provision of rear parking courtyards. Whilst it is acknowledged that this is not always preferable to parking within the curtilage of residential dwellings, Staff remain satisfied that this element of the proposals responds positively to issues raised by the Borough Crime Prevention Design Advisor and will operate acceptably in the future.

6.3.10 Detailed proposals for the hard and soft landscaping of the site and ongoing maintenance have been submitted with the application. In respect of hard surfacing the main road and parking areas will be finished with asphalt with the spine roads and cul-de-sacs surfaced with brindle block paving. Details/samples of the materials should be submitted through condition. In respect of soft landscaping, it should be noted that planting indicated on the development layout plan is largely indicative and does not entirely match that shown on the submitted landscaping drawings. Staff have based their consideration of soft landscaping on the specific landscaping drawings and sought advice from the Council's Trees and Landscaping Officer. The proposal seeks to largely maintain TPO trees within the site and the detailed landscaping proposals are considered to be acceptable. The development is therefore considered to accord with the Trees SPD and Policy DC60 of the LDF.

6.3.11 The development is designed to Lifetime Homes standard and 14 of 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.

6.4 Design and Visual Impact

6.4.1 The principal entrance to the site will be flanked by an apartment block either side of the access. Each building is roughly L-shaped, turning the corner into the site from Noak Hill Road. The apartment blocks have been designed with accommodation on three floors but with the upper floor accommodation within the roofspace, thereby giving the impression of a two and a half storey building. Staff have discussed the design of the entrance blocks at length with the scheme architects and are satisfied that the height of the buildings is the minimum that can be achieved, whilst still giving the entrance buildings sufficient scale to mark the principal entrance to the site.

The buildings exhibit a traditional design approach with tiled roofs and a brick and weatherboarded external finish and a curved glazed balcony design. Staff are satisfied that the scale and massing of the entrance buildings and their design and external appearance will give a suitably high quality appearance to the development in the streetscene and will acceptably complement the character of the nearby Green Belt.

- 6.4.2 There is one other flatted block within the development, which is situated on the western side of the site on plot nos. 4-14. The design of this block has been revised in response to staff concerns about the appearance of the block, its inward facing appearance and shortage of private amenity space for occupiers. The revised plans have re-designed the building with a central weatherboarded section flanked by two, brick built subservient wings. Additional detail has been provided to the front elevation by way of metal Juliette balconies. Glazed balconies have been added to the inward facing elevations of the building. Staff are now satisfied that this element of the proposed development will have an acceptable impact in the streetscene.
- 6.4.3 The remainder of the proposed development comprises a range of family housing, of 2, 3 and 4 bedrooms. The development includes a number of different house types, although there are also design variations, within each type. However, they are all of a traditional design, constructed predominantly of red or buff coloured brick externally with red or grey tiles. A number of dwellings within the development (27) are finished externally with weather boarding rather than external brick.
- 6.4.4 The proposed dwellings are predominantly two storey, although many have a steep roof pitch, which would potentially enable accommodation to be provided in the roofspace in the future. The dwellings within the development are considered to be acceptable in terms of scale and massing, although it is acknowledged that they appear somewhat tall, despite their two storey nature, owing to the steepness of the roof pitch. Staff have applied judgement to the issue of whether the height and design of the dwellings is acceptable, particularly in the Appleby Drive streetscene, where their height in comparison to existing houses is accentuated by a change in ground levels. It is considered however that the development will, by nature of the number of units proposed, create its own character, such that the units will be compatible with those around it within the development site and need not necessarily fully reflect the height of surrounding buildings.
- 6.4.5 The proposed development is considered to be acceptable in terms of scale and massing and will create residential units of sufficient variety in design and appearance.
- 6.4.6 Details of boundary treatment have been submitted with the application. These details are considered acceptable in principle and should be secured through conditions.

6.5 Impact on Amenity

- 6.5.1 The nearest residential properties to the development are those in Appleby Drive and Stephens Close. A number of concerns have been raised by residents in these roads in respect of the proposed development.
- 6.5.2 The development proposes short terraces of houses which face on to Appleby Drive. The facing distance between these houses and existing dwellings in Appleby Drive is in the region of 22m, which is not an uncommon relationship in suburban areas and is not therefore judged to result in a material loss of privacy or amenity to existing residents. It is acknowledged that the proposed houses are tall and also on higher ground than houses on the south side of Appleby Drive. However, given the separation distance and the position of the new housing to the north it is not considered any material loss of light or visual intrusion would occur.
- 6.5.3 The proposed houses facing Appleby Drive are indicated to have a finished floor level that is some 0.5 m than the street level on the opposite side of the road, increasing to some 1m higher than the opposite street level as the terrace moves further westwards. This difference is not insignificant, particularly as the existing houses on the south side of Appleby Drive are, in turn, lower than street level due to the slope of the ground. Staff have considered whether this differential in levels would result in material harm to neighbouring residential amenity by way of interlooking or loss of privacy but are satisfied that given the face to face distance of some 15m across a public highway that this would not be a materially unacceptable relationship. It is noted that proposed floor level details are only preliminary at this stage, subject to further site investigation works, and it is therefore recommended that the matter of proposed levels be subject to a condition so that this can be controlled in the future.
- 6.5.4 Houses in Stephens Close, particularly nos. 1-7 are closer to the application site and are also situated on lower ground level than the site. However, at present, no development is proposed directly in front of these houses. The nearest relationship is between the house on plot 179 and no.1 Stephens Close. The house on plot 179 has a south facing front elevation but is not directly opposite no.1 Stephens Close and it is not considered it would give rise to material loss of privacy, nor due to its position to the north of Stephens Close, would it result in material loss of light.
- 6.5.5 It is acknowledged that residents have raised concerns regarding the impact of the development on traffic and particularly parking in Appleby Drive. It is accepted many residents park on street on the north side of Appleby Drive, where there are presently no parking restrictions and some of this on street parking capacity would be lost due to the driveways of the proposed new dwellings. Also, the majority of new dwellings fronting Appleby Drive would be 3 bed houses but with only one parking space per dwelling.
- 6.5.6 Staff have considered whether this constitutes sufficient grounds to refuse the application but conclude that it is not. This is based on the fact that

parking provision for the development as a whole is within the required level of 1-1.5 spaces per unit set out in Policy SSA2, that this is public highway where there is no established right of parking and that there are still areas where on street parking could take place (for example outside the proposed landscaped area in front of the Appleby Drive greensward). It is noted that some existing residents already have off street parking and furthermore that prospective occupiers of the dwellings would be aware of the parking situation when deciding whether to purchase one of the properties. Having regard to all of these factors, in particular the fact that the amount of parking complies with the requirement of Policy SSA2, Staff conclude refusal on these grounds could not be supported.

6.5.7 Given that the development proposals only extend to the western side of the Whitworth Centre site and playing fields, the development proposed is not considered to materially impact on residents to the east of the application site. There are no residential properties immediately north of the site and the traveller site to the western side of Straight Road is sufficiently far from the site not to be materially affected. The nearest properties to the south-west of the site in Straight Road and Appleby Drive are sufficiently separated from the application site that no material harm to amenity is considered to result.

6.5.8 Staff have also given consideration to the living environment for future occupiers of the development, in particular proposed plot 1, which is situated adjacent to an existing electricity sub-station. The sub-station is enclosed by a high brick wall, some 4.8m, which would dominate a large part of the rear garden of the proposed dwelling. The proposals have been revised to address this issue as far as possible, by moving the dwellings on plots 1-3 further towards the western site boundary. This results in a marginally less dominant impact on the rear of the property to plot 1. Staff consider that the resultant living environment would not be materially unacceptable and that this would essentially be an issue for a prospective purchaser to take into consideration. A condition relating to sound insulation requirements for the construction of the new development is recommended to ensure that noise from the sub-station does not materially harm the amenity of occupiers of the adjacent plot.

6.6 Environmental Issues

6.6.1 The application site is located in Flood Zone 1. A Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) has been submitted with the application and includes measures for sustainable water run off (SUDS). In principle this accords with LDF Policy DC49 and Policies 5.12 and 5.13 of the London Plan. The Environment Agency has confirmed there are no objections to the development but have requested planning conditions.

6.6.2 A land contamination desk top and site investigation study have been carried out. A condition is recommended in respect of land contamination issues.

- 6.6.3 The proposal is not considered to give rise to any significant noise issues subject to conditions required by Environmental Health.
- 6.6.4 An energy strategy and sustainability statement have been submitted with the application. The energy strategy indicates that the development will at a minimum meet Code for Sustainable Homes Level 3 with a reduction in emissions achieved to meet Code Level 4. It is recommended that the aims of these statements be secured by condition. This will also accord with Policies DC50 and DC51 of the LDF and Policies 5.2, 5.3 and 5.7 of the London Plan.
- 6.6.5 An Ecological Scoping Survey and Biodiversity Statement has been submitted with the application. A walkover of the site has been undertaken and does not indicate the presence of any rare or protected species, including the presence of bats. The report does make recommendations relating to the impact of development on nesting birds and bats and opportunities for bio-diversity enhancement. It is therefore recommended that a condition be imposed requesting details of how the measures recommended in the report will be achieved.
- 6.6.6 English Heritage (GLAAS) advise that the proposal may affect remains of archaeological significance and should be subject of a condition requiring a programme of archaeological work to be undertaken. This will accord with Policy DC70 of the LDF and Policy 7.8 of the London Plan.

6.7 Parking and Highway Issues

- 6.7.1 The application proposes a total of 209 parking spaces, which equates to some 1.45 spaces per unit. This is within the range identified in Policy SSA2 (1-1.5 spaces per dwelling) as acceptable. The site has a PTAL rating of 1 and Highways have indicated that a minimum parking ratio of 1.5 spaces per unit would be preferred. Of the spaces within the development, the flatted accommodation (35 units) has one parking space per unit; the remaining dwellings within the development have either one or two parking spaces per unit, creating the overall ratio of 1.45 spaces average per dwelling. Staff consider the parking spaces to be acceptably laid out within the site and to be adequate to serve the proposed development. Whilst the amount of parking is not consistent with the Council's policies set out in Policy DC2, it is consistent with the London Plan (Policy 6.13 and the Mayor's draft Housing SPG) and the Site Specific Allocation for the development and accords with PPS3. A travel plan will form part of the development and will enable opportunities for more sustainable forms of travel to be implemented. Cycle parking can be required by condition to ensure it complies with LDF standards.
- 6.7.2 In terms of impact on road capacity and junctions Highways have no objections to the proposals. Highways are satisfied with regard to data relating to trip generation and capacity and acknowledge that this is an opportunity to improve the capacity and safety of junctions. The proposed new access roundabout is considered to be acceptable from a Highways

perspective. There is a requirement for a new pedestrian crossing on Noak Hill Road. This is however proposed to be provided through a separate contractual obligation as part of the land sale.

- 6.7.3 Highways have advised that a contribution of £144,000, to be secured through Section 106 agreement, is required in connection with the development. This is an addition to the provision of a pedestrian crossing which the developer is required to provide owing to the proposed removal of the footbridge. The contribution would be used for improvements to road junctions in the vicinity of the site, such as Straight Road and Lower Bedfords Road, and reflects proposals currently being looked at through Transport for London schemes.
- 6.7.4 A refuse collection strategy has been submitted with the application. The details are acceptable in principle. However, it is considered that a condition will still be required securing details of refuse storage facilities. Additional fire hydrants have been requested by the Fire Brigade and concerns raised about access to some of the units. The applicant has confirmed that these concerns have been discussed with the Fire Brigade and proposals revised to respond to their comments. The Fire Brigade will be consulted on the revised proposals and Members will be advised of any issues raised.

6.8 Affordable Housing

- 6.8.1 The application provides a total of 144 units, of which it is proposed that 22 will be provided as affordable housing (15%). These 22 units will comprise 20 no. 2 bed apartments and 2 no. 1 bed apartments and are proposed to be provided as Shared Equity homes for sale. The Affordable Housing Statement submitted with the application indicates that this will address issues of local need and help to counteract the imbalance of social rented housing in this part of the Borough.
- 6.8.2 A viability appraisal has been submitted with the application to demonstrate the amount of affordable housing provision which can be supported by the development. The viability appraisal has been independently assessed and concludes that, based on the agreed purchase price for the land, the applicants could not be expected to provide additional affordable housing beyond that proposed.
- 6.8.3 Housing raised concerns that the affordable housing type, which is proposed under a specific model used by the developer (the "WHI" model) is not a traditional shared ownership model and questioned whether this would provide truly affordable housing to Borough residents. The independent appraisal of the viability statement indicates that if a traditional shared ownership model were used instead of the WHI model proposed, this would further reduce the viability of the scheme by approximately £559,662. As the scheme, as currently proposed, produces a deficit of some £1, 987, 851 it is not considered viable to further request that the developers revise the proposed model of shared ownership. The proposal

is considered to provide a form of shared ownership housing that is recognised by PPS3 and Staff acknowledge that the proposal does enable a more balanced socio-economic mix than is traditionally the case in this part of Harold Hill. Staff therefore consider that the proposal does not conflict with planning policy and is further justified through the viability appraisal submitted with the application.

6.9 Education

- 6.9.1 The proposed development is considered to result in additional demand for both primary and secondary school places locally and Education have requested a maximum contribution of £1,509, 526.01 to meet the cost of the additional places.
- 6.9.2 In respect of the viability of the development, the appraisal submitted with the application proposes a contribution of £6,049 per unit, totalling £871,056 in contributions. Given that Highways have also requested a contribution of £144,000 it is clear that the amount offered by way of S106 contributions is substantially below that required for education and highway purposes combined.
- 6.9.3 Following an independent review of the viability appraisal, Staff consider that it has been demonstrated that the development cannot support an increase in Section 106 payments above that proposed. Staff therefore recommend that a maximum S106 contribution of £871,056 be sought through the development to be apportioned between the requirements of Highways and Education. Staff request that authority be delegated to the Head of Service to negotiate and agree with the relevant departments how the highway and education contributions shall be apportioned

7. Conclusion

- 7.1 The proposed residential development on the site is acceptable in principle. The design and layout of the proposed development is considered to be in keeping with the character and amenity of the locality and to provide a suitably high quality living environment. The design, scale, bulk and massing of the proposed buildings is considered to be acceptable and the detailed scheme to accord with the criteria in Policy SSA2. There is judged to be no material harm to neighbouring residential amenity arising from the proposals and the application makes acceptable provision for landscaping, sustainability and for environmental protection. The proposal is considered to be acceptable in respect of parking and highways issues.
- 7.2 The proposal makes provision for 15% of the units to be provided as affordable housing, which falls below that required by Policy DC6 of the LDF and London Plan policies. However, the applicant has submitted a viability assessment to justify the amount of affordable to be provided as required by Policy DC6 and the London Plan. The viability assessment has also been provided to justify the amount of Section 106 contributions arising from the development and independently appraised and verified.

7.3 The viability appraisal submitted with the application is considered to justify the proposed amount and model of affordable housing proposed and the amount of Section 106 contributions offered. The proposal is therefore judged to be acceptable, subject to a legal agreement and conditions and it is recommended that planning permission is granted.

IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

Financial implications and risks:

The application site comprises land which has been disposed of by the Council.

Legal implications and risks:

Legal resources will be required to prepare and complete 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 and includes the provision of an element of affordable housing, thus contributing to the provision of mixed and balanced communities.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Application forms, plans and supporting statements received 27 October 2011 and revised plans received 20 January, 27 February and 2 March 2012.