



REGULATORY SERVICES COMMITTEE

15 November 2012

REPORT

Subject Heading:

**P1020.12 – 69 Oldchurch Road,
Romford**

**The demolition of existing warehouse
and office and the construction of 34
flats in two blocks with underground
parking and 2 semi-detached houses.**

(Application received 16 August 2012)

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Policy context:

Local Development Framework

Financial summary:

None

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

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

SUMMARY

This planning application relates to the demolition of an existing industrial building and a residential development of 34 flats and 2 houses. The planning issues include the principle of development, design and street scene impact, parking and highway matters, amenity issues, sustainability and affordable housing. These issues are set out in detail in the report below. Staff consider the proposal to be acceptable..

The application is recommended for approval subject to conditions and the applicant entering into a Section 106 Agreement.

RECOMMENDATIONS

That it be noted that proposed development is liable for the Mayor's Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) in accordance with London Plan Policy 8.3. The applicable fee is based on a combined internal gross floor area for the two dwellings and 34 flats of 3529m² minus the existing floor area to be demolished of 1846.16m², which equates to a total area of 1682.84m² and a Mayoral CIL payment of £33656.80.

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 8% of the units within the development as affordable housing in accordance with Policy DC6 of the LDF Development Control Policies Development Plan Document.
- Save for those holding blue badges restriction on residents of the development applying for parking permits within the local area.
- A financial contribution of £216,000 to be used towards infrastructure costs.
- All contribution sums shall include interest to the due date of expenditure and all contribution sums to be subject to indexation from the date of completion of the Section 106 agreement to the date of receipt by the Council.
- To pay the Council's reasonable legal costs in association with the preparation of a legal agreement irrespective of whether the legal agreement is completed.
- Payment of the appropriate planning obligation/s monitoring fee.

That staff be authorised to enter into a legal agreement to secure the above and upon completion of that agreement, and that the Committee delegate authority to the Head of Development and Building Control to grant planning permission subject to the conditions set out below PROVIDED THAT an independent economic viability assessment of the proposal commissioned by the Council confirms the appropriate level of affordable housing provision at 8% of the dwelling units and that should the assessment result in a different percentage of affordable housing provision that the proposal be remitted to a subsequent meeting of the Committee for further consideration and resolution. :

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

Reason:

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

2) Accordance with plans: The development hereby permitted shall not be carried out otherwise than in complete accordance with the approved plans, particulars and specifications.

Reason:

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

3) Parking standards: Before the building(s) hereby permitted is first occupied, provision shall be made for 34 No. off-street car parking spaces for use by the flats and 4 No. spaces for use by the 3-bed and 2-bed dwellings and thereafter this provision shall be made permanently available for use, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason:

To ensure that adequate car parking provision is made off street in the interests of highway safety.

4) Materials: Notwithstanding the details submitted, before any of the development hereby permitted is commenced, samples of all materials to be used in the external construction of the building(s) shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority and 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 comply with Policy DC61 of the Development Control Policies Development Plan Document.

5) 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 the 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 Development Control Policies Development Plan Document Policy DC61

6) Standard flank wall condition: Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995, no window or other opening (other than those shown on the submitted and approved plans,) shall be formed in the flank wall(s) of the building(s) hereby permitted, unless specific permission under the provisions of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended or otherwise replaced) 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, and in order that the development accords with Development Control Policies Development Plan Document Policy DC61.

7) 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, and in order that the development accords with the Development Control Policies Development Plan Document Policies DC61 and DC32 of the LDF.

8) 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.

9) 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 Development Control Policies Development Plan Document Policy DC61.

10) Construction Methodology Statement: Before development is commenced, a scheme shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority making provision for a Construction Method Statement to control the adverse impact of the development on the amenity of the public and nearby occupiers. The Construction Method statement shall include details of:

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

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

Reason:

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

11) Highways Licence Agreement: The necessary agreement, notice 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.

12) Secured by Design: Prior to the commencement of the development hereby permitted, details of the measures to be incorporated into the development demonstrating how 'Secured by Design' accreditation might be achieved shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details, and shall not be occupied or used until written confirmation of compliance with the agreed details has been submitted to and approved in writing by the LPA

Reason:

In the interest of creating safer, sustainable communities, reflecting guidance set out in PPS1, Policy 4B.6 of the London Plan, and Policies CP17 'Design' and DC63 'Delivering Safer Places' of the LBH LDF

13) 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

14) Ground 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;

- a) A Phase II (Site Investigation) Report as the Phase I Report which had already been submitted 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 sites 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 of two parts:

Part A – Remediation Statement 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.

15) Permitted Development rights: Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (Amendment) (No. 2) (England) Order 2008 Article 3, Schedule 2, Part 1, Classes A, B, C, D and E, which amends the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 (“the 1995 Order) no extensions, roof extensions, roof alterations or outbuildings shall take place unless 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 the interests of amenity and to enable the Local Planning Authority to retain control over future development, and in order that the development accords with Development Control Policies Development Plan Document Policy DC61.

16) Boundary Treatment: Prior to the commencement of the development hereby approved, details of all proposed walls, fences and boundary treatment shall be submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority. The boundary development shall then be carried out in accordance with the approved details and retained permanently thereafter to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority.

Reason:

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

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

Reason:

To prevent noise nuisance to adjoining properties.

18) Sustainable Homes Rating: 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 and the London Plan.

19) Renewable Energy System: 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 occupation of any part of the development.

Reason:

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

20) Site drainage: Details of the site drainage system shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority before the development commences.

Reason:

To prevent pollution of the water environment.

21) Lifetime Homes Standard: The new residential units hereby approved shall all be built to Lifetime Homes standards.

Reason:

In order to comply with the requirements of Policy DC7 of the LDF Development Control Policies Development Plan Document.

22) Archaeological work: No development shall take place until the applicant has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a written scheme for investigation which has been submitted by the applicant and approved by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall only take place in accordance with the detailed scheme pursuant to this condition. The archaeological works shall be carried out by a suitably qualified investigating body acceptable to the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In order to comply with the requirements of Policy DC67 of the LDF Development Control Policies Development Plan Document.

INFORMATIVES

1. Reason for Approval (assuming the independent assessment of viability of the proposed development confirms the provision of 8% of dwelling units affordable housing units being appropriate):

The proposed development is considered to be in accordance with the aims, objectives and provisions of policies CP1, CP2, CP9, CP10, CP17, DC2, DC3, DC6, DC7, DC32, DC33, DC34, DC35, DC36, DC40, DC50, DC51, DC55, DC61, DC63 and DC72 of the LDF Core Strategy and Development Control Policies Development Plan Document, Policies 3.3, 3.4, 3.5, 3.7, 3.8, 3.11, 6.9, 6.10, 6.13, 7.1, 7.2, 7.3, 7.4, 7.5, 7.6 and 8.3 of the London Plan and Section 6 and 7 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

Note: Following a change in government legislation a fee is now required when submitting details pursuant to the discharge of conditions, in order to comply with the Town and Country Planning (Fees for Applications and Deemed Applications) (Amendment) (England) Regulations, which came into force from 06.04.2008. A fee of £85 per request (or £25 where the related permission was for extending or altering a dwellinghouse) is needed.

2. 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.
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. 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 and Engineering on 01708 433750 to commence the Submission / Licence Approval process.
 4. The developer, their representatives and contractors are advised that planning 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. The applicant is advised that if construction materials are proposed to be kept on the highway during construction works then they will need to apply for a license from the Council.
 6. With regards to surface water drainage it is the responsibility of the developer to make proper provision for drainage to ground, water courses or a suitable sewer. In respect of surface water it is recommended that the applicant should ensure that storm flows are attenuated or regulated into the receiving public network through on or off site storage. When it is proposed to connect to a combined public sewer, the site drainage should be separate and combined at the final manhole nearest the boundary. Connections are not permitted for the removal of Ground Water. Where the developer proposes to discharge to a public sewer, prior approval from Thames Water Developer Services will be required. They can be contacted on 0845 850 2777.
 7. In aiming to satisfy Condition 12 the applicant should seek the advice of the Police Crime Prevention Design Advisor. The services of the local Police CPDA is available free of charge through Havering Development and Building Control or Romford Police Station, 19 Main Road, Romford, Essex, RM1 3BJ." It is the policy of the local planning authority to consult with the Borough CPDA in the discharging of community safety condition(s).

8. The development of this site is likely to damage archaeological remains. The applicant should therefore submit detailed proposals in the form of an archaeological project design. This design should be in accordance with the appropriate English Heritage guidelines.

REPORT DETAIL

1. Site Description

- 1.1 The application site is located to the southern side of Oldchurch Road and to the east of Oldchurch Rise. The site comprises two distinct parts, the first part fronts onto Oldchurch Road and lies between nos. 67 and 73. This part of the site is presently open and used for parking. The second part of the site comprises a larger rectangular parcel of land which runs to the rear of nos. 65 to 83 Oldchurch Road. This part of the site is occupied partly by a large warehouse building and partly by an area of hard surfacing.
- 1.2 To the south the application site is adjoined by a public car park with the Romford Ice Rink beyond. To the east the site is adjoined by Blade Court a flatted block of 42 units which fronts onto the roundabout of Oldchurch Road and Rom Valley Way. The northern boundary of the site adjoins the rear gardens of nos. 65 to 83 Oldchurch Road, which comprise two storey semi detached and terraced houses. To the west of the site on the opposite side of Oldchurch Rise, is Oldchurch Park and land associated with the Queens Hospital.

2. Description of Proposal

- 2.1 The application seeks planning permission for the demolition of the existing building on the site and its replacement with a residential development comprising 34 flats in two blocks and two semi-detached houses.
- 2.2 The proposal would comprise 9 no. one bedroom flats, 25 no. two bedroom flats and 1 no. three bedroom house and 1 no. two bedroom house. Access into the development would be taken from Oldchurch Rise. The development would provide parking at surface level and underground at a rate of 1.15 spaces per flat and two spaces per house with two visitor spaces.
- 2.3 The proposed flats would be provided in two separate blocks on the part of the site located to the rear of nos. 65 to 83 Oldchurch Road. Block A would provide 10 flats, with block B providing 24 flats. Block A would be situated adjacent to Oldchurch Rise in the western part of the site. The proposed block would measure approximately 24 metres in width by 21 metres in depth. The block would be of varying storey heights ranging from one to

three storeys. The single storey elements would have a maximum height of 3 metres, with the three storey elements having a maximum height of 8.5 metres. Each of the flats would have Juliet type balconies, predominantly within the southern elevation. The block would be finished with facing brickwork, render and weatherboarding. A distinctive pattern throughout the development is the addition of coloured vertical strip features.

- 2.4 Block B would be situated in the eastern part of the site adjacent to the car parking of the neighbouring Blade Court flatted block. The block would measure 35 metres in width by 26 metres in depth. The block would be of varying storey heights ranging from two stories to four stories. The two storey elements of the block would be 6 metres in height with the five storey element reaching a maximum height of 12 metres. Each of the flats would have Juliet type balconies, predominantly within the southern elevation. The block would be finished with facing brickwork, render and weatherboarding. The areas at the base of the proposed blocks would provide communal amenity space.
- 2.5 The proposed pair of semi detached houses would be provided fronting onto Oldchurch Road on the land between nos. 67 and 73. The houses would have conventional rear garden areas with surface car parking beyond. The proposed houses would measure 8.4 metres in width by 10.3 metres in depth, with a pitched roof over 5 metres in height to the eaves and 8.15 metres to the ridge. The proposed pair of houses would be connected to an existing terraced block, of similar design to the adjoining houses, with two bay window features to the front elevation. The proposed pair would therefore be seen as an extension to the terrace rather than a semi-detached pair of dwellings. The houses would be finished with facing brickwork and roof tiles.
- 2.6 This application follows a previous outline application which was approved but withdrawn due to a failure to sign the S106 agreement. The current proposal is slightly different from the previous submission in that the internal space has been arranged in a different way to provide for mainly 1-bed and 2-bed units as opposed to the previous scheme which included 3-bed units. Another change is the layout and design of the two semi-detached dwellings proposed. The applicant has also significantly reduced the affordable housing provision from 35% (13 units) to 8% (3 units).

3. Relevant History

- 3.1 P0586.09 - Outline application for demolition of existing warehouse and office, construction of 34 flats in two blocks with underground parking and two semi-detached houses - Approved but withdrawn due to the failure to complete a S106 agreement.
- 3.2 P1980.08 - Outline planning application for demolition of existing warehouse and office, construction of 35 flats in two blocks with underground parking and two semi-detached houses - Refused

4. Consultations/Representations

- 4.1 Notification letters were sent to 78 neighbouring properties and 1 letter of objection was received.
- 4.2 The main concerns relates to the overdevelopment of this part of the Borough and the increase in traffic congestion that it would bring about.
- 4.3 The Council's Environmental Health Service requested the part 2A condition to be added as the Desktop Study indicated that there are potential pollutant linkages present on the site. Environmental Health also requested a noise insulation and construction and delivery hours condition.
- 4.4 The Highway Authority has no objection to the proposals.
- 4.5 The Borough Crime Prevention Design Advisor did raise concerns regarding certain elements discussed with the applicant which is not reflected on the plans. A Secured by Design condition is requested to deal with any outstanding issues.
- 4.6 English Heritage requests a condition securing the implementation of a programme of archaeological works.

5. Relevant Policies

- 5.1 Policies CP1 (housing supply), CP2 (sustainable communities), CP9 (reducing the need to travel), CP10 (sustainable transport), CP17 (design), DC2 (housing mix and density), DC3 (housing design and layout), DC6 (affordable housing), DC7 (lifetime homes and mobility housing), DC32 (the road network), DC33 (car parking), DC34 (walking), DC35 (cycling), DC36 (servicing), DC40 (waste recycling), DC50 (sustainable design and construction), DC51 (renewable energy), DC55 (noise), DC61 (urban design), DC63 (crime) and DC72 (planning obligations) of the Local Development Framework Core Strategy and Development Control Policies Development Plan Documents and the Residential Extensions and Alterations Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), Draft Planning Obligations SPD and the Residential Design SPD are also relevant.
- 5.2 Policies 3.11 (Affordable Housing Targets), 3.3 (Increasing Housing Supply), 3.4 (Optimising Housing Potential), 3.5 (Quality and Design of Housing Developments), 3.7 (Large Residential Developments), 3.8 (Housing Choice), 6.9 (Cycling), 6.10 (Walking), 6.13 (Parking), 7.1 (Building London's Neighbourhoods and Communities), 7.2 (Inclusive Design), 7.3 (Designing out Crime), 7.4 (Local Character), 7.5 (Public Realm), 7.6 (Architecture) and 8.3 (Community Infrastructure Levy) of the London Plan (2011).
- 5.3 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) Section 6 "Delivering a wide Choice of Homes", and Section 7 "Requiring Good Design".

6. Staff Comments

6.1 This proposal is put before the Committee owing to the application site comprising more than two dwellings. The main issues to be considered by Members in this case are the principle of development, the site layout and amenity space, design/street scene issues, amenity implications, and parking and highways issues.

6.2 Principle of Development

6.2.1 The site lies outside the Metropolitan Green Belt, Employment Areas, Commercial Areas, Romford Town Centre and District and Local Centres. The principle of residential development is considered acceptable in land use terms and the provision of additional housing is consistent with the National Planning Policy Framework. The Council will generally require the redevelopment for housing of commercial sites which become available for development.

6.2.2 Policy 3.8 of the London Plan states that DPD policies should offer a range of housing choices, in terms of the mix of housing sizes and types, taking account of the housing requirements of different groups. Policy 3.5 states that Local Development Frameworks should incorporate minimum space standards. The Mayor has set these at 61m² for a 2-bed 3-person flat and 50m² for a 1-bed 2-person flat. The proposed flats are in line with these minimum guidelines and considered acceptable. For the two semi-detached houses the Mayor has set the minimum internal space standards at 83m² for a 2-bed 4-person dwelling and 96m² for a 3-bed 5-person dwelling. The proposed dwellings are in line with these minimum guidelines and considered acceptable.

6.2.4 Policy CP1 indicates that outside town centres and the Green Belt, priority will be made on all non-specifically designated land for housing. The majority of the site is presently occupied by a warehouse building. The site is located within a predominantly residential area, with the existing use of the land for commercial purposes being somewhat out of character. The proposal is therefore an opportunity to remove this use from a residential area and replace it with a land use more compatible with the surroundings. The proposal is therefore acceptable in principle and in accordance with Policy CP1 and policy 3.3 of the London Plan which seeks to increase London's housing supply.

6.2.5 As the site has a history of commercial use, it is likely that land contamination could be present. It is recommended that issues of land contamination be dealt with by condition in the event that planning permission is granted. Similarly issues of archaeology could also be dealt with via condition.

6.3 Density and Site Layout

- 6.3.1 The application site is ranked as being within a high Public Transport Accessibility Level Zone (PTAL 5-6), with the density recommendation being 165-275 units per hectare. The proposed development of 36 units represents a density of 107 units per hectare based on the red line site area or 121 units per hectare if the site area of the two proposed semi detached houses is deducted. This is clearly below the recommended density range but may not be unacceptable given the constrained nature and location of the site. Furthermore, the advised density ranges are one of number of criteria employed to assess the appropriateness of a proposal.
- 6.3.2 In terms of site layout, the proposed development has a lesser overall footprint than the existing industrial buildings. This enables the proposed blocks to be positioned further from the northern site boundary than the existing building. This, in turn, is considered to create a relatively spacious setting for the development with a separation distance of between 10.5 and 20 metres being created from the northern boundary. There is also the opportunity to provide landscaped areas around each of the flatted blocks and the access road. Staff therefore consider the development to have a reasonably spacious setting.
- 6.3.3 It should be recognised however that the site is situated in a high PTAL zone where the provision of amenity space is likely to be at a reduced level. The development provides a landscaped area of 700 square metres in addition to further areas of landscaping adjacent to the access road which provide setting for the proposed buildings. The amenity area is considered to be relatively spacious and is set out in conveniently useable form. Additionally there is some provision of external balconies within the development, which would add to the amenity provision. The site is situated adjacent to the entrance to Oldchurch Park, which would also contribute towards the amenity needs of future occupiers of the development. Staff consider the amenity space provision acceptable.
- 6.3.4 To the south the site is adjoined by a public car park with open space beyond which forms part of the Romford Ice Rink grounds. The ice rink site is Council owned and it is envisaged that the site may be redeveloped to provide a mixed use development of housing, a foodstore and a petrol filling station. Given the distance of separation between the proposed blocks and the ice rink site, it is not considered that the proposal would prejudice the redevelopment of this land.
- 6.3.5 The layout of the proposed blocks would include main entrance doors from the new access road, with level access and double width doors. In order to ensure that the proposal meets the provisions of Policy DC7 in respect of Lifetime Homes, a planning condition is recommended.

6.4 Design and Visual Impact

- 6.4.1 The proposal includes the construction of a pair of semi-detached houses on land between nos. 67 and 73 Oldchurch Road, fronting onto Oldchurch Road. The surrounding properties in this part of Oldchurch Road are two storey semi detached or terraced houses. Staff are of the view that the proposed pair of semi detached houses would be of a suitable form and external appearance. It is considered that the proposed houses would satisfactorily integrate into the street scene.
- 6.4.2 The proposed flatted blocks have been designed as a predominantly three and four storey development, although the visual impact of this is mitigated by the flat roof design and use of contrasting external materials. The proposed flatted blocks would, for the most part, be of greater height than the current industrial building on the site. However, the overall height of the blocks would not exceed that of the adjacent Blade Court, which is a five storey building. Blade Court has been designed in such a way to address the road junction at Rom Valley Way and follow the curvature of the roundabout. The proposed development is considered to be different to this development in that the site does not form a frontage location and, instead, amounts to a type of 'backland' development to the rear of existing houses. The proposed development would however be visible from Rom Valley Way across the open land to the front of the Ice Rink and from Oldchurch Rise. Block A is considered to be acceptable in terms of siting and design. Block B would comprise a predominantly four storey building. The block has been designed in such a way that it steps down in height to two storeys at the point closest to the rear of Blade Court and nos. 65 and 67 Oldchurch Road. Having regard to the design of the proposed blocks and the height of the adjacent Blade Court, the overall height and bulk of the proposed buildings is not considered to be materially out of scale and character with the surroundings.
- 6.4.3 The proposed development would be visible along Oldchurch Rise, which serves as a secondary access point to the Queens Hospital. Block A would be set back between 3 and 12 metres from the boundary of the site onto Oldchurch Rise, which mitigates its overall impact in the street scene. Staff are of the view that the proposal would result in an improved visual relationship to Oldchurch Rise which is presently characterised by the existing building of industrial appearance tight to the back edge of the footway.
- 6.4.4 In respect of the overall design and architectural style of the building, Staff consider that there is no distinctive architectural style in this part of Oldchurch Road. It is considered that the modern design of the development which consist of a mixture of different colours and types of materials would be acceptable in principle and would integrate with Blade Court and the Queens Hospital.

6.5 Impact on Amenity

- 6.5.1 To the north the site is backed on to by the rear gardens of dwellings in Oldchurch Road. In terms of bulk, visual impact and impact on light, the

proposed flatted blocks are judged to be sufficiently far from the site boundary not to result in significant harm to amenity. At the closest point, habitable room windows in block A would face the northern boundary at a distance of approximately 17 metres to the boundary and 30 metres back to back. In respect of block B, at the closest point, habitable room windows would face the northern boundary at a distance of 21 metres to the boundary and 31.5 metres back to back. Staff consider this to be an acceptable relationship in respect of issues of privacy.

6.5.2 The proposed development is considered to have an acceptable relationship with Blade Court, with a distance of 12 metres being achieved to the flank elevation of block B. At this point the building is two stories and gradually increases in height to a maximum of five stories. At the point where the building reaches four stories it would be at a distance of 21 metres from the main rear wall of Blade Court. In view of the distances of separation and the orientation of the proposed flatted blocks it is considered that no material harm to amenity would result.

6.5.3 Given the curved facade of block B some of the proposed window openings facing east would face towards the rear of Blade Court. These window openings would be separated by a distance of 23 metres at the closest point and be at an oblique angle which Staff consider would prevent significant inter-looking.

6.5.4 The depth of the proposed dwellings in relation to the adjacent houses is considered acceptable and would not result in an acceptable impact upon amenity.

6.6 Sustainability/Renewables

6.6.1 The proposed development aims to gain Code for Sustainable Homes Level 3, which is in accordance with Policy DC49. In the event that Members were minded to grant planning permission this could be secured by condition to ensure the development attains this standard.

6.6.2 It is indicated that predicted carbon dioxide emissions from the development could be reduced by 20% through the use of on-site renewable energy equipment. The development would therefore accord with the target set out in the London Plan. The Council's Energy Officer is satisfied with the proposal in respect of sustainability subject to suitable conditions. The proposal is therefore considered acceptable in this respect and conditions could be imposed to ensure the development demonstrates this level of reduction of CO₂ emissions is met.

6.6.3 Policy DC40 advises that planning permission will only be granted for developments where suitable waste and recycling storage facilities are provided. In this case the proposal would see the provision of suitable refuse storage enclosures which staff consider would allow convenient kerb side collection. In the event that Members are minded to grant planning

permission a condition requiring further details in this respect could be imposed.

6.7 Highways / Parking Issues

6.7.1 Access into the site would be taken via Oldchurch Rise, with the vehicular crossover being situated in the same position as currently. The proposed access road into the site would join two ramps, each serving the underground car parks. A turning area for larger vehicles would be provided within the centre of the site. The proposed turning and access arrangements are considered to be acceptable, and meet the access and servicing needs of the development.

6.7.2 The development proposes a total of 44 parking spaces, which is a ratio of 1.15 spaces per flat, two spaces per house and two visitor spaces. The application site is located on the outskirts of Romford Town Centre in an area which is identified for high density development (PTAL 5-6). In view of this the proposed parking provision is considered to be acceptable and would accord with the density matrix in Policy DC2. Future occupiers could also be restricted from applying for parking permits through S106 agreement. The proposal includes cycle storage provision to accord with Policy DC36 and this would encourage alternative means of transport. Staff consider, having regard to the package of measures proposed and the location of the site in relation to Romford Town Centre, that the parking provision is acceptable.

6.8 Affordable Housing

6.8.1 The proposal results in development for which an affordable housing provision is required in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework and the London Plan. Policies CP2 and DC6 set out a borough wide target of 50% of all new homes built in the borough to be affordable. The applicant has provided with this current application a financial appraisal which in the applicant's view justifies the provision of 8% (3 units) affordable housing within the scheme. Negotiations are still ongoing in respect of this issue between the applicant and the Council's Housing department. The Council has commissioned an independent economic viability assessment of that provided to the Council by the applicant and this is the reason behind the wording of the recommendation.

6.9 The Mayor's Community Infrastructure Levy

6.9.1 The proposed development is liable for the Mayor's Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) in accordance with London Plan Policy 8.3. The applicable fee is based on a combined internal gross floor area for the two dwellings and 34 flats of 3529m² minus the existing floor area to be demolished of 1846.16m², which equates to a total area of 1682.84m² and a Mayoral CIL payment of £33656.80.

6.10. Planning Obligations

6.10.1 In accordance with the Draft Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document a financial contribution of £6,000 per dwelling to be used towards infrastructure costs arising from the new development is required. This should be secured through a S106 Agreement for the amount of £216,000.

6.11 Other Issues

6.11.1 Policy DC63 requires new development to address safety and security in the design of new development. The proposal is considered acceptable in principle in this respect, subject to the imposition of conditions requested by the Borough Crime Prevention Design Advisor.

6.11.2 The site is in a location which may potentially affect the flight path of helicopters using the landing pad within the grounds of the adjacent Queens Hospital. The potential impact on the flight path is a material planning consideration and as such letters of consultation were previously sent for a similar planning application to the Queens Hospital, the London Air Ambulance, the Essex Air Ambulance and the National Air Traffic Services. No objections were raised by any of these parties at the time.

7. Conclusion

7.1 In conclusion, residential development on the site is considered to be acceptable in principle and would result in the removal of an existing commercial use. The proposal is considered to be acceptable in terms of scale, form, massing and visual impact. Staff are of the view that the proposal would have an acceptable relationship to adjoining properties and subject to a financial contribution towards infrastructure costs, would provide suitable amenity provision for future occupiers. The development is also considered to be acceptable in respect of parking and highway issues. At the time of writing this report issues in respect of affordable housing provision were still being negotiated. Subject to this matter being resolved, it is recommended that planning permission be granted.

IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

Financial implications and risks:

Financial contributions are required through a legal agreement

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 proposed dwellings would be constructed to meet the Lifetime Homes Standard which means that they would be easily adaptable in the future to meet the changing needs of occupiers.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Application forms and plans received on 16th August 2012.