



**WATFORD  
BOROUGH  
COUNCIL**

# **DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE**

**4 November 2020**

**7.00 pm**

**Virtual**

**Contact**

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**Publication date: 27 October 2020**

# Committee Membership

Councillor P Jeffree (Chair)

Councillor S Johnson (Vice-Chair)

Councillors N Bell, K Collett, M Mills, J Pattinson, I Sharpe, R Smith and M Watkin

## Agenda

### Part A – Open to the Public

#### CONDUCT OF THE MEETING

The committee will take items in the following order:

1. All items where people wish to speak and have registered with Democratic Services.
  2. Any remaining items the committee agrees can be determined without further debate.
  3. Those applications which the committee wishes to discuss in detail.
1. **Apologies for absence**
  2. **Disclosure of interests**
  3. **20/00729/FULM - Land To The Rear Of Amwell Close (Pages 5 - 21)**
  4. **20/00788/FUL - Land adjacent 1 Park Terrace (Pages 22 - 37)**

## **Introduction**

Please note that the officer report is a summary of the issues including representations made and consultation responses. Full details of the applications, plans submitted, supporting information and documents, representations made, consultation responses and correspondence can be found on the council's web based [Public Access system](#) using the application reference or address.

Specific policy considerations for each application are detailed within the individual reports. The background papers and policy framework listed below have been relied upon in the preparation of the reports in this agenda.

## **Background papers**

- The current planning applications under consideration and correspondence related to that application.
- All relevant third party representations and consultation replies received.

## **Policy Framework**

- The Statutory Plans and Supplementary Planning Guidance, together with relevant Government legislation, Circulars, Advice, Orders, Directions and Guidance listed below:

## **Local Planning Documents**

Local Development Documents provide the framework for making planning decisions. These can be found on the Council's [website](#) and include:

- the existing Local Plan which consists of the Core Strategy, saved policies in the Watford District Plan 2000 and Proposals Map); and
- Supplementary Planning Documents.

## **County Planning Documents**

The Hertfordshire Waste Local Plan and Minerals Local Plan prepared by Hertfordshire County Council are material considerations alongside the Watford Local Plan. These documents can be found on the county council's [website](#).

## **National Planning Documents**

Key legislation can be found using this [weblink](#), including:

- Growth and Infrastructure Act (2013)
- Housing and Planning Act (2016)

- Localism Act (2011) and subsequent amendments
- Planning Act (2008) and subsequent amendments
- Planning and Compulsory Planning Act (2004) and subsequent amendments
- Town and Country Planning Act (1990) and subsequent amendments
- Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 and subsequent amendments.

National guidance can be found on the government service and information [website](#), including:

- National Planning Policy Framework (revised February 2019) and supporting Technical Guidance
- Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) (web based)
- Planning policy for traveller sites
- Relevant government circulars
- Relevant Ministerial Statements (which will be referred to in the individual reports as necessary)

### **Section 106 Planning obligations and Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)**

The Council introduced the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) with effect from 1 April 2015. The CIL charge covers a wide range of infrastructure as set out in the Council's Regulation 123 list, including highways and transport improvements, education provision, youth facilities, childcare facilities, children's play space, adult care services, open space and sports facilities. CIL is chargeable on the relevant net additional floorspace created by the development. The charge is non-negotiable and is calculated at the time that planning permission is granted where relevant. Section 106 planning obligations can only be used to secure affordable housing provision and other site specific requirements, such as the removal of entitlement to parking permits in Controlled Parking Zones and the provision of fire hydrants.

### **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.

<b>Committee date</b>	Wednesday, 4 November 2020
<b>Application reference</b>	20/00729/FULM - Land To The Rear Of Amwell Close,
<b>Site address</b>	Watford, WD25 9TD
<b>Proposal</b>	Erection of one block of 8 (2 bed 3 person) dwellings together with associated parking and external works.
<b>Applicant</b>	Watford Community Housing
<b>Agent</b>	Rock Townsend
<b>Type of Application</b>	Full Planning Permission
<b>Reason for committee Item</b>	Number of Objections
<b>Target decision date</b>	Thursday 5 November 2020
<b>Statutory publicity</b>	Neighbour Letters
<b>Case officer</b>	Andrew Clarke, <a href="mailto:andrew.clarke@watford.gov.uk">andrew.clarke@watford.gov.uk</a>
<b>Ward</b>	Meriden

## 1. Recommendation

- 1.1 That planning permission be granted subject to conditions, as set out in section 8 of this report.

## 2. Site and surroundings

- 2.1 The site is owned by Watford Community Housing Trust, is 0.133 hectares in size and is of an irregular, broadly triangular shape. The site is undeveloped and is currently covered by grass and trees. The subject site is not designated as green space. It is currently not enclosed, so although it can be accessed by the public, and may be perceived as public space, it is privately owned and could be enclosed.
- 2.2 The site is not within a conservation area, contains no listed buildings and is not close to any listed buildings. The site is not subject to any specific planning designations. The site falls within the Environment Agency's flood zone 1, the zone with the lowest chance of flooding. The surroundings are not subject to parking controls.
- 2.3 Adjacent to the site is a public footpath which leads to the nearby Garston Railway Station on the Abbey Flyer Railway line. Apart from the railway station and line the surroundings are entirely residential. The housing to the south and west on Phillipers was developed by the local authority as a new municipal housing estate in the early second half of the twentieth century comprised of semi-detached and short rows of terraced two storey dwellings. Amwell Close itself to the north west was developed in the 1990's and

comprises a similar form of housing to that found on Phillipers though the architectural detailing has a later typically 1990's style. The site is located approximately 3 miles from Watford Town Centre

### **3. Summary of the proposal**

#### **3.1 Proposal**

Planning permission is sought for the erection of a two storey building comprising eight dwellings with shared amenity space, refuse store, car and cycle parking.

#### **3.2 Conclusion**

The proposed development provides eight good quality residential dwellings, in a building which is considered to respect the character and appearance of the area, without having any unacceptable impact on the living conditions of neighbouring properties in accordance with the policies and guidance specified above.

### **4. Relevant policies**

- 4.1 Members should refer to the background papers attached to the agenda. These highlight the policy framework under which this application is determined. Specific policy considerations with regard to this particular application are detailed in section 6 below.

### **5. Relevant site history/background information**

- 5.1 Watford Community Housing Trust also consulted residents on this proposal. Details of this can be found on their website:  
<https://www.wcht.org.uk/find-a-home/homes-in-development/amwell-close/>
- 5.2 Pre-application advice was sought prior to submission of this application.
- 5.3 The site has no planning history.

### **6. Main considerations**

- 6.1 The main issues to be considered in the determination of these applications are:
- (a) Principle of the use
  - (b) Scale and design
  - (c) Quality of residential accommodation

- (d) Affordable housing provision
- (e) Impact on amenity of adjoining residential properties
- (f) Transport, parking and servicing
- (g) Environmental considerations

6.2 (a) Principle of the use

The subject site is a triangular piece of land which is bounded by a footpath and a railway station on one side and by housing developments on the other two sides. The site is not an allocated housing site but is within an established residential area and would be considered a windfall site in accordance with the criteria of Policy HS1 of the Core Strategy. Although the space is green, covered by trees and accessible to the public, it is not designated as open space in the Development Plan. The principle of a residential development on the site is considered acceptable in principle.

6.3 (b) Scale, design and layout

The proposed building would have two storeys with a rectangular footprint. It would have a width of 19.4 metres and a depth of 16.4 metres. The building would have two dual pitched roofs with gabled ends to either side of a central flat roof. The ridge height of the roof would be 10.3 metres and the eaves height would be 5.6 metres.

6.4 The scale and design of the building with pitched roofs and gable ends relates well to the surrounding built form of Amwell Close and Phillipers. Externally the building would have a contemporary appearance with vertical banding around the windows and doors. The building would be finished in red brick, with a grey tiled roof and grey UPVC doors and windows. In order to ensure a high quality appearance materials and design details will be secured by condition.

6.5 The existing cul-de-sac at the end of Amwell Close would be extended, opening up into a designated parking area for the development. The land to the east and south of the building would become a large communal garden for shared use by occupants of the eight dwellings. Appropriate hard and soft landscaping and tree planting will be secured by condition.

6.6 Suitable placement for the Cycle and Refuse stores has been identified on the plans. Details of these stores will be secured by condition.

6.7 (c) Quality of residential accommodation

Each of the eight flats would occupy one corner of one of the floors. All the dwellings would suit occupancy by three persons with each having one double

and one single bedroom. All dwellings would meet minimum space standards and would be dual aspect.

- 6.8 All of the four ground floor units would have some private amenity space, which acts as a defensible space between their doors / windows and the communal / public space beyond. Dwellings numbers 1 and 2 would have their own private entrances to the front of the building. Dwellings 3 to 8 would use the communal entrance to access their front doors. Dwellings 3 and 4 would have direct access to the communal garden via their private gardens. The four dwellings on the upper floors (numbers 5 to 8) would have access to the communal garden via a side gate.
- 6.9 Watford's Residential Design Guide states that communal open space provided for the exclusive use of occupants of the development may be acceptable as long as its location, size and shape enable it to be enjoyed by the occupants. The location of the garden is suitable. Although awkwardly shaped the size requirement far exceeds the minimum communal garden space requirements at 650 square metres.
- 6.10 (d) Affordable housing provision  
Watford Borough Council's Housing Service fully supports this application. Watford Community Housing have indicated all 8 units will be for social rent, the Housing Service's preferred tenure type. The site is part of a programme jointly funded by Watford Community Housing, Watford Borough Council and Homes England to produce 55 two and three bedroom units to be let at Social Rented tenure.
- 6.11 Given that this proposal is not a 'major development' affordable housing provision is not a planning policy requirement. For housing proposals, major development is where 10 or more homes will be provided, or the site has an area of 0.5 hectares or more. Neither of these criteria apply. As such, although the applicant's stated intention is to offer these homes for social rent this would not be secured through any planning permission and members should consider the application on this basis.
- 6.12 (e) Impact on amenity of adjoining residential properties  
The surroundings are residential. The nearest dwellings are two storey residential dwellinghouses at 11 Amwell Close, 16 Phillipers and 18 Phillipers.
- 6.13 11 Amwell Close.  
The proposed development is positioned diagonally to this dwelling at a distance of 11.1 metres building to building. This property has a garden which is triangular in shape with a rear facing first floor window which is 6.5 metres

from the diagonal rear garden boundary, measured perpendicularly from the centre of the window. The proposed habitable room windows are at an angle which is greater than 90 degrees to this existing dwelling, therefore perpendicular lines taken from the windows in the proposed development would not cross the footprint of this neighbouring dwellinghouse or in this case its garden. The position of the proposed development relative to this house is considered acceptable.

6.14 16 and 18 Phillipers

These two dwellings are perpendicular to each other forming the corner of a cul-de-sac which is off the main road which forms Phillipers. The proposed development would be positioned diagonally to the rear of these dwellings at this corner of the cul-de-sac. These two properties both have generous gardens which extend to the side of the properties with garden boundaries which are diagonal to the dwellinghouses abutting the proposed development site. The gardens of these two houses are large in comparison to those nearby due to their corner position. The proposed development would be 18.3 metres from the house at number 16 and 12.8 metres from the house at number 18. The proposed habitable room windows are at an angle which is 90 degrees to both of these existing dwellings, therefore perpendicular lines taken from the centre of the windows in the proposed development would not cross the footprint of these neighbouring dwellinghouses, though they would cross their gardens. The position of the proposed development relative to these houses is considered acceptable.

6.15 The proposed dwelling numbered 8 is the closest first floor dwelling to both 16 and 18 Phillipers. The habitable room windows of this dwelling would be face the diagonal garden boundaries of number 16 Phillipers at a distance of 9.8 metres and number 18 Phillipers at a distance of 11 metres.

6.16 The 9.8 metre separation distance between one of the three living room windows of dwelling 8 to the private garden of the existing dwellinghouse at 16 Phillipers would not meet the 11 metre separation guidance recommended between proposed upper level habitable rooms and property boundaries set out in Watford's Residential Design Guide. Given the irregular triangular shape of the site and its diagonal relationship with neighbouring properties, this minor incursion by one window onto the large side garden of 16 Phillipers is considered acceptable on balance. In all other respect the proposed development would accord with all parts of Watford's Residential Design Guide.

- 6.17 Two tall mature trees within the subject site which are to be retained would further mitigate any potential overlooking to the existing housing on Amwell Close and Phillipers.
- 6.18 (f) Transport, parking and servicing  
The site is close to Garston Railway Station and approximately 3 miles from Watford Town Centre. Buses operate nearby on Garston Lane, with more bus services available on St Albans Road which is a 5 minute walk from the site.
- 6.19 6 car parking spaces are proposed to serve the 8 proposed dwellings. This would equal a ratio of 0.75 spaces per dwelling. Policy T22 of the Watford District Plan 2000 sets maximum parking requirements for new developments. The maximum provision for this development would be 12 spaces. The proposed figure is considered acceptable, particularly given parking provision in the draft local plan which seeks to further reduce reliance on cars.
- 6.20 The plans depict space for the storage of 16 bicycles. This is considered acceptable. Details of the cycle store will be secured by condition.
- 6.21 The plans also depict space for a refuse store. This is considered acceptable. Details of the refuse store will also be secured by condition.
- 6.22 (g) Environmental considerations  
The site has significant tree cover. This is a result of it not having previously been developed. No trees on or adjacent to the site are subject to Tree Preservation Orders. The proposal would include the felling of a hornbeam and a Norway maple tree which enclose the northern entrance to the site and three groups of trees to the centre and south of the site. Although a large number of trees would have been felled to facilitate this development, a mature oak tree and a mature sycamore tree on the site which are of particular significance would be retained, and these would act as a buffer to neighbouring residential dwellings.
- 6.23 The proposed development would not be within the root protection zone of either of the retained trees and the Arboricultural Method Statement outlines how these two trees would be protected during construction. The line of trees adjacent to the railway line would also not be affected by this proposal.
- 6.24 Watford Borough Council's Arboricultural Officer and Hertfordshire County Council Ecology are satisfied with the proposal, subject to conditions which ensure compliance with the Arboricultural Impact Assessment, the Arboricultural Method Statement and Preliminary Ecological Appraisal.

Appropriate soft landscaping, including replacement tree planting would add further planting within the site and will be secured by condition.

- 6.25 Due to the location of the site in close proximity to a railway line, Network Rail have requested a Risk Assessment and Method Statement (RAMS) and a Basic Asset Protection Agreement (BAPA) to be with them prior to commencement. This would ensure no detriment is caused to the Abbey Flyer Railway line. This requirement will be included as an informative on the decision.

## 7 Consultation responses received

### 7.1 Statutory consultees and other organisations

Name of Statutory Consultee / Other Organisation	Comment
Hertfordshire County Council (Ecology)	No objection subject to compliance with submitted documentation conditions.
Hertfordshire County Council (Highways Authority)	No objection subject to conditions and informatives.
Network Rail	No objection subject to informatives.

### 7.2 Internal Consultees

Name of Internal Consultee	Comment
Arboricultural Officer	No objection subject to soft landscaping and compliance with submitted documentation conditions.
Environmental Health	No response received.
Housing Service	Fully supports this application.
Waste and Recycling	Refuse requirements noted.

### 7.3 Interested Parties

Letters were sent to 36 properties in the surrounding area. 23 Objections were received in response. The main comments are summarised below, the full letters are available to view online:

Comments	Officer response
Loss of Open Space / Overdevelopment	The subject site is considered to be a windfall site which is suitable for development. It is not designated as open space within the Development Plan. The density of the proposal is not considered to

	be overdevelopment.
Design	The scale and design of the building relates well to the surrounding built form of Amwell Close and Phillipers as noted in section (b) of the appraisal.
Loss of Light, Privacy and Outlook	The proposed development would cause no undue harm to neighbouring amenity as noted in section (e) of the appraisal.
Additional Parking Pressure	The provision of six parking spaces for the eight dwellings is in accordance with policy. See section on (f) Access, servicing and parking provision above.
Traffic Generation	The provision of an additional 8 dwellings would not put any significant pressure on the highway network. This has been noted in the response from Hertfordshire County Council Highways.
Lack of education and health facilities	The development is CIL (Community Infrastructure Levy) liable. This levy is used to help the local authority to deliver the infrastructure needed to support development in their area.
Disruption from Construction	The Environmental Protection Act, the Control of Pollution Act and the Highway Act control the matters relating to construction.
Loss of Trees	Trees would be felled to facilitate this development. The loss of trees has been limited as much as possible and trees retained where possible. New tree planting would also mitigate this loss. This is explained in section (g) of the appraisal.
Impact to Wildlife	The ecological appraisal submitted with this application finds no significant wildlife. Other legislation exists outside of planning to protect wildlife. Herts County Council Ecology are satisfied with the proposal.
Harm to adjacent railway	Network Rail have been consulted and are satisfied subject to an informative

## 8 Recommendation

### Conditions

#### 1. Three Years

The development to which this permission relates shall be begun within a period of three years commencing on 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. Approved Drawings and Documents

The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved drawings and documents:

- Drawing Number: RT20052-RTA-XX-00-DR-A-0001. Revision: PL03
- Drawing Number: RT20052-RTA-XX-00-DR-A-0004. Revision: PL06
- Drawing Number: RT20052-RTA-XX-00-DR-A-0005. Revision: PL04
- Drawing Number: RT20052-RTA-XX-00-DR-A-0006. Revision: PL04
- Drawing Number: RT20052-RTA-XX-XX-DR-A-0007. Revision: PL04
- Drawing Number: RT20052-RTA-XX-XX-DR-A-0008. Revision: PL04
- Drawing Number: RT20052-RTA-XX-01-DR-A-0021. Revision: P03
- Arboricultural Impact Assessment. Document Reference: 5519/20-02 Rev -. Dated: 7<sup>th</sup> April 2020. By: PJC Consultancy
- Arboricultural Method Statement (Preliminary). Document Reference: 5519/20-03 Rev -. Dated: 6<sup>th</sup> April 2020. By: PJC Consultancy
- Preliminary Ecological Appraisal. Document Reference: 4179E/19. Dated: 20<sup>th</sup> September 2019. By: PJC Consultancy
- Design and Access Statement. Revision: PL01. Dated: July 20. By: Rock Townsend
- Transport Statement. Report Number: 133818-R01(1). Dated: May 2020. By: Jarvis
- Travel Plan Statement. Report Number: 133818-R02(1). Dated: May 2020. By: Jarvis

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.

#### 3. Detailed Drawings

No construction works above foundation level shall commence until detailed design drawings of the proposed building including the external door and window reveals, brick coursing detailing, eaves details and rainwater goods 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.

Reason: In the interests of the character and appearance of the area, in accordance with Policy UD1 of the Watford Local Plan Core Strategy 2006-31.

#### 4. Materials

No construction works above foundation level shall commence until details of the materials to be used for all the external finishes of the building, including walls, roof, doors and windows, 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.

Reason: In the interests of the character and appearance of the area, in accordance with Policy UD1 of the Watford Local Plan Core Strategy 2006-31.

#### 5. Hard Landscaping

No part of the development shall be occupied until a detailed hard landscaping scheme for the site including site boundary treatments, drainage of the parking spaces and external lighting has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, and the works have been carried out in accordance with the approved details. The detailed scheme shall be based upon drawing number: RT20052-RTA-XX-00-DR-A-0004 revision: PL04.

Reason: In the interests of the visual appearance of the site and the wider area, in accordance with Policy UD1 of the Watford Local Plan Core Strategy 2006-31.

#### 6. Soft Landscaping

No part of the development shall be occupied until a detailed soft landscaping scheme for the site has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The detailed scheme shall be

based upon drawing number: RT20052-RTA-XX-00-DR-A-0004 revision: PL04. The approved soft landscaping scheme shall be carried out not later than the first available planting and seeding season after completion of 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 and the wider area, in accordance with Policy UD1 of the Watford Local Plan Core Strategy 2006-31.

#### 7. Cycle and Refuse Store Details

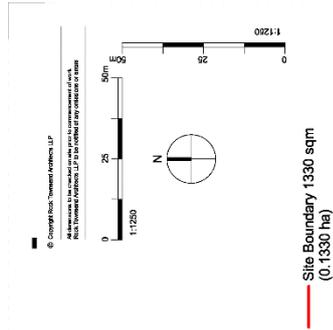
No dwelling shall be occupied until details of the cycle and refuse stores have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority and have been constructed in accordance with the approved drawings. The bin stores shall be retained as approved at all times.

Reason: To ensure adequate facilities are provided for the future occupiers, in accordance with saved Policies SE7 and T10 of the Watford District Plan 2000 and Policy UD1 of the Watford Local Plan Core Strategy 2006-31.

#### Informatives

1. IN907 – Positive and proactive statement
2. IN909 – Street naming and numbering
3. IN910 – Building Regulations
4. IN911 – Party Wall Act
5. IN912 – Hours of Construction
6. IN913 – Community Infrastructure Levy Liability
7. IN915 – Highway Works – HCC agreement required
8. Network Rail Agreement

# Site Location Plan



--- Land owned by Sanctuary Housing within the planning application boundary. It is likely that the existing turning head will need extending and re-modelling for access by fire tenders or bin lorries. Agreement for this has been sought from the relevant land owners, Sanctuary Housing.



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S

PL03 2010 21 REISSUED TO PLANNING  
 PL03 2010 05 Submitted for planning  
 REVIEWED

PROJECT: AMWELL CLOSE WATFORD  
 WDC9 North Watford  
 DWELLING: Existing  
 SITE LOCATION PLAN

DATE: 28/05/20  
 SHEET: 1:1250  
 SCALE: 1:1250  
 DRAWN BY: PLANNING  
 CHECKED BY: RT/20/052  
 DRAWING NO: RT/20/052-RT/20/052-001-001

THE CHURCH, BAKER STREET, LONDON, SE1 8AE  
 020 7261 8877  
 www.rta-architects.co.uk



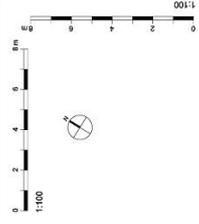
Aerial of Site



Proposed Site Plan



© Copyright Rock Townsend Architects LLP  
 All dimensions to be checked on the site by a competent person  
 Rock Townsend Architects LLP is the author of any information on plans



DATE: 08/05/2018  
 DRAWN BY: J. BROWN  
 CHECKED BY: J. BROWN  
 PROJECT: W225 North Watford  
 DRAWING: Ground and First Floor

**Rock Townsend**

PROJECT: AMWELL CLOSE WATFORD  
 W225 North Watford  
 DRAWING TITLE: Proposed Plans  
 DRAWING NO: Ground and First Floor

DATE: MAY 2018  
 SCALE: 1:100  
 DRAWN BY: J. BROWN  
 CHECKED BY: J. BROWN

PROJECT NO: RT20052  
 DRAWING NO: RT20052-RTA-00-GR-A-005

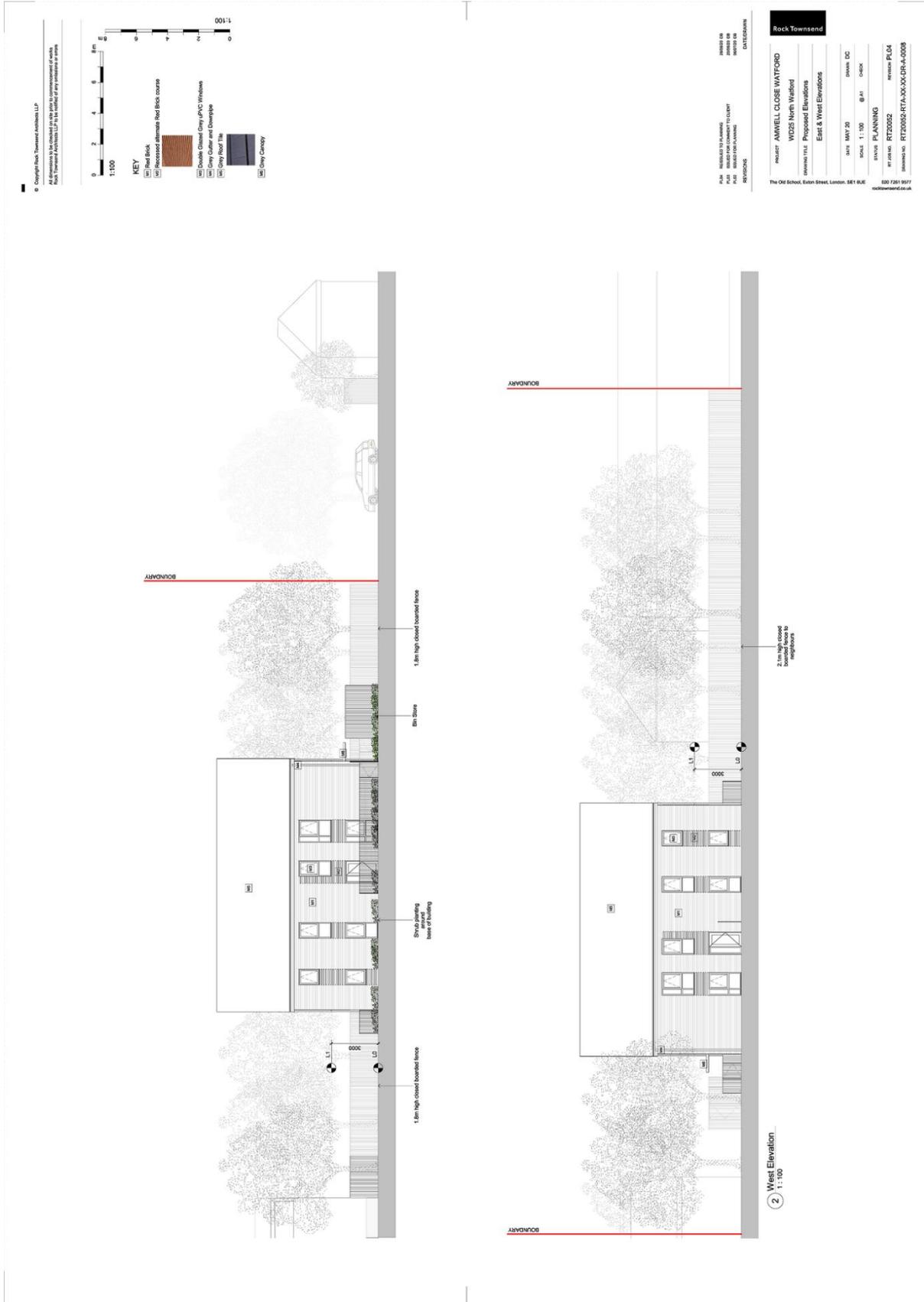
The Old School, Eaton Street, London, SE1 8UE  
 020 751 9277  
 rocktownsend.co.uk

2 Proposed First Floor Plan  
 1:100

1 Proposed Ground Floor plan  
 1:100

Proposed Floor Plans





Proposed Side Elevations (East and West)

## Agenda Item 4

<b>Committee Date</b>	Wednesday, 4 November 2020
<b>Application Reference</b>	20/00788/FUL
<b>Site Address</b>	Land adjacent 1 Park Terrace, Watford, WD25 9PL
<b>Proposal</b>	Erection of 3 x 4 bedroom terraced houses with associated car parking within the curtilage of the site
<b>Applicant</b>	Westfield Homes
<b>Agent</b>	Warner Planning
<b>Type of Application</b>	Full Planning Permission
<b>Reason for Committee Item</b>	Number of received objections
<b>Target Decision Date</b>	Friday 6 <sup>th</sup> November 2020 (extended by agreement)
<b>Statutory Publicity</b>	Neighbour letters
<b>Case officer</b>	Helen Harris; <a href="mailto:helen.harris@watford.gov.uk">helen.harris@watford.gov.uk</a>
<b>Ward</b>	Meriden

### 1. Recommendation

- 1.1 That planning permission be granted, subject to conditions and informatives (as set out in Section 8 of this Committee Report).

### 2. Site and Surroundings

- 2.1 The application site is approximately 710sqm in area and comprises of a vacant piece of land adjacent to No. 1 Park Terrace, a two-storey end-of-terrace dwelling. The site is situated within Character Area 21C in the Watford Character of Area Study. This Character Area is located in the northern part of the Borough.
- 2.2 To the north and east of the application site lies additional contemporary residential development within the neighbouring Borough. There is consistent architectural topology across the development, with buildings exhibiting similar materials and of a fairly consistent scale. This outer urban area operates as a cul-de-sac and has low levels of pedestrian/vehicular activity.
- 2.3 The application site is not located within a Conservation Area and there are no statutory or locally listed buildings either on the site or within close proximity.

### **3. Summary of the Proposal**

#### **3.1 Proposal**

3.2 Full planning permission is sought for the construction of three, three-storey terraced dwellinghouses, each with four bedrooms, together with associated refuse/recycling stores and cycle parking and a total of six car parking spaces to the rear.

3.3 The proposed layout of each dwelling is such that the ground floor would comprise of an open plan living/dining/kitchen room and WC, the first floor would comprise of two double-sized bedrooms, one single bedroom and family bathroom, and the second floor would comprise a further double-sized bedroom and en-suite bathroom.

3.4 A total of 6no. car parking spaces are shown to the rear of the proposed dwellings, accessed via Kytes Drive. Additional landscaping is also proposed to the front of each dwelling in the form of small front garden areas, with each dwelling shown to have a cycle store to the front for two cycles each, as well as provision for refuse/recycling.

3.5 Each dwelling is shown to have a private rear garden, ranging between 67sqm to 128sqm in total area. Boundary treatment to the rear includes 2.1m high close-boarded timber fencing and gates, with individual gated rear access provided to each dwelling from the rear car parking area through into rear gardens.

#### **3.6 Conclusion**

3.7 The proposed three dwellinghouses sit comfortably within the street scene, without giving rise to any significant or unacceptable loss of amenity to the surrounding properties in accordance with the Development Plan. The dwellings would provide high-quality, good-sized accommodation and amenity areas. On-site parking using the existing vehicle accesses is acceptable to the Highway Authority.

### **4. Relevant Policies**

4.1 Members should refer to the background papers attached to the agenda. These highlight the policy framework under which this application is determined. Specific policy considerations with regard to this particular application are detailed in Section 6, below.

## **5. Relevant Site History / Background Information**

- 5.1 The application site has no relevant planning history.
- 5.2 The agent has sought pre-application advice from Watford Borough Council. A written response was provided to the agent on 14 April 2020.

## **6. Main Considerations**

- 6.1 The main issues to be considered in the determination of these applications are:
- (a) Principle of Development;
  - (b) Scale and Design;
  - (c) Proposed Layout and Quality of Living Accommodation (including Amenity Space);
  - (d) Impact upon Neighbouring Residential Amenity;
  - (e) Highways, Refuse & Recycling Provision; and
  - (f) Ecology, Trees and Landscaping;
- 6.2 (a) Principle of Development
- 6.3 Section 11 of the NPPF establishes the requirement to make effective use of land. Paragraph 117 establishes that “Planning policies and decisions should promote effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses while safeguarding and improving the environment and ensuring safe and healthy living conditions”. Paragraph 118 states that “Planning policies and decisions should promote and support the development of under-utilised land and buildings, especially if this would help to meet identified needs for housing where land supply is constrained and available sites could be used more effectively”.
- 6.4 The application proposals would provide for three, four-bedroom dwellings on a plot of underutilised land. Policy HS2 gives guidance on the mix of housing units sought across the borough in order to provide for the needs of the whole community. Policy SS1 acknowledges that in suburban areas a significant provision should be made for family sized units. Given the location of the site within an established suburban area, the majority of the units should be 2 bed or larger. The proposal would provide family-sized dwellings which are considered to comply with Policy HS2 of Watford Core Strategy which encourages family-sized accommodation.

- 6.5 Sustainable development underpins planning policy from a local to national level, which includes the creation of residential accommodation and it is considered that the proposed development would align with, and support, these policy objectives.
- 6.6 (b) Scale and Design
- 6.7 The area surrounding the application site consists predominantly of residential uses, with a varied mix in terms of building types and sizes. Detached dwellings feature along Kytes Drive to the north of the site, with flatted development further to the west on the other side of the North Orbital. In the immediate context of the site along Coates Way, however, the predominant form of housing is two-storey terraced dwellings with pitched roofs. Many of the houses have been extended in the roof and feature rear dormers. The general materiality is uniform, comprising of dark stock brickwork, u-PVC and painted timber windows and doors and clay tiled roofs.
- 6.8 The design of the proposed dwellings is traditional, with limited detailing. The building form proposed is considered to complement the local street scene in terms of its character and appearance. The scale of the proposed 3no. 4-bedroom terrace dwellings would also be in keeping with the general scale and appearance of neighbouring dwellings within the residential area. In terms of materiality, brick is proposed as the principal facing material which would be compatible with the local context. Clay plain tiles are proposed to the pitched roofs. Detailing around the window reveals would take the form of alternate courses of projecting brick at ground floor level and contrasting brickwork at first floor level. The positioning, scale and design reflect the wider character of the street and would sit comfortably within the street scene. Appropriate materials and design details will be secured by way of condition.
- 6.9 The proposed scheme would provide a functional layout and the design and appearance of the proposed terrace dwellings are considered to be acceptable in the context of the site's residential setting. The proposed terraced dwellings would have front access from Park Terrace, with rear access to private gardens and parking area via an access road off Kytes Drive.
- 6.10 Overall, the proposed dwellinghouses will reflect the scale, design and appearance of the surrounding houses and will enhance the streetscenes in Park Terrace.

- 6.11 (c) Proposed Layout & Quality of Living Accommodation (including Amenity Space)
- 6.12 The Nationally Described Space Standards (March 2015) prescribe the minimum space standards for new residential development which provide as follows:
- Bedrooms of 11.5sqm and over are considered to be double (2 person) rooms, whereas bedrooms under 11.5sqm are considered to be single (1 person) rooms; and
  - Dwellings should provide flexibility by providing at least one bedroom capable of being used and furnished as either a double or a twin room.
- 6.13 The Nationally Described Space Standards, March 2015 (DCLG) further prescribes minimum unit sizes. The minimum space standard set for 4-bedroom, 7-person dwellinghouses arranged over 3 storeys is 121sqm, with an additional 3sqm requirement given over to built-in storage.
- 6.14 Each of the houses will have an internal floor area of 126sqm. This slightly exceeds the minimum floor area set out in the nationally described space standards. Floor to floor heights are 2.7m, achieving 2.5m floor to ceiling height at ground and first floor. Storage space is provided under the stairs at ground level and first floor. At ground floor level, the open plan arrangement allows for the living/dining rooms to be dual aspect, with kitchens facing to the rear garden. At first floor level the bedrooms face to the front and rear. As such, it is considered that all of the main habitable room windows will be afforded with good levels of outlook, natural light ingress and ventilation.
- 6.15 In respect of privacy, the rear facing windows of the houses are 25.5m apart, which exceeds the minimum guideline of 22m for distances between proposed dwellings and will ensure acceptable levels of privacy. Each house will have a private rear garden area of between 67-128sqm. The Residential Design Guide prescribes a minimum area of 80sqm of amenity space for new four bedroom dwellinghouses. Two of the three dwellinghouses would have gardens smaller than this, with a deficit of between 10sqm and 14sqm. One of the dwellings would benefit from wraparound side and rear garden extending to 128sqm, significantly in excess of the standards. It is not considered that the smaller garden areas to two of the dwellings are unduly harmful to the quality of accommodation provided by the dwellings. It is also acknowledged that the application site is within close proximity to Garston Park which would serve as a supplementary recreational and wellbeing space for future residents.
- 6.16 Overall, it is considered that the proposed dwellinghouses will provide good quality accommodation for future occupiers.

6.17 (d) Impact upon Neighbouring Residential Amenity

6.18 Development is expected to be cognizant of the impacts that it may generate so as to avoid reducing the level of amenity available to either the application site itself or its surroundings.

6.19 The nearest properties to the application site are 1-3 Park Terrace fronting onto Coates Way which lie immediately adjacent to the application site. The siting of the proposed dwellings is such that they would be in a linear arrangement, following the established building line created by the existing row of terraced dwellings along Coates Way.

6.20 The building footprint of the proposed dwellings would follow that of the existing dwellings adjacent and not project further forward and out to the rear than the neighbouring dwellings. There are no side-facing windows proposed at any level to the proposed dwellings. As such, there would be no resultant direct overlooking, loss of privacy/amenity or loss of light to the living accommodation or external amenity spaces of those neighbouring properties adjacent to the east.

6.21 (e) Highways, Refuse & Recycling Provision

6.22 Pedestrian access to the proposed development would be via the front (Park Terrace) while vehicular access would be through the rear access service road (Kytes Drive) which would be extended for vehicles and car parking to the site.

6.23 The proposal would incorporate 6no. on-site car parking spaces (that is, two spaces to serve each dwelling). Car parking spaces are arranged so that four are perpendicular and two are longitudinal. The Watford District Plan states maximum parking standards within Appendix 2. This site is located within Zone 4 and for the development of 3 x 4-bedroom units, the maximum parking provision for the development should not exceed 9no. spaces (i.e. 3 x 3 spaces per dwelling max). The quantum of car parking spaces would fall within the maximum parking standards and is considered to be a reasonable level of provision.

6.24 The site is bounded by a service/access road to the rear of Park Terrace and the North Orbital Road (A405) to the west. A footway linking into the pedestrian underpass ramp underneath the A405 is set within a green area to the south. An existing 3m cycleway footway is present on the eastern side of the A405, bordering the site. The service/access road off Kytes Drive is maintainable by the highway authority with footpaths on both sides, providing vehicular access to the rear of a number of properties. This access road is accessible at its eastern

end via Kytes Drives, approximately 35m to the north of the junction with Coates Way.

- 6.25 Hertfordshire County Council have been consulted and have raised no objection to the scheme. Whilst acknowledging that the proposed development is an intensification of the use of the existing site, Highways officers consider that the scheme will generate low vehicular trips and the level of traffic to be generated by the proposed development would not result in a significant impact upon the local road network. Highways officers find the submitted swept-path analysis to be acceptable demonstrating adequate turning / manoeuvrability space for vehicles.
- 6.26 The proposal also includes space for bin and bike storage to the front garden area of each dwelling.
- 6.27 Plans depict Sheffield cycle stands for each property, positioned adjacent to each front door to allow up to two cycles to be securely stored. The Council would expect these stands to be covered/enclosed and a condition is hereby attached to ensure details of enclosure are submitted to the Council prior to occupation of the development.
- 6.28 Refuse/recycling is shown to be positioned in the front garden area for a 240litre and 140litre bin per dwelling. The bins would be brought to the front highway on collection day. Refuse collection will be made off Coates Way, in a similar arrangement to neighbouring properties. Details of these refuse stores will be secured by way of condition.
- 6.29 (f) Ecology, Trees and Landscaping
- 6.30 The application site involves the development of an area which was previously part of a site of deciduous woodland of ecological importance, however, this has now been cleared and the site has been used as a residential garden for No. 1 Park Terrace for the last several years. The site is, however, sited immediately adjacent to a site which remains deciduous woodland of significant ecological importance.
- 6.31 The planning application includes a supporting ecological assessment which finds that the site affords negligible opportunities for protected species. The boundary of the site is largely retained with close-boarded fencing with few access points for common garden mammals, such as hedgehogs. The woodland edge habitat along the northern site boundary is recognised as providing for potential foraging and navigational opportunities for bats.

- 6.32 The proposed development incorporates a number of ecological enhancement measures, including native plant species and species of known wildlife value in landscaping scheme; provision of tree, shrub or hedgerow planting along the northern site boundary to buffer the adjacent woodland habitat; provision of new bat roosting and bird nesting opportunities (i.e. 1no. bat box and 1no. bird box to be incorporated in the fabric of the dwellings) and cut-outs inserted to fencing at ground level to ensure hedgehog and other wildlife are able to move freely between gardens.
- 6.33 The Council's arboricultural officer has assessed the proposals, finding that the proposals would not impact directly on the health and longevity of the on-site trees. The proposed vehicular access extends to the extent of the boundary to the north which could have the potential to impact on the health of the offsite trees in the adjoining woodland. The Council's arboricultural officer recommends that a tree survey be undertaken on the offsite trees on the adjacent land, together with an Arboricultural Impact Assessment to ensure no damage is had to these trees through construction works. These recommendations have been dealt with via pre-commencement conditions attached to the recommendation for approval.

## **7. Consultation Responses Received**

### **7.1 Statutory Consultees and Other Organisations**

#### **7.2 Internal Consultees**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Officer's Comment</b>
Hertfordshire County Council Highways Team	No objections to the scheme, subject to the imposition of a number of informatives.
Waste and Recycling Team	No objections to the scheme. Refuse requirements noted.
Arboricultural Officer	No objection to the proposals, subject to the attachment of pre-commencement conditions.

#### **7.3 Interested Parties**

Letters were sent to 15no. properties in the surrounding area. Responses have been received from 10no. properties. The main comments are summarised below (the full comments/letters are available to view online):

<b>Comments</b>	<b>Officer's Response</b>
Exacerbation of car parking pressures and highways concerns to the rear access road in terms of safety (between intended users and other residents) and capacity to serve the proposed development	<p>The Highway Authority have not raised concerns or objections in relation to traffic generation or road safety.</p> <p>Maximum parking standards seek to prevent increased traffic generation. The provision of two parking spaces per dwelling is in accordance with policy. Please refer to Section (e), above, relating to access, servicing and parking provision.</p>
Loss of sunlight/daylight and loss of privacy	The proposal has been designed to not give rise to any significant or unacceptable loss of amenity to the surrounding properties. See Section (d), above, relating to impacts on surrounding properties.
Noise and disturbance resulting from construction activity	<p>The Environmental Protection Act, the Control of Pollution Act and the Highway Act control the matters of disruption raised and an informative is attached to this effect.</p> <p>Any disruption during construction works would be temporary and a construction management plan would be secured by way of condition.</p>
Validity of supporting technical studies/reports (i.e. concerns that Noise Assessment is not accurate due to date of survey / errors found in accompanying Planning Statement)	Errors in Planning Statement duly noted by planning officer. Specifically, page 27 (under Sustainable Development sub-heading) where reference is made to a different address/scheme. However, these errors do not make a difference to the validity of the assessment.

## 8. Recommendation

That planning permission be granted, subject to the below listed conditions and informatives.

### Conditions

1. The development to which this permission relates shall be begun within a period of three years commencing on 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. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved drawings:

2036 (P) 00-P9 – Proposed Ground Floor Plan  
2036 (P) 01-P6 – Proposed First Floor Plan  
2036 (P) 02-P6 – Proposed Second Floor Plan  
2036 (P) 40-P5 – Proposed Elevations  
2036 (P) 100-P2 – Existing Site Plan with Location Plan

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.

3. Prior to the commencement of the site works the applicant shall submit a construction management plan setting out details of any demolition works, removal of materials from site, parking for all contractors, subcontractors, visitors and delivery vehicles, storage of materials to be approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority in consultation with the Highway Authority and that the service road accessed via Kytes Drive shall be maintained available for use at all times during the period of site works.

Reason: To minimise danger, obstruction and inconvenience to users of the highway, and for the free and safe movement of vehicles. This is a pre-commencement condition to ensure that the proposed measures during construction are satisfactory and are agreed with the Local Planning Authority before construction commences.

4. No construction works shall commence until details of the materials to be used for all the external finishes of the building, including walls, roof, doors and windows, 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.

Reason: In the interests of the character and appearance of the area, in accordance with Policy UD1 of the Watford Local Plan Core Strategy 2006-31. This is a pre-commencement condition as the materials need to be agreed with the Local Planning Authority before construction commences.

5. No development on site shall commence until a Tree Survey, Arboricultural Impact Assessment and a Method Statement in respect of tree protection measures (including ground protection) relating to trees located within and adjacent to the site (i.e. to include those offsite protected trees to the north of the site) have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The tree protection measures approved under this condition shall be implemented prior to the commencement of any works and shall be maintained as such at all times whilst the construction works take place.

Reason: To ensure the existing trees which make a positive contribution to the visual amenity of the area are retained and not harmed by the development in accordance with saved Policy SE37 of the Watford District Plan 2000.

6. No work shall commence until a detailed tree and landscaping scheme for the site, including details of trees to be retained, trees to be removed and replacement planting, 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 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 and the wider area, in accordance with Policy UD1 of the Watford Local Plan Core Strategy 2006-31.

7. No dwelling shall be occupied until full details of a soft landscaping scheme have 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 Policy UD1 of the Watford Local Plan Core Strategy 2006-31.

8. No dwelling shall be occupied until details of the cycle stores and refuse stores have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority and have been constructed in accordance with the approved drawings. The stores shall be retained as approved at all times thereafter.

Reason: To ensure adequate facilities are provided for the future occupiers, in accordance with saved Policies SE7 and T10 of the Watford District Plan 2000 and Policy UD1 of the Watford Local Plan Core Strategy 2006-31.

9. Notwithstanding the provisions of Article 3 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015 (or any modification or reenactment thereof), no development permitted under Schedule 2, Part 1, Classes A, B, C or D of the Order shall be carried out to the new houses without the prior written permission of the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To enable the Local Planning Authority to ensure that any such developments are carried out in a manner which will not be harmful to neighbouring amenity or the character and appearance of the area.

### Informatives

1. IN907 - Positive and proactive statement - GRANT
2. IN910 - Building Regulations
3. IN912 - Hours of Construction
4. IN909 - Street Name and Numbering
5. IN913 - Community Infrastructure Level Liability
6. IN808 – Vehicular Crossover
7. HIGH – Storage of Materials – Highway
8. OBSHIG – Obstruction of the Highway
9. MUD – Mud on highway
10. Roads to Remain Private

The applicant is advised that all access roads and parking area associated with the development will be unadopted and the developer should put in place a permanent arrangement for long-term maintenance.

Application Site



Aerial View of Application Site – Google Earth





Top Image: Front Elevation  
Bottom Image: Rear Elevation



Artist's Impressions of Proposed Development