

### Briefing- Revised Planning Application for Hemming Way

Watford Community Housing Trust is presenting the revised planning application for Hemming Way to committee members to respond to the single reason for refusal that was set out in the decision notice, which stated:

*The proposal would fail to provide a high standard of design and would be out of character with the residential aspects of the area, having the appearance of being overdeveloped, contrary to the provisions of the Residential Design Guide (2014) and Policies SS1 and UD1 of the Watford Local Plan Core Strategy 2006-31.*

The refusal notice focuses on the appearance of the proposed development. The design team have reviewed both the physical appearance and more significantly the massing of the building to respond positively to these comments and develop proposals which address these concerns.

The changes were required to be more than cosmetic to respond to the context; **five** significant changes have therefore been instigated:

- 1 The overall scale of the buildings has been lowered by removing the pitched roof gables.**
- 2 The overall massing of the building has been broken down by removing the brickwork cladding to the balconies, breaking the building down into distinctive bays.**
- 3 The upper floor of the development has been set back to strengthen the two storey eaves line which is characteristic of the area; to achieve this adjustment to the massing the number of bedrooms in the overall development has been reduced.**
- 4 The upper floor material has been changed to a light coloured cladding which reflects the tone of the adjoining rendered buildings; this also visually diminishes the appearance of the upper floor against the sky.**
- 5 A brick has been selected for the lower portion of the building which matches the colour of materials on the adjoining properties.**

The effect of these five changes is most clearly demonstrated in the before and after images (below) which are generated at eye level from the footpath network.

Comment from Peter Jeffree, Mayoral Design Champion:

**“The scheme immediately looks more harmonious and better proportioned relative to the adjacent houses. The combination of materials looks better, a neat inversion of the tone of materials in the next door houses.”**



**First Application:  
Looking north up Hemming Way**

**The overall massing of the building has been broken down by removing the brickwork cladding to the balconies, breaking the building down into distinctive bays.**





**Revised Application:  
Looking north up Hemming Way**

**The overall massing of the building has been broken down by removing the brickwork cladding to the balconies, breaking the building down into distinctive bays.**





**First Application:  
Looking south  
down Hemming  
Way**

**The overall scale  
of the buildings  
has been  
lowered by  
removing the  
pitched roof  
gables.**

**The upper floor  
material has  
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a light coloured  
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buildings.**





**Revised Application:  
Looking south down Hemming Way**

**The overall scale of the buildings has been lowered by removing the pitched roof gables.**

**The upper floor material has been changed to a light coloured cladding which reflects the tone of the adjoining rendered buildings.**





**First Application:  
Looking south  
down Hemming  
Way to the new  
park entrance**

**The upper floor  
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the area.**

**A brick has been  
selected for the  
lower portion of  
the building  
which matches  
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materials on the  
adjoining units.**





**Revised Application:**  
Looking south down Hemming Way to the new park entrance

The upper floor of the development has been set back to strengthen the two storey eaves line which is characteristic of the area.

A brick has been selected for the lower portion of the building which matches the colour of materials on the adjoining units.

### **The Existing Bungalows**

These are below current one bedroom unit housing standards. These original properties only provide 39m<sup>2</sup> of accommodation, against the 50m<sup>2</sup> being provided in the new one bedroom homes. At nearly 30% larger and with improved air tightness and insulation standards the new homes will be more economic to heat and provide the space that studies informing national housing standards guidance have identified is required.

### **Enhancing the Local Area**

The proposals do bring much needed 100% affordable accommodation, providing homes for future generations of Watford residents.

The design brings wider, long lasting benefits to the local area. The entrance to Leavesden Green is improved by both widening the route into the park and also positioning new homes to provide visual surveillance to the entrance. Improved street lighting further enhances security to combat ASB – a problem cited during the consultation events held to discuss the proposals.

The park now extends out into the street, highlighting the presence of this amenity space and bringing an underused traffic island into purposeful use. Investment in new semi-mature landscaping will deliver a useable space in the first season after the new homes are completed, with a maintenance programme ensuring their upkeep.

**If you have any queries regarding this briefing, please contact Nick Simons, Project Manager on 01923 209230 or [nick.simons@wcht.org.uk](mailto:nick.simons@wcht.org.uk)**