



DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Update Report

Wednesday, 18th May, 2016

7.30 pm

Town Hall

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CONTACT

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DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

18 May 2016

UPDATE SHEET

Item 4

15/01662/FULM – 14 Stratford Road

AMENDMENTS TO CONDITIONS

Condition 3 to be removed. This condition set out the requirement for construction work to be carried out between certain hours. However, issues arising from the construction period are not material planning considerations and are covered by other legislation. Accordingly, it is not appropriate to attach a condition. Instead an informative is suggested which will provide the applicant and any other persons reading the decision with information regarding appropriate working hours and associated legislation.

Condition 4 amended to read as follows (N.B: new wording to be inserted is shown underlined):

4. *No construction works above damp proof course level shall commence until details of the materials to be used for all the external finishes of the buildings, including all walls, roofs, doors, windows, balconies, fascias, soffits, rainwater and foul drainage goods (including samples where considered necessary by the Local Planning Authority) have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be carried out only in accordance with the approved materials.*

Condition 5 amended to read as follows (N.B: new wording to be inserted is shown underlined):

5. *No construction works above damp proof course level shall commence until detailed drawings of the elevations including the window reveal treatment and window*

dressing technique to be used have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be carried out only in accordance with the approved details.

Condition 11 re-worded to read as follows:

11. *Prior to any works commencing on site details of all below ground services and cabling (electricity, gas, telephone, foul water, surface water, etc), including any temporary connections for site huts showing depth, width and routing of all trenches shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be carried out only in accordance with the details approved under this condition .*

Condition 17 re-worded to read as follows (N.B: new wording to be inserted is shown underlined):

17. None of the units hereby approved shall be occupied until a scheme detailing the external lighting to be installed within the site (including any external lighting attached to the buildings) has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The lighting shall be installed, as approved, prior to the first occupation of the development and shall be maintained as such at all times thereafter unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure that any external lighting safeguards the security and amenities of residents, respects the character and appearance of the area and is sensitive to bats in accordance with Policies GI3 and UD1 of the Watford Local Plan Core Strategy 2006-31.

REMOVAL OF CONDITION

Condition 14 to be removed. This condition set out the requirement for the submission of a Construction Environmental Management Plan. However, issues arising from the construction period are not material planning considerations and are covered by other legislation. As such, it is not appropriate to impose planning conditions relating to these matters. Informatives have been added (see below) to provide advice to the applicant on the wheel washing and contractor's parking.

The conditions will be renumbered accordingly. Those conditions that refer to other conditions will also be amended accordingly to reflect the renumbering.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATIVES

The following Informative notes are to be added:

9. You are advised that appropriate arrangement should be made within the site to provide for:
 - a. Servicing and Delivery associated with the construction
 - b. Parking for workers and contractors associated with the construction
 - c. Wheel washing to prevent the spread of debris onto the public highway.

Failure to make such provisions may be contrary to the Highways Act and/or require a separate licence from the Local Highway Authority.

10. You are advised of the need to comply with the provisions of The Control of Pollution Act 1974 Part IV, The Health & Safety at Work Act 1974, The Clean Air Act 1993 and The Environmental Protection Act 1990.

In order to minimise impact of noise general construction work should be restricted to the following hours:

- Monday to Friday 8am to 6pm
- Saturdays 8am to 1pm
- Noisy work is prohibited on Sundays and bank holidays

Instructions should be given to ensure that vehicles and plant arriving at and leaving the site comply with the stated hours of work.

11. You are advised that any works involving the removal of asbestos will need to be carried out fully in accordance with The Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012 and/or any other relevant legislation. The removal of asbestos will need to be carried out by a licensed contractor. Should you require further information on the safe removal of asbestos then you should contact the Health & Safety Executive on 0300 003 1747 or visit their website at:
<http://www.hse.gov.uk/asbestos/regulations.htm>.

12. You are advised that The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (as amended), The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), The Protection of Badgers Act 1992 and The Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006 relate to the protection of habitats and species. It is a criminal offence to disturb or destroy protected species and it is the applicant's responsibility to ensure that this legislation is complied with and that suitable measures are put in place in order to safeguard protected species. Your attention is drawn to the measures outlined in the submitted Ecological Assessment (Report No. CSa/2729/01), prepared by CSa Environmental Planning, dated September 2015.

AMENDMENT TO 'CONSIDERATION OF OBJECTIONS RECEIVED' SECTION

The 'Consideration of objections received' section of the report contains a table which provides officer comments in relation to matters raised by residents. The officer response provided in relation to "noise, dirt, heavy vehicles and disruption during works" (on page 46 of the report) has been amended to read as follows:

Noise, dirt, heavy vehicles and disruption during works.	Problems arising from the construction period are not material planning considerations and are covered by other legislation as such it is not appropriate to impose planning conditions relating
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	to these matters. However, appropriate informatives have been included.
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ADDITIONAL TECHNICAL CONSULTATION RESPONSE RECEIVED

The Council’s Environmental Health Department has been consulted and has provided the following comments:

It is my understanding that there is to be no associated air-handling units with the new development, and therefore, it is not necessary to request any information on this matter.

Based upon the information provided, my main concern is the demolition phase as it has the potential to cause a significant impact on the surrounding premises. In particular, given the age of the building, it is likely that there will be a number of asbestos containing materials inside. As a result, it would be appropriate to request a demolition plan, which outlines details of any asbestos in the building and clearly explains how it will be removed and disposed off. If we could get a condition requesting this, that would alleviate my concerns.

Officer Response:

The safe removal of asbestos on construction sites is covered by separate legislation - The Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012. It is not, therefore, a matter which is appropriate to address by way of planning conditions. Notwithstanding this, an informative note has been added to advise the applicant of their responsibilities under the The Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012 (see ‘Additional Informatives’ section above).

OFFICER RESPONSE IN RELATION TO COMMENTS OF URBAN DESIGN AND CONSERVATION MANAGER

The comments of the Urban Design & Conservation Manager included within the Committee Report are dated 27th January 2016. Since these comments were written, the applicant has

sought to address many of the concerns raised by the Urban Design & Conservation Manager through the submission of additional information and amended plans.

The Urban Design & Conservation Manager comments contained within the report are outlined below. The officer's response to these are shown underlined.

Layout:

Still have some concerns re the car parking arrangement which uses long continuous lines of spaces which don't appear to be broken up - it would be better to have breaks using tree planting as a structural device here.

Suitable tree planting has been included to break up the car park areas, as detailed on the proposed site plan (drawing no. 203 Rev P4) and Landscape Plan (drawing no. LP/14SRWH/020 C).

The scheme claims to be deriving its inspiration from the Salters Almhouses on the adjoining site. Whilst the arrangement in plan form has improved and does have a positive relationship with the Almshouses, the approach to a hierarchy of buildings across the site does not respond as well; the gatehouse concept works but the building heights apart from this buildings are consistent across the site unlike the Almshouses where there is a clear dominant and identifiable range which is taller. This gives the scheme a clear focal point which is lacking from the proposed application scheme. This could be addressed through reducing building heights on part of the proposed scheme for example, blocks A, B, E and F leaving C and D as the focal point in the centre of the site. Amendments could be made to the design of the elevations to give these sections more prominence as well.

Reducing blocks A, B, E and F would significantly reduce the number of units and is likely to render the scheme financially unviable with the 35% affordable housing provision.

Buildings:

The Stage 4 diagram in the D and A statement make it clear that the scheme makes heavy use of crowned roof form - I am not particularly happy with this and it results in a small roof which looks out of scale with the elevations - even with the lower eaves in places. It should be possible to remove the need for this approach on the townhouses and the gatehouse and on some of the narrower blocks. I note the argument made by the applicant regarding the crowned roof approach used on the extensions to the Salters Almshouses setting a precedent

for this approach to be used here. There are a couple of points in relation to this ; the scale of the extensions to the almshouses is very different and it is unlikely that a similar approach would be granted consent today. It does not get away from the fact that on the taller elements of the proposed scheme the roof form does look out of scale with the building. The principal element of the Almshouses, the original buildings have an energy and dynamic in part generated by the steep roof pitches and gables along with features such as high chimneys, castellations, stepped gables, diaper brick patterns and use of stone dressing. The buildings in the application scheme seek to use some of these features but do not maintain the energy and dynamism of the Almshouses. Suggested improvements are:

- *Where gables are used the building line should project slightly to create a stronger vertical emphasis through the elevation.*

The majority of the gables project to provide articulation as detailed on the submitted elevations and floorplans.

- *The window type used across most of the elevations is more suited to the Victorian domestic vernacular than the gothic revival used on the Almshouses – the flat topped window form used on the Almshouses and in certain parts of the application scheme should be used throughout – this would give a stronger identity and character to the scheme which is currently lacking.*

A flat topped window form has been incorporated throughout the scheme.

- *The dressing technique used for the doors and windows should be altered to simple straight stone form rather than the curved brick soldier courses.*

A flat topped window form has been incorporated throughout the scheme.

- *Window materials should probably be metal and possibly black rather than white wooded ones – consider the use of diamond leading rather than the four pane at the top approach.*

The materials and type of windows and their dressing treatment are to be secured by conditions as set out within ‘Conditions’ section of the committee report.

- *There are some concerns regarding the chimneys – which do have a relevance in design terms but don’t seem to have a function so there is an issue regarding building integrity.*

The chimneys add interest to the elevations and do not upset the elevational character to an extent that warrants their removal.

Town houses:

Symmetry: have reviewed the comments sent in as well including the examples given and would make the following points in relation to the comments:

- *Examples referred to are not really relevant to the building typology being promoted in the application scheme; many are two storey and are part of a longer street and do not have such a single dominant feature as the central wide gable being used here.*
- *The 3 storey examples provided are more relevant in that the building typology is more appropriate; but the examples used are not particularly good examples of three storey Victorian buildings and the features on them are not particularly successful; in particular, the large gables used which demonstrate that this is not really a successful feature for this type of building.*
- *If symmetry is to be used it needs to be reworked on these buildings and used to break down the scale – for example the larger central gable could be broken into two smaller gables which sit above a projecting bay.*

The design of the town houses has been amended during the course of the application to reflect the comments raised by the Urban Design & Conservation Manager. The amendments have included the incorporation of two smaller gables on the front of each pair of semi-detached houses as opposed to a single central gable.

Other comments:

- *If the application scheme is seeking to use Victorian houses as the model then more attention to detailing is required and I would suggest that the eaves line of the roof needs to be dropped so that it is level with the bottom of the windows on the second floor as shown on the current drawings.*

The eaves line has been reduced in light of the suggestions made by the Urban Design & Conservation Manager. The eaves line is now shown to be level with the bottom of the windows on the second floor.

- *The dormers and windows on the second floor should be reduced in size – both height and width, so that they read as a subservient element to those on the main part of the elevation. The same ridge height could be achieved but a steeper pitch needed which would*

improve the design – the gables should have a lower ridge than the main roof. I think this would also result in a reduction of the crowned area.

The dormers have been reduced and the gables have a lower ridge than the main roof as per the Urban Design & Conservation Manager's recommendations.

- *Comments above in relation to the windows on the main buildings should apply here as well.*

The dressing technique used for the doors and windows has been altered to simple straight stone rather than the curved brick soldier courses.

- *These changes would result in a more robust design.*
- *I still think we should avoid the integral garages - would on street spaces be sufficient - will the cars ever go in the garages?*

There is no design guidance or policy basis to require the removal of the garages.

General Comments:

Care will be needed regarding the details and materials to be used – note suggestions regarding the window treatment, including the dressing. We will need detailed drawings for most features.

Further details of the exact materials and the window reveal and window dressing treatment are to be secured by condition as set out within 'Conditions' section of the committee report.

Even with the changes suggested which should result in a successful scheme on paper, there are concerns regarding whether it can be delivered with sufficient quality to be successful next to the Almshouses - materials are identified but not specified and we have no details which will make or break a scheme like this. There are elements to the design which are not the average and build costs will be higher as a result.

See comment above.

I think the best way to sum up is that I don't think this is ready to be determined yet - more work is needed and I would like to see more details at this stage - no landscape plan.

A detailed landscape plan has been submitted during the course of the application and this is considered suitable by the Arboricultural Officer.

I am not convinced that the housing mix is right for the location and I would have preferred a more innovative approach as we had with the houses on St Thomas church site.

The housing mix is discussed in the 'Principle of Development' section of the committee report. The surrounding area is characterised by a mix of flats and houses that range in size, type and tenure. The scheme seeks to provide a mix of flats and houses, 35% of which will be affordable, and will contribute towards providing a varied housing stock in the area.

In addition to the above, it should be noted that the design of the southeast-facing elevation of Block A which faces the street has been revised during the course of the application in accordance with recommendations made by the Urban Design & Conservation Manager. These amendments have included changes to the fenestration to provide a better elevational treatment and more balanced appearance.

ADDITIONAL HIGHWAYS COMMENTS

In relation to visibility splays, the Local Highways Authority has now confirmed in writing that the additional justification provided by the applicant is acceptable and a condition for a visibility splay for this proposal is no longer required.

AMENDED DRAWING RECEIVED

An amended drawing has been received since the publication of the committee report. The amended drawing (numbered 16 001-2) supersedes drawing no. 205 Rev B and seeks to correct a discrepancy between the elevations and roof plan.