

PART A

Item
Number

5B

Report of: **DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT SECTION HEAD**

Date of Committee	12th August 2010
Site address:	30 Westland Road, Watford, Herts, WD17 1QX
Reference Number :	10/00543/FUL
Description of Development:	Erection of a New, Twenty Nine Room HMO following the Demolition of the Existing Hotel
Applicant	Stoneblock UK Ltd
Date received:	7th June 2010
8wk date(minor):	2nd August 2010
Ward:	Central

SUMMARY

Full planning permission is sought for the erection of a twenty nine room HMO following the demolition of the existing hotel.

There is no objection in principle to the loss of the hotel. The site is within a residential area and in a sustainable location close to the town centre where higher density development comprising small units such as this are acceptable. A car-free development is also acceptable in this location. By reason of its scale, siting, design and materials, the building will respect its context and will have a positive impact on the character and appearance of the area.

The scheme is well designed for its context, in accordance with national and local policies, and, as a result, it will integrate well with neighbouring development.

The development will provide a substantial HMO without causing material harm to the amenities of neighbouring properties, the appearance or character of the surrounding area or the safety and free flow of traffic within the immediate vicinity. A Unilateral Undertaking has been completed to exclude the development from the Controlled Parking Zone. The development complies with the policies of the Watford District Plan 2000. Subject to the imposition of appropriate conditions, the Development Management Section Head recommends that planning permission be granted as set out in the report.

BACKGROUND

Site and surroundings

The application site comprises a roughly triangular shaped piece of land sited in a primarily residential area within the Central Ward of Watford. The site occupies an area of approximately 0.05 hectares and is bordered on two sides by residential properties and a highway to the third side. The site is not located within a Conservation Area and no part of either the application site or any adjoining site are subject to either a Local or Statutory Listing. The site is not subject to any further designations on the Proposals Map accompanying the Watford District Plan 2000 although the site is located within a Controlled Parking Zone.

The site itself is bordered to the west by No.24 Wellington Road and its rear garden area, although a section of this now appears to be accessed via the hardstanding surrounding the hotel. To the south lie the properties within Wellington Road. To the north is the road junction between Westland and Wellington Roads and to the east sits a further residential unit on the corner with Shady Lane.

The existing building on the site does not contribute positively to the character or appearance of the surrounding area. The site, where not covered by the building is laid to hardstanding, making its appearance hard and unwelcoming. The building itself draws influence from the surrounding vernacular, although it now appears slightly unkempt and does not make use of the full potential of the site. The site is located within Residential Character Zone 2A of the Watford Residential Design Guide Volume 1 where the emphasis is on late 19th to early 20th century buildings of a predominantly two storey nature. The street scene is urban with a strong sense of enclosure formed through defined and consistent building lines and small front boundary walls. Front gardens are small but provide some degree of defensible space to the public realm.

The surrounding area is characterised by two storey, terraced, Victorian houses. Typically, these are of yellow and red stock bricks with slate or concrete roof tiles. Many of the terraced houses on Westland Road to the north of the site and on Wellington Road to the east incorporate double height bay windows with gable features extending into the roof giving a strong vertical rhythm. This rhythm is extended through the consistently narrow plot widths to further add vertical emphasis. The houses on Westland Road to the south are smaller and plainer in appearance, with less decorative detailing. Other significant buildings in the vicinity include the Police Station, a large 4 storey concrete building, and Penny Court, a recent 3 storey red brick block of flats.

Planning permission has previously been approved under application reference 09/00781/FULM for the demolition of existing hotel and the erection of three studio flats, three one bedroom flats and six two bedroom flats with amenity garden and external works. This was granted by Development Control Committee on the 7th January 2010.

Proposed development

Planning permission is sought for the demolition of the existing hotel on the site and the erection of a three storey, twenty nine room HMO. The proposed building covers a larger footprint than the existing building. To the ground floor, ten bedrooms (all with ensuite facilities) are proposed along with three communal kitchens. To the first floor, a further ten bedrooms with ensuites a three communal kitchens are proposed. To the second floor, nine bedrooms and two communal kitchens are proposed.

No car parking is provided for the site; amenity space is to the rear and is in the form of communal open space, and a refuse, recycling and cycle storage area is also located at the rear of the site.

Planning history

09/00781/FULM - Demolition of existing hotel and erection of 3 studio flats, 3 one bed flats and 6 two bed flats with amenity garden and external works – Approved – 7th January 2010

Relevant policies

Planning Policy Statements and Guidance Notes

PPS1 Delivering Sustainable Development
PPS3 Planning and Housing
PPG13 Transport

Hertfordshire Structure Plan Review 1991-2011

No relevant policies.

Hertfordshire Waste Local Plan

No relevant policies.

Hertfordshire Minerals Local Plan

No relevant policies.

Watford District Plan 2000

- H2 Housing Need Structure Plan Requirements
- H5 Development on Previously Developed Land
- H7 Primarily Residential Areas
- H8 Residential Standards
- H11 Housing Mix
- H12 Housing Density Standards
- L8 Open Space Provision in Housing Development
- U1 Quality of Design
- U2 Design and Layout of Development
- U3 Integration of Character
- U6 Landscape Design
- T4 Transport and New Development
- T10 Cycle Parking Standards
- T21 Access and Servicing
- T22 Car Parking Standards
- T24 Residential Development
- IMR2 Planning Obligations

Supplementary Planning Document

Residential Design Guide, Volume 1 – Building New Homes was approved by the Council's Cabinet as a Supplementary Planning Document on 17 November 2008. It provides a robust set of design principles to assist in the creation and preservation of high quality residential environments in the Borough which will apply to proposals ranging from new individual dwellings to large-scale, mixed-use, town centre redevelopment schemes. The guide is a material consideration in the determination of planning applications and replaces the Council's existing

Supplementary Planning Guidance *SPG4 – Privacy Guidelines*, *SPG5 – Private Gardens*, *SPG8 – Extensions* and *SPG14 – Designing for Community Safety*.

Supplementary Planning Guidance

SPG 6 Internal Space Standards

CONSULTATIONS

Neighbour consultations

Letters were sent to 151 properties in Westland Road, Wellington Road, Franklin Road and Canterbury Road. Five responses have been received citing the following objections:

- Shared kitchens will create conflict
- Increase in noise and disturbance
- Is this the correct location for an HMO?
- Additional car parking
- Loss of local community through transient residents
- Too many conversions/small units at present
- Loss of light to neighbouring properties
- Design is not effective
- Potential overcrowding

The Committee will be advised of any additional representations received after the date this report was written.

Consultations

Hertfordshire County Council (Highway Authority)

The proposal is to demolish the existing hotel containing 10 bedrooms and erect a 29 bedroom HMO. Section 6 of the application form indicates the development does not involve a new or alteration of an existing access to the highway. Section

11 indicates there will be no parking provision within the site to serve the proposed HMO. There appears to be an existing vehicle access to this site via the raised table at the junction of Westland Road with Wellington Road which is not an ideal situation but as there will be no parking provision within the site this access can be closed which could be seen as a highway gain.

The location of the site is close to local shops and public transport. The Local Planning Authority may restrict residents' rights to a parking permit under policy T26 of the Watford District Plan 2000. The site is in a sustainable location and provided parking demand is restricted I do not consider this proposal will have a significant impact on the safety and operation of the adjacent highway. The applicant should also be advised that this development would attract a contribution to the South West Hertfordshire Transport Plan and subsequent transport plans. The rooms have on-suite showers and can be considered bed-sits therefore, under these circumstances; I have no objection to this proposal and recommend permission is granted subject to the completion of an Agreement to secure a financial contribution of £10875 and subject to [a number of] conditions. I therefore have no objection and recommend the [imposition of a number of] conditions [which have been included in the Recommendation at the end of this report].

Hertfordshire Constabulary

Whilst there is a Design & Access Statement it does not give any information about community safety. The Department for Communities and Local Government 'Guidance on information requirements and validation' under paragraph 132 states:

"PPS1 makes clear that a key objective for new developments should be that they create safe and accessible environments where crime and disorder or fear of crime does not undermine quality of life or community cohesion. Design and access statements for outline and detailed applications should therefore

demonstrate how crime prevention measures have been considered in the design of the proposal and how the design reflects the attributes of safe, sustainable places set out in Safer Places - the Planning System and Crime Prevention (ODPM/Home Office, 2003). Further advice on 'Secured by Design' principles is available from the Police."

There is mention of Secured by Design and I will be looking for this development to be designed and constructed to SBD New Homes 2010 standards and the appropriate forms completed and returned to me. Details of the SBD requirements can be found on their website www.securedbydesign.com, in addition all glazing in doors, ground floor and vulnerable windows to be 6.4mm laminated glass.

The Residential Design Guide Volume 1 under 3.7 Safety and Security mentions the actual and perceived sense of safety and security experienced by residents and considers it a key consideration when looking at the layout and mix of housing schemes. The Guide also highlights that Secured by Design has been proved to reduce crime when utilised as part of the planning/design process.

I do have a concern in that the D&AS talks about high quality non-fully self-contained "studio rooms" whereas some of the plans talk about a "proposed hostel" and I would be rather concerned if we are looking at a "hostel" in view of the location close to police facilities.

I have examined the plans and have the following comments/recommendations:

- The main doors to the flats to be to LPS1175 and I will be looking for video access control to all the flats so as to provide the best possible security for the occupants.
- Cycle theft unfortunately happens in Watford and I look for all cycle stores/sheds to be locked and keys/codes given to residents. I attach a

document which is a précis of Secured by Design and Sustainable Homes requirements for cycle storage.

- I will be requiring that the development be built to SBD New Homes 2010 standards with all doors to PAS23/24 with windows to BS7950. I will be looking for all ground floor doors to have split spindle locking devices whereas the upper floors can have cylinders with internal thumb turns to allow for egress in the event of fire.
- All ground floor doors and windows must have 6.4mm laminated glazing, plus any vulnerable windows should have a similar type of glazing.
- We often have concerns about delivery of post and will be looking for either external post boxes or a small vestibule where the post boxes can be installed. We do not like the Traders button on front doors as it leaves the individual flats vulnerable to possible attempted burglary, plus of course there is no knowledge of may have entered the block.
- I will be looking for the boundaries to properties on Westland Road and Wellington Road to have 1.8 metre closed boarded fencing top by 300mm timber trellis. I note from the various elevations that there will be a 1.2 metre fence along the front edge of the property and suggest that it be a metal hooped fence.
- There is a gap, between 32 Westland Road and the development which must be closed using the appropriate 1.8 metres fencing plus trellis as mentioned above at the building line.
- There is a similar gap between 24 Wellington Road and the development which must be gated on the building line to prevent unauthorised access to the rear of the property where statistics tell us some 60%-70% of burglary entries to properties occur.
- Comments have been made about the lighting within the development and I would refer the developers to Part 2 of SBD which gives details of the lighting requirements, and I would like to see a copy of the Lux Plan.

[Note: The application has been amended to address these points.]

Environmental Health

The kitchens are of sufficient size for 33 persons. HMO Licensing applies to rented properties which are three storeys or more and that are occupied by five or more persons who are not related. From the plans it appears that this premises will need to be licensed. Environmental services can be contacted on 01923 278 485 for more information and for licence application forms.

APPRAISAL

In accordance with s.38 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, the Development Plan for Watford comprises:

- (a) the “saved” policies of the *Hertfordshire Structure Plan 1991-2011*;
- (b) the “saved” policies of the *Watford District Plan 2000*;
- (c) the “saved” policies of the *Hertfordshire Waste Local Plan 1995-2005*; and
- (d) the *Hertfordshire Minerals Local Plan Review 2002-2016*.

The Structure Plan was adopted in April 1998 and provides strategic level policies for the county, although only a limited number of ‘saved’ policies remain relevant. The District Plan was adopted in December 2003 and provides local level policies. The Watford District Plan 2000 provides the most up to date “development plan” policies which, together with any relevant policies from the Waste Local Plan and the Minerals Local Plan, must be afforded considerable weight in decision making on planning applications.

The East of England Plan 2008, which provided regional level policies, was revoked on 6th July 2010 and no longer forms part of the Development Plan.

The *Residential Design Guide Volume 1 – Building New Homes* is also a material consideration in the determination of this planning application.

Principle of proposed development

The application site is within a Primarily Residential Area where residential use is considered acceptable under Policy H5 of the Watford District Plan 2000 subject to high quality design. Policies H5 and H7 indicate that within primarily residential areas proposals for residential purposes will be acceptable provided they accord with a number of criteria. The application proposal accords with these criteria in that the proposed development will not result in:

- An overall loss of residential accommodation;
- A significant over supply of housing in the plan period;
- A detrimental loss of open space;
- Loss of a community facility or off street car parking; or
- Harm to nearby living conditions

General housing policies

The site is located close to the town centre and is an appropriate and sustainable location for small units of accommodation. The level of development proposed gives a density of 222 dwellings per hectare. Whilst this is numerically very high, being a function of the dense nature of the proposal and the small size of units being provided, this is not in itself considered to be inappropriate in this location. It accords with national, regional and local policies to make efficient use of urban land to create sustainable communities. As PPS3 points out (paragraph 50), “imaginative design and layout of new development can lead to a more efficient use of land without compromising the quality of the local environment”, whilst PPS1 (Para.27 (iv)) encourages the bringing forward of land of a suitable quality within appropriate locations. The location of this site is appropriate to the proposed use and density.

All of the rooms have an acceptable internal layout and floorspace. Although, there are no planning policies that stipulate minimum room sizes in HMOs, Environmental Health consider that the floorspace and amenity provision is

acceptable. All rooms will have satisfactory levels of amenity in respect of outlook, privacy and natural light. The site layout incorporates a communal amenity space at the rear of the block of approximately 94m². This exceeds the requirements of the Residential Design Guide which requires a minimum communal area of 50m² although HMOs are not referred to specifically within this policy.

Character of the area and design

The scheme proposes the demolition of the existing hotel, a substantial detached building of traditional design, although now somewhat diluted due to the poor choice of replacement windows and the level of hardstanding that has been laid. It displays many of the features common to properties in the locality, including gabled roofs and large bay windows, yet it does not fully capitalise on its position as a corner site in a relatively prominent location set on road junctions that afford strong views to the site.

Most of the surrounding area is traditional Victorian terraced streets with two storey buildings. To the north of the site, many of the houses incorporate strong bay windows that extend into the roof with gabled heads. The predominant building material is facing brick with some brown pebble dash render. The locality displays a wide selection of bricks, including orange, red, yellow, buff and purple, with no clearly dominant colour. Originally, the predominant roof material was plain red or brown tiles with some slate. These have generally been retained although a significant minority of houses now have profiled concrete roof tiles. Windows would originally have been painted timber and some still remain; however, the majority of the windows have now been replaced with white uPVC. Most buildings are set back a short distance from the pavement with small enclosed front garden areas defined by boundary walls, railings and hedges.

The key design issue in considering new development is whether the proposed scheme meets the test set out at paragraph 34 of PPS1:

“Design which is inappropriate in its context or which fails to take opportunities available for improving the character and quality of the area and the way it functions, should not be accepted.”

The existing building on the site is appropriate to the context of the area to a degree, in terms of its scale and visual appearance, although this has been undermined to some extent by more recent extensions and poor replacement windows. Its function as a hotel is also not inappropriate within a residential area. However, there are a number of aspects to the current site that have a negative impact on the locality. The building itself is sited towards the boundary with 32, Westland Road and does not address the corner particularly well; the corner has a feeling of being somewhat ‘unfinished’. In addition to this, the areas to the front, side and rear of the building, including the whole original garden area, are covered with tarmac and are used as informal car parking for the hotel. The only boundary treatment to Westland Road is a series of concrete posts. Overall, the current building and site have a negative impact on the character and appearance of the area, particularly having regard to its prominent position on this corner.

The proposal that was originally submitted took much of the footprint, setback from the street and roof form from the previously approved redevelopment proposal, with only some detailed changes to the elevations and fenestration. Although the main bulk of the building was acceptable, the changes that had been made detracted from the quality of the earlier approval, and also proved to be lacking in execution of detail and integration of character through the elevational treatment. Windows were poorly aligned and lacked the correct emphasis, the main entrance was barely visible and was secondary in its appearance and there were a number of blank flank walls that lacked visual interest.

Following discussions with your officers the scheme has been redesigned, with a substantially improved elevational treatment. Windows are now correctly aligned across the different storeys and this, in addition to the staggered footprint, results in a clear and formal treatment to the elevations. The fenestration has been redesigned so that the horizontal emphasis of the original submission has been replaced with a vertical emphasis that is significantly more in keeping with the prevailing context. The roof form has changed slightly to remove a crown roof resulting in a slightly higher gable to the central element. However, given this corner plot, this is acceptable and also results in a further gable to the northern elevation that is felt to 'turn the corner' more effectively. The roof form now comprises a series of gable roofs reflecting the typical roof form in the locality. A new entrance has been provided which gives the building an identity and further aids its legibility as a residential unit. One of the issues with the earlier application was the introduction of additional ground floor entrance doors to three of the four ground floor flats. This allowed greater frontage activity and also gave the building an appearance more akin to a stepped series of terraced houses. Given the nature of this building as an HMO and the concerns raised by Hertfordshire Constabulary in relation to safety and access to the building, it is desirable in this instance to retain one, safe and secure entrance.

Through these amendments, the development takes the opportunity to address the negative impacts of the existing site and makes a positive contribution to the locality. The stepped footprint allows the building to address positively the whole of the site frontage and to complete this corner; yet also maintain a suitable setback from the highway boundary to ensure it does not appear overly dominant. The overall scale of the building respects that of adjoining properties and is appropriate for this prominent corner. As with the existing building, it is of a slightly larger scale than the houses on either side of the site although this is a design treatment often found on corner sites of this nature. The fenestration of the elevations is also now consistent with the locality. The set back of the building frontage from the site boundary has allowed a small front garden area to

be created which is characteristic of the locality and this is to be enclosed with low railings. Importantly, the proposed building has a strong vertical rhythm that reflects the rhythm seen in the terraced houses of Westland Road and Wellington Road. In general terms therefore, the proposal is compliant with Policy U3 of the Watford District Plan 2000 in respecting the prevailing character of the area.

In terms of materials, it is proposed to use a facing brick with stone relief window heads, concrete roof tiles and white uPVC windows. Given the variety of bricks found in the locality this is not inappropriate. The roof tiles should be of a plain or 'duo-plain' style to reflect the predominant tile format. In terms of windows, white uPVC windows of various styles predominate with very few examples of timber windows remaining. The use of white uPVC windows is therefore considered acceptable.

In conclusion, the proposed scheme, by reason of its scale, siting, design and materials, respects its context and will have a positive impact on the character and appearance of the area. The building is of a suitably high quality design and complies with Policy U2 of the Watford District Plan 2000.

Impact on neighbouring properties

The proposed building is sited towards the Westland Road frontage and is staggered in its footprint as it follows the curve in the road. Each end of the building is sited adjacent to the flank elevations of the adjoining properties at 32 Westland Road and 24 Wellington Road. Neither flank elevation of the building impinges on a 45° line taken from the nearest rear facing windows of these properties. The internal layout of the previous approval building was designed in order that the majority of the flats had their principal elevation facing Westland Road. Consequently, only a limited number of habitable room windows faced to the rear and towards existing properties, inclusive of living rooms with French doors and bedrooms. The other windows in the rear elevation were to communal stairs and corridors.

Adjacent to 32 Westland Road, bedroom windows at first and second floor level face the rear amenity area. These windows look towards the rear elevations of houses in Franklin Road. The distance to the garden boundary at its closest point is 8m; however the rear garden section of No.24 Wellington Road is used for parking and had been part of the site for the earlier application. 14m is achieved to actual garden areas ensuring no direct overlooking. Adjacent to 24 Wellington Road, windows to bedrooms at first and second floor level in the rear elevation face towards the rear amenity area and the rear garden area of 32 Westland Road. This distance is 14.4m and is in excess of the minimum of 10m in respect of gardens.

Compared with the existing hotel on the site, the proposed building will be sited further away from the garden boundaries and houses surrounding the site, will be more centrally located and will therefore result in an improvement in the outlook from and privacy for these properties.

Access and parking

The site is located within Zone 1 of the Car Parking Zones Map in the Watford District Plan 2000, as referred to in Appendix 2 of the Plan and Policy T22. This policy states that within this location, the following levels of parking should be the maximum provision for each unit:

- One Bed Dwelling – 1 space
- Two Bed Dwelling – 1 space
- Three Bed Dwelling – 1.55 spaces
- Four or More – 2 spaces

The site is in a sustainable location and the County Council does not consider the proposal will have a significant impact on the safety and operation of the adjacent highway, subject to parking being restricted. The existing crossover on Westland Road is located on the raised table at the junction of Westland Road

and Wellington Road. The removal of this crossover will be a benefit in terms of highway safety.

Given the location of the site close to the town centre and the nature of the units being provided, it would not be inappropriate for the development to be car-free. The site is within a Controlled Parking Zone (Zone A) and the development can therefore be excluded from the CPZ to prevent residents parking cars on-street which would exacerbate the existing parking problems in the area. This exclusion is secured via a variation to the Traffic Regulation Order and a payment by the applicant of a contribution of £2,000 has been secured through the completion of a s.106 planning obligation.

A secure cycle store is shown at the rear of the communal amenity area accessed via a gated passageway along the southern side of the building. Further details of this can be secured by condition.

S.106 planning obligation

By the nature of the use, an HMO represents a single planning unit rather than 29 separate dwellings. As such, s.106 contributions in respect of education, healthcare, open space and sustainable transport would not be justified. The applicant has however completed a planning obligation to ensure that the development is exempt from the CPZ provisions.

Consideration of objections received

Objections	Officer's response
Shared kitchens will create conflict	Shared kitchens are typical of HMOs. The size and number of kitchens provided meet the standards set by Environmental Health.

Increase in noise and disturbance	This is unlikely to be materially different from the approved flatted scheme.
Is this the correct location for an HMO?	This site accords with guidance in PPS1 and PPS3, as it is centrally located and is near to the amenities of the town centre and suitable transport links.
Additional car parking	The evidence suggests that car ownership rates for residents of HMOs are lower than for other types of residential accommodation. In any event, it is recommended that the proposed development should be exempt from the CPZ.
Loss of local community through transient residents	There is no evidence that residents of studio and one bedroom flats are any less transient than residents of HMOs.
Too many conversions/small units at present	There are relatively few high quality and purpose-designed HMOs within the town centre. This is not a traditional flatted development and therefore adds to the housing mix of the area, in accordance with Policy H11.
Loss of light to neighbouring properties	The development complies with the 45 ⁰ rule set out in the RDG and its bulk is little different to the flats previously approved on this site.
Design is not effective	Following amendments that were made to the original submission, the design is now of high quality so that the development will integrate well with the street scene,

Potential overcrowding	The proposed HMO will require a licence and will be checked by Environmental Health on a regular basis to ensure that overcrowding does not take place.
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Conclusion

The proposal seeks to replace the existing hotel with a three storey, twenty nine room House in Multiple Occupation of a traditional design. There is no objection in principle to the loss of the hotel. The site is within a residential area and in a sustainable location close to the town centre where higher density development comprising small units such as this are acceptable. A car-free development is also acceptable in this location. By reason of its scale, siting, design and materials, the building will respect its context and will have a positive impact on the character and appearance of the area.

The scheme is well designed for its context, in accordance with national and local policies, and, as a result, it will integrate well with neighbouring development.

HUMAN RIGHTS IMPLICATIONS

The Local Planning Authority is justified in interfering with the applicant’s Human Rights in order to alleviate any adverse effect on adjoining properties and their occupiers and on general public amenity. With regard to any infringement of third party Human Rights, these are not considered to be of such a nature and degree as to override the Human Rights of the applicant and therefore warrant refusal of planning permission.

RECOMMENDATION

That, in consequence of a unilateral undertaking under s.106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) having been entered into to secure the contribution set out below, planning permission be granted subject to the following conditions:

Section 106 Heads of Terms

- i) To secure a financial payment to the Council of:
 - a) £2,000 towards the variation of the Borough of Watford (Watford Central Area and West Watford Area) (Controlled Parking Zones) (Consolidation) Order 2006 to exclude future residents of the Development from entitlement to resident parking permits for the controlled parking zones in the vicinity of the Land in accordance with Policy T24 of the Watford District Plan 2000.

Conditions

1. The development to which this permission relates shall be begun within a period of 3 years commencing on the date of this permission.

Reason: To comply with the requirements of Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

2. Construction of the development hereby permitted shall not take place before 8am or after 6pm Mondays to Fridays, before 8am or after 1pm on Saturdays and not at all on Sundays and Public Holidays.

Reason: To safeguard the amenities and quiet enjoyment of neighbouring properties during the time that the development is being constructed, pursuant to Policy SE22 of the Watford District Plan 2000.

3. No development shall commence until a Construction Environmental Management Plan has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. This Plan shall include details of contractors parking, the delivery and storage of materials, measures to mitigate noise and dust, wheel washing facilities, plant and equipment and a contact procedure for complaints. The Plan as approved shall be implemented throughout the construction period.

Reason: To safeguard the amenities and quiet enjoyment of neighbouring properties and prevent obstruction of the adjoining highway during the time that the development is being constructed, pursuant to Policies T4 and SE22 of the Watford District Plan 2000.

4. No development shall commence until full details and samples of the materials to be used for the external surfaces of the building (including walls, roof, dormer windows, windows, window heads, doors and rainwater goods) have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall only be implemented in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: In the interests of the visual appearance of the site, pursuant to Policy U3 of the Watford District Plan 2000.

5. No development shall commence until full details and samples of the materials to be used for all hard surfaced areas have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall only be implemented in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: In the interests of the visual appearance of the site, pursuant to Policy U3 of the Watford District Plan 2000.

6. No development shall commence until details of the siting, height and type of fencing or other means of enclosure around the boundaries of the site have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. All such fencing and other means of enclosure shall be carried out as approved prior to the first occupation of any part of the development and shall be maintained at all times thereafter.

Reason: In the interests of the visual appearance of the site and in the interests of security of the site and adjacent properties in accordance with Policies U2, U3 and U4 of the Watford District Plan 2000.

7. No development shall commence until a soft landscaping scheme (including a detailed method statement covering tree planting, tree, shrub and grass specie, planting size and density) for all landscaped areas within the site has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved landscaping scheme shall be carried out not later than the first available planting and seeding season after completion of the development. Any trees or plants whether new or existing which within a period of five years die, are removed or become seriously damaged or diseased shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of similar size and species, or in accordance with details approved by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In the interests of the visual appearance of the site in accordance with Policies U6, U2 and U3 of the Watford District Plan 2000.

8. No development shall commence until details of the design and materials for the refuse, recycling and cycle stores indicated on drawing number 1568-09C have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. No part of the development shall be occupied until these stores have been provided as approved and thereafter they shall be retained as approved unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In the interests of the visual appearance of the site and to ensure that adequate facilities exist for residents of the proposed development, in accordance with the aims of Policies SE7, U2, U3, T9 and T10 of the Watford District Plan 2000.

9. No part of the development shall be occupied until all existing vehicle access points have been stopped up in accordance with details which shall have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority in consultation with the Highway Authority and that stopping up shall thereafter be retained as approved.

Reason: To minimise danger, obstruction and inconvenience to highway users.

Informatives

1. This planning permission is accompanied by a planning obligation under s.106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 to secure a financial contribution under policy T24 of the Watford District Plan 2000.
2. The Local Planning Authority's reasons for granting planning permission in this case are as follows:

The Development is in accordance with the policies of the Development Plan (namely the Watford District Plan 2000) and the development for the

reasons outlined in the background report is not considered to result in material harm to interests of acknowledged importance beyond that which would occur were the development to comply with Supplementary Planning Guidance adopted by the Council for planning purposes. Having regard to the site's location, the character of the surrounding area and the impacts upon surrounding buildings and uses, there are considered to be no other material planning interests that would, as a result of the development being carried out, be materially harmed.

The proposal seeks to replace the existing hotel with a three storey, twenty nine room House in Multiple Occupation of a traditional design. There is no objection in principle to the loss of the hotel. The site is within a residential area and in a sustainable location close to the town centre where higher density development comprising small units such as this are acceptable. A car-free development is also acceptable in this location. By reason of its scale, siting, design and materials, the building will respect its context and will have a positive impact on the character and appearance of the area.

The scheme is well designed for its context, in accordance with national and local policies, and, as a result, it will integrate well with neighbouring development.

3. In reaching its decision the Local Planning Authority had regard to the following policies of the Watford District Plan 2000:

- H2 Housing Need Structure Plan Requirements
- H5 Development on Previously Developed Land
- H7 Primarily Residential Areas
- H8 Residential Standards
- H11 Housing Mix

- H12 Housing Density Standards
- L8 Open Space Provision in Housing Development
- U1 Quality of Design
- U2 Design and Layout of Development
- U3 Integration of Character
- U6 Landscape Design
- T4 Transport and New Development
- T10 Cycle Parking Standards
- T21 Access and Servicing
- T22 Car Parking Standards
- T24 Residential Development
- IMR2 Planning Obligations

4. HMO Licensing applies to rented properties which are three storeys or more and that are occupied by five or more persons who are not related. From the plans it appears that this premises will need to be licensed. Environmental Services can be contacted on 01923 278 485 for more information and for licence application forms.

Drawing Numbers

1568-10, 1568-09c, 1568-06c, 1568-04c, 1568-07c, 1568-05c, 1568-01c, 1568-02c, 1568-03c, 1568-08b

Other documents

Design and Planning Statement

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