



Havering
LONDON BOROUGH

**Strategic Planning
Committee**

27th February 2020

Application Reference:

P0498.19

Location:

22 – 44 North Street, Romford

Ward

Romford Town

Description:

Demolition of existing buildings on site and erection of a four to six storey development comprising 46 residential units and 340sqm flexible commercial floor space at ground floor (Use Classes A1, A2, A3, B1(a) and D1), plus associated plant space, bin storage, cycle parking and external landscaping, including disabled parking

Case Officer:

William Allwood

Reason for Report to Committee:

The application is a Major proposal, and is considered a significant development, with heritage impacts.

- 1.1 The redevelopment of the site for residential development with ground floor commercial uses within the Romford Town Centre is acceptable in principle.
- 1.2 The application is for the redevelopment of a two storey block of commercial units backing onto the Mews and the church yard to St Edward the Confessor's Church – Grade II* listed building; the application site is also within the Romford Town Conservation Area. The proposal is for the Demolition of existing buildings on site and erection of a four to six storey development comprising 46 residential units (30 x 1 bed, 12 x 2 bed and 4 x 3 bed) and 340sqm flexible commercial floor space at ground floor (Use Classes A1, A2, A3, B1 (a) and D1), plus associated plant space, bin storage, cycle parking and external landscaping, including disabled parking
- 1.3 The application is submitted as a full application, providing details of the layout, form, scale and the various uses across the proposed development. The proposed density is within policy range and the layout is considered to be satisfactory and capable of providing a high quality development.
- 1.4 The proposed height of the apartment blocks at up to 6 storeys is considered appropriate in context for this part of North Street.
- 1.5 Members may recall considering the pre-application as part of a consultation exercise held at Strategic Planning Committee on the 08th November 2018. At that time, the initial proposed scheme ranged in height from 6 to 12 storeys, providing 95 residential units, and approximately 347 sq. m of commercial floor space. The initial scheme proposed 62 private and 33 affordable residential units.
- 1.6 Issues and comments following the meeting of the 08th November 2018 raised by Members of Strategic Planning Committee are included within the body of this Report.
- 1.7 Further, the pre-application enquiry was referred to the independent Quality Review Panel (QRP) on the 04th February 2019. A summary of the QRP comments are included within this Report.
- 1.8 Finally, a revised pre-application proposal scheme ranged in height from 6 to 9 storeys, providing 77 residential units, and approximately 382 sq. m of commercial floor space. Again, issues and comments following the meeting of the 07th February 2019 raised by Members of Strategic Planning Committee are included within the body of this Report.
- 1.9 The current scheme has now reduced the height of the scheme to six and four storeys, and on balance, is considered now to protect the setting of the Grade II* listed Church and Church Yard, and would preserve the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.
- 1.10 The recommended conditions would secure future policy compliance by the applicant at the site, and ensure any unacceptable development impacts are mitigated.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 That the Committee resolve to GRANT planning permission subject to conditions, to include key matters as set out below and the prior completion of a legal agreement pursuant to Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) and all other enabling powers to secure the planning obligations at paragraph 2.2 below:
- 2.2 That the Assistant Head of Planning is delegated authority to negotiate any subsequent legal agreement including that:
- a. Controlled Parking Zone contribution sum of £5,152 or such other figure as is approved by the Council: Indexed
 - b. Carbon offset contribution sum of £56,700.68 or such other figure as approved by the Council: Indexed
 - c. To provide training and recruitment scheme for the local workforce during construction period, in accordance with London Plan policy.
 - d. To provide affordable housing in accordance with a scheme of implementation so that the overall level of affordable housing (by habitable rooms) is in accordance with the agreed Financial Viability position.
 - e. Affordable Housing Review Mechanisms: early, and late stage reviews (any surplus shared 60:40 in favour of London Borough Havering) in accordance with the Mayor of London's Affordable Housing and Viability SPG (2017)
 - f. To implement or provide financial contribution to provision of environmental improvements to The Mews as shown on the plans
 - g. Prevention of occupiers from obtaining on-street parking permits.
- All contribution sums shall include interest to the due date of expenditure and all contribution sums to be subject to indexation from the date of completion of the Section 106 agreement to the date of receipt by the Council.
 - The Developer/Owner to pay the Council's reasonable legal costs associated with the Legal Agreement prior to the completion of the agreement irrespective of whether the agreement is completed.
 - Payment of the appropriate planning obligations monitoring fee prior to the completion of the agreement.
- 2.3 That the Assistant Director of Planning is delegated authority to issue the planning permission and impose conditions and informatives to secure the following matters

Conditions

1. Full application – commencement in 3-years
2. Accordance with plans
3. Details of Materials
4. Car club management
5. Details of Commercial Units
6. Parking allocation and management plan
7. Details of site levels
8. Hard and Soft Landscaping
9. Details of refuse and recycling storage
10. Details of cycle storage
11. Hours of construction
12. Noise – new plant
13. Noise Insulation (specific)
14. Contamination – site investigation and remediation
15. Contamination – if contamination subsequently discovered
16. Electric charging points
17. Construction methodology
18. Construction Logistics and Deliveries/ Servicing Plan
19. Air Quality – construction machinery
20. Air Quality – demolition/construction dust control
21. Air Quality – low nitrogen oxide boilers
22. Details of boundaries
23. Details of surfacing materials
24. Car parking to be provided and retained
25. Pedestrian visibility splays
26. Vehicle access to be provided
27. Wheel washing facilities during construction
28. Details of drainage strategy, layout and SUDS
29. Details of secure by design
30. Secure by Design accreditation to be obtained
31. Water efficiency
32. Accessible and Adaptable Dwellings
33. Archaeological investigation prior to commencement
34. Bat/bird boxes to be provided

Informatives

1. Planning Obligations

2. Statement pursuant to Article 31 of the Development Management Procedure Order
3. Fee for condition submissions
4. Changes to public highway
5. Highway legislation
6. Temporary use of the highway
7. Surface water management
8. Community safety
9. Street naming/numbering
10. Protected species - bats
11. Protected species
12. Crime and disorder
13. Thames Water comments
14. Letter boxes

2.4 In terms of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), the development will be liable to pay CIL when the development is built. In this regard, the London Mayoral CIL2 charging rate is £25 per sq. m. for all development, and the Havering CIL for this part of the Borough (introduced on the 01st September 2019) is £125 per sq. m for residential development, and £50 per sq. m for the any retail use.

2.5 It is therefore anticipated that the Mayoral CIL will be in the order of £102,325 and the Havering CIL is £486,125 subject to indexation and any relief for affordable housing.

3 PROPOSAL AND LOCATION DETAILS

Proposal

3.1 The application is submitted as a full application and is accompanied by a series of supporting documents, and has recently been subject to amendments to the scheme for the demolition of existing buildings on site and erection of a four to six storey development comprising 46 residential units (30 x 1 bed, 12 x 2 bed and 4 x 3 bed) within 2 no. separate blocks at six and four storey's in height. The proposal provides for 2no. Duplex family affordable housing units, which results in a 7.1% affordable contribution by habitable room. 5no. of the units are wheelchair accessible to meet the 10% requirements of the London Plan 2016, and Building Regulations requirement M4 (3). The scheme also incorporates an element of commercial floor space (340 sq. m), with a loading bay, 5no. (including visitor, wheelchair accessible and Car Club spaces), together with 84no. residential cycle spaces located either end of the building(s).

3.2 The proposed residential development mix would be as follows:

Unit Split	Number of Units	% Units
1 Bed 1 Person	5	10.9
1 Bed 2 Person	25	54.3

2 Bed 3 Person	8	17.4
2 Bed 4 Person	4	8.7
3 Bed 5 Person	4	8.7
Total	46	100
Floorspace (m² GEA)		
Commercial	340	

3.3 In terms of the disposition of the various uses throughout the building, the LPA advise the following:

Ground Floor

- 4no. 3-bedroom, 5 persons Duplex units with external amenity areas fronting onto the Mews, with access to the residential cores both from North Street and the corner of The Mews and the passageway
- Parking areas and commercial loading bay facing The Mews
- Commercial and retail units fronting North Street and the passageway between The Mews and North Street
- Cycle store for 80no. spaces
- Refuse areas

First Floor

- Upper floors to the 4no. Duplex units, with recessed balconies facing the Mews
- 1no. one –bedroom, one person unit with recessed balconies
- 5no. one –bedroom, two persons unit with recessed balconies
- Plant room

Second and Third Floors

- 2no. one –bedroom, one person units with recessed balconies per floor
- 6no. one –bedroom, two persons units with recessed balconies per floor
- 2no. two –bedroom, three persons units with recessed balconies per floor
- 1no. two –bedroom, four persons unit with recessed balconies per floor

Fourth Floor

- 4no. one –bedroom, two persons unit with recessed balconies
- 2no. two –bedroom, three persons unit with recessed balconies
- 1no. two –bedroom, four persons unit with recessed balconies
- Roof terrace measuring 274 sq. m, which provides a mixture of hard and soft landscaping, play space and outdoor furniture
- Lift overrun and plant

Fifth Floor

- 4no. one –bedroom, two persons unit with recessed balconies
- 2no. two –bedroom, three persons unit with recessed balconies
- 1no. two –bedroom, four persons unit with recessed balconies

3.4 The proposed buildings would be flat roofed and appear as three main elements, each finished in contrasting brickwork.

Site and Surroundings

3.5 The proposed site is located on the north-eastern side of North Street midway between the cross roads with the Market Place/High Street, and the roundabout on the ring road. The current building comprises a two-storey block of commercial units backing onto the Mews and the churchyard to St Edward the Confessor's Church. On the opposite side of North Street is the 8-storey Rubicon Court mixed use block together with the unfinished frame of a redevelopment of 23 – 55 North Street. A nightclub is located at first floor level.

3.6 To the north on the same side of North Street up to the roundabout is the podium development of North House, comprising a single storey plinth with a 12-storey office block. The site is located wholly within the Romford Conservation Area; St. Edward the Confessor Church - a Grade II* listed building - is located to the south east of the site. The site is highly accessible to public transport and other services; it is 500 metres (12 minutes' walk) to the railway station and has a PTAL of 6a.

Planning History

3.7 The following planning decisions are relevant to the application:

- Various applications relating to the night club use
- In 2015, planning permission was refused on the southern part of the site at 22 – 28 North Street The demolition of 4 shops and offices over and the erection of an 8 storey mixed development with 4 No ground floor shops (A1 and A3), 28 flats above (24 No 2 Bed and 4 no 1 bed) together with private balconies and terraces, communal storage, roof mounted photo-voltaic cells, bulkhead lighting to adjacent pavements, associated pavement improvements and improvements to the rear facade of 30-44 North Street (reference P1528.13)

3.8 That application was refused for the following reasons:

- Given the piecemeal nature of the development, and the loss of existing buildings which positively contribute to the conservation area, the setting of Grade II* listed church and wider street scene, the replacement scheme by way of its significant height, bulk, and massing would result in significant harm to heritage assets and incongruous to the established character locally

- The proposed residential access was considered substandard being located in a back-street location, lacking legibility to pedestrians, would contribute to an unacceptable standard of residential accommodation
- The proposed development failed to delivered appropriate planning obligations

4 CONSULTATION RESPONSE

- 4.1 The views of the Planning Service are expressed in the MATERIAL PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS section below.
- 4.2 The following were consulted regarding the application; further, the consultees have been advised of the amended proposals to reduce the height of the building to six and four storeys, and any further comments will be reported to Strategic Planning Committee:
- 4.3 British Pipelines Agency - No objections
- 4.4 Thames Water – No objections, subject to informatives about surface water drainage, underground waste water assets and public sewers
- 4.5 Metropolitan Police (Designing Out Crime) – Requested conditions regarding designing out crime
- 4.6 LBH, Environmental Protection (Noise and Vibration) – No objections, subject to necessary mitigation works
- 4.7 LBH, Environmental Protection (Contamination) – No objections, subject to conditions, remediation and necessary mitigation works
- 4.8 LBH, Environmental Protection (Air Quality) – No objections, subject to conditions
- 4.9 LBH Waste and Recycling – No objections to the delivery of refuse storage and collection for the residential element; a separate commercial waste collection contract will be required for the proposed businesses
- 4.10 LBH School Organisation – No objections, subject to appropriate CIL education contributions
- 4.11 LBH Flood & Rivers Management Officer – No objections in principal, subject to condition
- 4.12 Inspector of Historic Buildings and Areas, Historic England – NOTE: These comments relate to the application as originally submitted. Historic England welcomes the reduction in height of the proposed development at 22- 44 North Street. However, we maintain that some harm would result from these proposals. It will be for your Council to consider the harm we have identified within the context of the policies set out in the attached pre-application advice letter in coming to a decision. Whilst Historic England has a remit to comment on historic environment issues at a national level, you should also take account of the comments provided by your Historic Buildings Consultant, who will be providing more detailed advice on the impacts on heritage assets at a local

level. These comments relate to the proposal as submitted (part 9/part 6 storey). Historic England have been advised of the amended proposals to reduce the scale of the building to six and four storeys, but it is not expected that they would respond. The views of the Council's Historic Buildings Consultant are incorporated in the main body of the report (paragraphs 6.14 to 6.25).

- 4.13 Greater London Archaeological Advisory Service, Historic England – No objections, subject to conditions
- 4.14 London Fire Brigade – Confirm that it will be not be necessary to install any additional fire hydrants
- 4.15 LBH Highways – No objections, subject to conditions on cycle storage, highway works and vehicle cleansing, a legal agreement to secure restrictions on parking permits and informatives on changes to the public highway and surface water management
- 4.16 Cadent Gas Ltd. – advise that they have operational gas apparatus within the applicant site boundary and therefore an informative will be added to any planning approval

5 LOCAL REPRESENTATION

- 5.1 A total of 151 neighbouring residential and commercial properties were notified about the application and invited to comment. The application has been publicised by way of site notice displayed in the vicinity of the application site. The application has also been publicised in the local press. Further, neighbouring properties and Ward Members have been reconsulted, following the recent receipt of amended plans to reduce the height of the building to six and four storeys. Any further comments will be reported to SPC.

15 No. of individual responses, both in terms of support and objections from local residents:

Representations – Support

- An excellent idea; there is a shortage of housing and profitable retail and leisure space
- Good bit of regeneration for North Street. More opportunities to get on the housing ladder. Looks good. Happy with scheme
- Will improve North Street visually

Representations – Object

- Unacceptable bulk height and mass which will visually impact on setting of nearby church and church yard, historic crossroads , golden lion pub and conservation area
- The loss of existing businesses will not help the local economy
- Lack of consultation at the pre-application stage
- Impact upon infrastructure including GPs and dentists

- The proposed demolition and rebuild is not in the interest of the local community and will devastate the local business.
- Impacts upon biodiversity
- Romford Civic Society, originally made the following representations:
 - Objects strongly to this application on the following grounds:
 - It is a fragrant breach of planning policy, proposing the demolition of a building identified as making a positive contribution to Romford Conservation Area in the borough's Conservation Area Appraisal for Romford Conservation Area and policy is clear that buildings which are identified as making a positive contribution to a conservation area should not be demolished.
 - The proposal would also be detrimental to the setting of the Golden Lion Inn, and to views in the location of the High Street/ North Street/the Market. Further, the proposal would be detrimental to the Conservation Area
 - The proposal contains an imbalance between one bedroom and two and three bedroom properties, and therefore not meeting housing need
 - Does not meet London Plan policy in seeking that residential developments be zero carbon emission rated
- The Civic Society have also made further comment in January 2020, where they reiterate their concerns over the scheme
- Councillor Judith Holt (Councillor Holt is the Member Champion for the Historic Environment and Romford Town Ward Member), advised the following:
 - The smallest corner block is just about acceptable, the larger two blocks are too high, the wrong colours and simply not sympathetic with St. Edward's Church and the churchyard. In addition, the view of the church is scarcely better and I have concerns about the lack of parking for the development.

6 MATERIAL PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

6.1 The main planning issues raised by the application that the committee must consider are:

- Principle of Development
- Strategic Planning Committee Feedback/ Quality Review Panel Responses
- Density/Site Layout
- Impact upon the setting of heritage assets, including the Grade II* listed church, the Grade I listed Golden Lion Public House, locally listed buildings and the character and appearance of the Romford Conservation Area
- Impact on Amenity
- Highway/Parking
- Affordable Housing/Mix and Viability
- School Places and Other Contributions
- Sustainability and Energy

Principal of Development

- 6.2 In terms of national planning policies, the National Planning Policy Framework 2019 (NPPF) sets out the overarching roles that the planning system ought to play, including a set of core land-use planning principles that should underpin decision-taking, one of those principles being:

“Planning decisions should promote an effective use of land in meeting the need for homes.” Para 117

“Planning decisions should give substantial weight to the value of using suitable brownfield land within settlements for homes.” Para 118

- 6.3 Policies within the London Plan seek to increase and optimise housing in London, in particular Policy 3.3 on ‘Increasing Housing Supply’ and Policy 3.4 on ‘Optimising Housing Potential’.
- 6.4 Policy CP1 of the LDF on ‘Housing Supply’ expresses the need for a minimum of 535 new homes to be built in Havering each year through prioritising the development of brownfield land and ensuring it is used efficiently. Table 3.1 of the London Plan supersedes the above target and increases it to a minimum ten-year target for Havering (2015-2025) of 11,701 new homes or 1,170 new homes each year. Policy 3 in the draft Havering Local Plan sets a target of delivering 17,550 homes over the 15-year plan period. Ensuring an adequate housing supply to meet local and sub-regional housing need is important in making Havering a place where people want to live and where local people are able to stay and prosper.
- 6.5 The aspiration for a residential-led redevelopment seeking to regenerate this part of Romford Town Centre is supported.
- 6.6 In view of the above, the Local Planning Authority raise no in principle objection to a residential-led development coming forward on this, in accordance with the policies cited above.

Strategic Planning Committee (SPC) Feedback – November 2018

- 6.7 Members of the Strategic Planning Committee may recall providing feedback to the Pre-Application scheme at 22 - 44 North Street Romford on the 08th November 2018. At that time, the scheme ranged in height from six to twelve storeys, and provided for 95 residential units, and approximately 373 sq. m of commercial floor space. In this regard, Members raised the following issues:
- Whether comparison to buildings nearby which are outside of the Conservation Area is disingenuous
 - What the justification is for the proposed height, why do high?
 - Density of scheme. Why so high and dense?
 - Consultation with the Church. What consultation has been undertaken? This should include the Civic Society
 - The principle of the car club was welcomed
 - The developer was invited to engage in the Romford Masterplan process

Havering Quality Review Panel – February 2019

6.8 On the 04th February 2019, the independent London Borough of Havering Quality Review Panel met to discuss the proposal at pre-application stage. At this time the proposal was for a part 9, part 6 storey building providing 77 dwellings and commercial on the ground floor. The conclusions of the QRP were summarised as follows:

- The panel recognises that the scheme's context is challenging, sitting within a fragile and historic part of Romford's centre that has been degraded over a long period. There is a duty to seek to make a positive contribution the conservation area here, not simply to do no harm.
- Critical to the success of the scheme will be getting the ground floor layout and uses right and improving the quality of the environment in The Mews to make an attractive link to the churchyard, central Romford's only significant green space.
- The panel is concerned that the heights and massing proposed will have a negative impact on key views within Romford, notably from the Market Place towards the church and from the crossroads northwards along North Street.
- Given the sensitivity of the site, the panel feels that the scheme should as far as possible preserve the existing scale within the conservation area. The panel is also unconvinced by the case for creating three distinct elements along North Street, differing in height, brick colour, and façade alignment.
- While the work to assess the local architectural character is appreciated, the panel feels that currently the character of the elevations presented reflects the 'New London Vernacular' rather than anything distinctive to Romford and it urges the design team to continue to finesse the architectural expression of the scheme, to respond more specifically to its context.
- The panel is also concerned by the high proportion of single aspect residential units within the scheme and would like to see this revisited. Finally, the panel feels that the quality of the amenity space proposed, including the green rooftop, has not yet reached an adequate standard.

Strategic Planning Committee (SPC) Feedback – February 2019

6.9 Further, Members of the Strategic Planning Committee may recall providing feedback to the Pre-Application scheme at 22 - 44 North Street Romford on the 07th February 2019. At that time, the revised scheme ranged in height from six to nine storeys, providing 77 residential units, and approximately 382 sq. m of commercial floor space. In this regard, Members raised the following issues:

- Height reduction welcomed.
- Affordable Housing: need to understand the basis of the offer and the trade-offs being made (height vs. unit numbers vs. viability, HO choice of words)
- Parking: need to understand the basis the car parking proposals in more detail. What is the anticipated level of demand for parking?
- The submission should demonstrate why the proposals would not dominate the Church or the Market Place

- Quality of tree planting and public realm to the rear of the site is really important

Density/Site Layout

6.10 As advised, the proposed scheme has been revised to take account of comments raised by the Quality Review Panel, Members of the Strategic Planning Committee and Officers of the Council.

6.11 To summarise, the changes between the submitted scheme are as follows :

- Height – the revised substitution scheme is four to six stories in height rather than six to nine as originally submitted.
- Balconies – the original submission scheme included recessed balconies along North Street and projecting balconies along The Mews, while the substitution scheme features only recessed balconies
- Mix – due to the loss of area on a typical floor brought about by the switch to recessed balconies, as well as the reduction in height, the mix of dwelling sizes has changed slightly. Whereas the original submission scheme included 63.5% 1 bed, 31.1% 2 bed and 5.4% 3 bed homes, the revised scheme has 65.2% 1 bed, 26.1% 2 bed and 8.7% 3 bed homes.
- Number of dwellings – the reduction in height has resulted in a loss of dwellings, from 74 in the original submission scheme down to 46 in the revised substitution scheme.
- Density – with the reduction in dwellings, the density has similarly fallen from 1150 HR/Ha to 762 HR/Ha.

6.12 The comparison between original and revised elevations in the context of North Street show how clearly the reduction in height changes the relationships between the proposed building and the neighbouring buildings. It is similar to or lower than buildings on the opposite side of the churchyard, and half the height of North House.

6.13 The general layout plan of the proposed buildings would fall in accordance with Policy DC61 of the London Borough of Havering LDF 2008 and the LB of Havering Residential Design Supplementary Planning Document 2010.

Impact upon the setting of heritage assets, including the Grade II* listed church, and the character and appearance of the Romford Conservation Area

Site Context

6.14 The site of the proposal is within the Romford Conservation Area, which is included within Historic England's Heritage at Risk Register having been identified as being in 'Very Bad' condition. Section 72 of the Planning (Listed

Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 states that in the exercise, with respect to any buildings or other land in a conservation area, special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area. At present the site is occupied by Nos.22-44 (evens) North Street - two adjoining 1920/30s blocks of two-storey, constructed of brick with retail units at ground floor. Within the adopted Conservation Area Appraisal, Nos.22-26 North Street are identified as making a positive contribution to the area and Nos.28-44 as making a neutral contribution. The two blocks are representative of their period in Romford's retail history and display a number of good details. The buildings are at present under occupied and have been subjected to a number of unfavourable alterations to both the front and rear. Whilst regrettable, it is accepted that the demolition of these blocks may be acceptable in principle subject to a high-quality scheme, which will enhance this part of the Conservation Area, which has been subjected to numerous poor-quality redevelopment schemes during the late twentieth and earlier twenty-first centuries.

- 6.15 Directly to the east of the site is the Grade II* Parish Church of St Edward the Confessor built 1849-50 by John Johnson, replacing an earlier Chapel consecrated in 1410. Section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 states that in considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses. The church is the only Grade II* listed building within the Conservation Area and is an important landmark, demarcating within the wider landscape what has been the settlements core since Romford received permission to hold a market in 1247. It is important to recognise the value of differing scales when considering views of the church from longer-distance views, which denote the position of the medieval core within a wider landscape to more intimate views from within the Conservation Area. The most significant surviving viewpoints of the church are considered to be those intimate views from the churchyards to the front and rear, a range of short-distance views from Market Place and North Street together with medium distance views from the outer peripheries of Market Place, North Street, High Street and South Street as well as longer distance views from South Street and on principle routes towards the core from beyond the ring road.
- 6.16 Immediately to the north of the Church is the associated churchyard which was laid out c.1950 as a public garden – this involved relocating headstones to the edges of the churchyard with some being used to form a path. The Churchyard's character is of a private and tranquil space, which is in sharp contrast to that of the Market Place. As the only 'greenspace', this area makes an invaluable contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area as well providing a positive setting of the Grade II* Church. The value of this space is further recognised by its inclusion with the London Parks and Gardens Trust's Inventory of Historic Green Spaces.
- 6.17 To the south of the application site is the historic crossroads where Market Place, North Street, South Street and High Street converge. When designated

in 1968, the special interest of the Conservation Area was defined as “a group of old buildings at the western end of the Market Place and the site of an ancient crossroads” ... and that ... “although composed of buildings of widely differing styles, the group is unified by its domestic scale and its relationship to and enclosure of the west end of the Market Place”. Church House, The Lamb Public House and The Golden Lion Public House are Grade II listed (HE Ref: 1079903, 1183878 and 1358531 respectively) whilst The Prudential Building, Lloyds Bank and The Co-Op Bank are included on Havering Local List. The historic crossroads is a highly significant area within the Conservation Area.

- 6.18 North House, to the north of the application site, is an eleven-storey late twentieth century office block above a single-storey podium providing retail accommodation. This building makes a negative contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and visually intrudes into the setting of the Grade II* listed church and graveyard. Directly opposite the application site is an eight-storey residential block known as Rubicon Court, adjoined to the north by a partially constructed part four, part eight and part sixteen storey building (though works have halted for a prolonged period and it is considered that an earlier planning permission granted at appeal for a building up to 16 storeys in height has lapsed).
- 6.19 Whilst Nos.22-26 North Street make a positive contribution to the area, they were not considered important or integral to the character or appearance of the Conservation Area as a whole. As such, it was assessed, the harm would be ‘less than substantial’ rather than ‘substantial’ in accordance with National Planning Policy.
- 6.20 It is considered that the proposal displays architectural merit, with the detailing of the southernmost block picking up on brick detailing found on late nineteenth and early twentieth century elements within the Conservation Area. The treatment of the building at street level also displays a number of high-quality details informed by context though in a contemporary manner. The applicant has also sought to use the development as an opportunity for place making with a chamfer on the southernmost block to allow for glimpsed views of the church from North Street and promote this as a pedestrian route to The Mews. To the rear, the applicant has extended their proposal beyond the red-line boundary to enhance the wider street scape. It is understood that this would be achieved through a financial contribution to the local planning authority. With regards to landscaping and public realm, the use of active frontages to The Mews and contribution to streetscape is considered favourably and there would certainly be improvements upon what exists at present.
- 6.21 The key concerns highlighted previously in relation to design and conservation matters were regarding the height of the blocks and the presence of projecting balconies.
- 6.22 The transition from the neighbouring three-storey block to six stories or then onwards to nine was considered too severe whilst the two nine-storey blocks would have read as a single mass despite the use of different bricks. Due to the closeness of this viewpoint, there would have been little differentiation in

perceived mass of these nine-storey blocks from the churchyard when compared to the eleven-storey North House – this was demonstrated by the verified views. The proposed would have had profound negative impact upon the quality of this space by greatly increasing the prominence of tall urban built forms into the graveyard, consequentially giving a strong sense of urban enclosure and overlooking. The use of projecting balconies to the rear also cluttered the elevation and accentuated the buildings prominence and the sense of being overlooked within a previously and tranquil private space of the graveyard.

- 6.23 As a result of feedback from officers on the originally submitted proposal, the applicant has reduced the height of the proposal from six and nine stories to four and six, together with removing projecting balconies. The reduction in height has had a significant impact upon the visual prominence of the proposal with a much more successful transition in massing from the neighbouring three-storey block to a high point of six stories which is markedly differentiated from North House. Whilst there would remain a sense of urban enclosure and overlooking, the reduced massing together with the omission of projecting balconies has lessened this impact. One negative impact, which remains unchanged, is the loss of a key-view from North Street, across the application site, to the spire of the Parish Church of St Edward the Confessor.

Conclusion

- 6.24 The proposed scheme would undoubtedly cause a degree of harm to the conservation area by contributing to a sense of urban enclosure and overlooking to the churchyard together with the loss of a positive contributor - though this is significantly less than would arise with the previous iteration. There would also be harm to the Grade II* Church through the loss of a key view and impact upon the character of its churchyard setting. With regards to the National Planning Policy Framework (2019), the level of harm to these heritage assets in each instance is considered less than substantial. As such, the local planning authority should weigh this harm against any public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use (Para.196).
- 6.25 It is acknowledged that the proposal is of architectural merit and in design terms represents a high-quality intervention within the Conservation Area, which has in recent years been subjected to numerous low-quality modern interventions. There are also a number of heritage benefits associated with the scheme including streetscape enhancements beyond the red-line boundary.

Impact on Amenity

- 6.26 The distances to neighbouring properties all far exceed recommended minimum separation distances with the closest distance to north side of New Road. This indicates that there will be no impact on the privacy of existing residences. The layouts of the flats and the distances between the block to adjoining residential content at Rubicon Court have been designed to maximise on privacy and avoid overlooking issues.

- 6.27 The proposed residential units have been designed to comply with the National Minimum Internal Space Standards and the Mayor of London's Housing Design Standards as set out in the Housing Supplementary Planning Guidance (March 2016). 90% of the proposed units comply with Building Regulation M4 (2) for accessible and adaptable dwellings, and 10% comply with Building Regulation M4 (3) for wheelchair user dwellings.
- 6.28 Officers have further reviewed the external space provided with the proposed development, and the revised plans show both private and communal amenity space for its occupants which appear to be sufficient and in accordance with the Residential Design Supplementary Planning Document Policy PG20 on Housing Design, and Policy DC61 of the London Borough of Havering LDF 2008.
- 6.29 Further, and from a crime design perspective, the proposal would present a layout that offers good natural surveillance to all public and private open space areas. The proposal would accord Policy 3.5 of the London Plan on Quality and Design of Housing Developments and Policy 7.1 on Lifetime neighbourhoods and Policy 7.3 on Designing Out Crime, as well as Policy DC63 of the LDF on Delivering Safer Places.
- 6.30 From a noise and disturbance perspective, the applicant has submitted a Noise Assessment, Contamination and Air Quality reports, which reaffirms that both residents from within and outside the proposal would not be affected by unacceptable levels of noise or air pollution arising from the development. The Councils Public Protection Officers have reviewed the submitted reports and concluded that the scheme (subject to conditions imposed) would be compliant with Policy DC52 on Air Quality, Policy DC55 on Noise and CP15 on Contaminated Land, subject to the introduction of appropriate planning conditions.
- 6.31 The LPA have reviewed the proposed waste storage areas catering the apartments and the ground floor commercial properties, which will be serviced via The Mews to the north and the service road. As it stands, there are no overriding concerns with this arrangement as scheme demonstrates a convenient, safe and accessible solution to waste collection in keeping to guidance within Policy DC40 of the LDF on Waste Recycling.

Highway/Parking

- 6.32 The application site within an area with PTAL of 6a (excellent accessibility), with good access to bus services and a 12 minute walk time to the Romford Train Station. 10% of the car parking spaces will be wheelchair accessible, which is in accordance with the provisions of London Plan 2016.
- 6.33 The Council is seeking to implement a Controlled Parking Zone near the proposed development site. The applicant has therefore developed an approach to car parking provision and management on the assumption that the proposed developments will need to be "self-sufficient" in respect of its car parking provision and it is envisaged that residents occupying the developments (save for blue badge holders) will not be eligible to apply for car parking permits within the CPZ.

- 6.34 In terms of affordable rent units, car parking spaces allocated to affordable units will be located in the proximity of these units and be specifically allocated for use by this tenure
- 6.30 The applicant has submitted a Transport Statement as part of this application and the Highways Authority have reviewed the document and consider the development acceptable from a highway perspective and unlikely to give rise to undue highway safety or efficiency implications in accordance with Policy DC32 The Road Network of the LDF.
- 6.31 The Council's Highways Engineer has further reviewed all other highways related matters such as access and parking and raises no objections subject to the imposition of conditions (covering pedestrian visibility, vehicle access and vehicle cleansing during construction), financial contribution to Controlled Parking Zone and limitation on future occupiers from obtaining any permits in any future zone.
- 6.32 The London Fire Brigade has raised no objection in principle.

Affordable Housing/Mix and Viability

- 6.33 Policy DC6 of the LDF 2008 and Policies 3.9, 3.11 and 3.12 of the London Plan 2016 seek to maximise affordable housing in major development proposals. The Mayor of London Supplementary Planning Guidance "Homes for Londoners" sets out that where developments propose 35% or more of the development to be affordable at an agreed tenure split, then the viability of the development need not be tested – in effect it is accepted that 35% or more is the maximum that can be achieved.
- 6.34 In this respect, the applicant has submitted a Financial Viability Appraisal, which has been independently assessed by specialists on behalf of the Local Planning Authority. The applicant's position is that proposal would not support the provision of affordable housing; the Council's own independent specialists have verified this position. However, paragraph 64 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2019 requires 10% affordable home ownership should be provided on site, regardless of the viability position. In this regard, the applicant is offering two, 3-bedroom 5 person's Duplex units as affordable housing; whilst this represents only 7.1% affordable units by habitable room, the Local Planning Authority agree with this approach given the agreed viability position.
- 6.35 However, and having reported the currently reported viability position, the Mayor of London *Affordable Housing and Viability* SPG 2017 seeks to maximise affordable housing delivery in the longer term and acknowledging the potential for significant changes in values in the housing market. Review mechanisms provide a reappraisal mechanism to ensure that maximum public benefit is secured over the period of a development and can encourage the build out of schemes. These mechanisms recognise the need to maximise affordable housing provision and address the economic uncertainties, which may arise over the lifetime of a development proposal. They allow increases in Section 106 contributions to reflect changes in the value of a development from the date of planning permission to specific stages of the development programme. Such approaches are intended to support effective and equitable implementation of

planning policy while also providing flexibility to address viability concerns such as those arising from market uncertainty.

- 6.36 Early reviews for Viability Tested Route schemes also consider market changes in Gross Development Value and build costs between the point of planning permission and the point of the review. The estimated Gross Development Value and build costs submitted as part of the original planning application will be compared against an updated scheme valuation and elemental cost plan. Viability Tested schemes should be subject to late reviews which will be applied once 75 per cent of homes are sold, or at a point agreed by the Local Planning Authority. The benefit of this approach is that the review can be based on values achieved and costs incurred. The review takes place prior to sale of the whole development to ensure that the review and any additional contribution arising from this are enforceable. The outcome of this review will typically be a financial contribution towards off-site affordable housing provision. Such Mayoral Review mechanisms will be secured by way of a Section 106 Agreement.

Drainage and Flood Risk

- 6.37 The proposal is for residential and commercial use within Flood Zone 1 as defined by the Environment Agency. The applicant addresses Drainage and Sustainable (SuDS) in the Planning Statement, and as no issue relating to flood risk was identified on site, and as the site is currently wholly development with no current SuDS, that the development would deliver a net improvement to surface water flood risk. In any event, the suggest entering into discussions with the Council during the determination of the planning application, should further SuDS measures be required, and suggest any SuDS measures could be specified through a condition.
- 6.38 The London Borough of Havering Flood and Water Manager agrees within this approach.

CIL and S106 Contributions

- 6.39 Policy DC72 of the LDF emphasises that in order to comply with the principles as set out in several of the Policies in the Plan, contributions may be sought and secured through a Planning Obligation. Policy 8.2 of the London Plan states that development proposals should address strategic as well as local priorities in planning obligations.
- 6.40 In this case, an Education contribution would be not sought should the planning permission be granted, as Havering CIL would cover school places funding. It is therefore anticipated that the Mayoral CIL will be in the order of £102,325 and the Havering CIL is £486,125 and this could cover educational provision arising out of the development.
- 6.41 Provision of the environmental improvements, either by the developer or through financial contribution, is considered necessary to provide an acceptable appearance and residential amenity to this current poor quality back of building environment.
- 6.42 Contribution to any future CPZ is also required given the limited parking provided for the proposed development.

Sustainability and Energy

- 6.43 To mitigate to climate change and minimise emissions of carbon dioxide, when considering planning applications the Mayor of London, in accordance with London Plan Policies 5.2 and 5.3, will assess the use of sustainable design and construction measures. Specifically, London Plan (2016) Policy 5.2 requires new residential buildings to achieve zero carbon standards by October 2016.
- 6.44 The proposal is accompanied by an Energy Statement. The reports outline an onsite reduction in carbon emissions by 35%, to include a photovoltaic strategy, which aims to further reduce CO₂ emissions across the entire site. In assessing the baseline energy demand and carbon dioxide emissions for the site, a financial contribution of £56,700.68 has been calculated as carbon emissions offset contribution in lieu of on-site carbon reduction measures. The development proposal, subject to contributions being sought would comply with Policy 5.2 of the London Plan.
- 6.45 The non-residential units have been designed to achieve BREEAM 'Very Good', in accordance with LBH Core Strategy and Development Control Policy DC49. London Plan (2016) Policy 5.15 requires new residential development to be designed so that mains water consumption is less than 105 litres per day per head and the proposed development would conform to this policy requirement.

Financial and Other Mitigation

- 6.46 The proposal would attract the following section 106 contributions:
- Sum of £5,152.00, or such other figure as is approved by the Council, towards CPZ in streets in the vicinity of the application site
 - Sum of £56,700.68 or such other figure as is approved by the Council, towards the Council's Carbon Offset Fund
 - To provide training and recruitment scheme for the local workforce during construction period, in accordance with London Plan policy.
 - To provide affordable housing in accordance with a scheme of implementation so that the overall level of affordable housing (by habitable rooms) is in accordance with the agreed Financial Viability position.
 - Affordable Housing Review Mechanisms: early, and late stage reviews (any surplus shared 60:40 in favour of London Borough Havering) in accordance with the Mayor of London's Affordable Housing and Viability SPG (2017)
 - Environmental Improvements contribution should the developer not be able to carry out the necessary works to The Mews
- 6.47 The proposal would also attract Mayoral Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and the London Borough of Havering CIL contributions to mitigate the impact of the development.
- 6.48 There is potential that the existing buildings may provide habitat for protected species. Otherwise there is no biodiversity interest in the site. Suitable conditions are recommended.

- 6.49 As advised within the Consultee Responses section of the Report, relevant Informatives would be appended.
- 6.50 Suitable planning conditions are recommended to ensure remediation of the site.

Conclusions

- 6.51 All other relevant policies and considerations have been taken into account. Planning permission should be granted subject to the conditions outlined above for the reasons set out above. The details of the decision are set out in the **RECOMMENDATION**.