# Development Management Committee 15th August 2018

## Item 8 Report No.PLN1821 Section C

The information, recommendations and advice contained in this report are correct as at the date of preparation, which is more than two weeks in advance of the Committee meeting. Because of these time constraints some reports may have been prepared in advance of the final date given for consultee responses or neighbour comment. Any changes or necessary updates to the report will be made orally at the Committee meeting.

Case Officer	Sarita Jones
Application No.	18/00251/FULPP
Date Valid	19th April 2018
Expiry date of consultations	7th June 2018
Proposal	Demolition of existing building and erection of part 3, part 4 and part 5-storey building containing 23 flats (2 x studios, 13 x one bedroom and 8 x two bedroom) and 2 retail units, with associated bin and cycle storage.
Address	Willow House 23 Grosvenor Road Aldershot Hampshire GU11 1DL
Ward	Wellington
Applicant	ACE Liberty & Stone Plc
Agent	Mr Jim Bailey
Recommendation	Refuse

## Description

The site occupies a prominent position at the junction of Grosvenor Road, Queens Road and Victoria Road, part of which is within the Aldershot West conservation area. It is on the edge of Aldershot town centre. It comprises a two storey flat roofed building built in the 1970s which is of little architectural merit. It has a small forecourt on Grosvenor Road and a small yard to the rear. It is in a poor state of repair and is currently vacant, having last been used as offices. Access to the rear of the building is available from Victoria Road but this is via land (currently a service area) which is not within the applicants' ownership (further commentary is made on this later in the report). There is no on site car parking to serve the building. There is a difference in levels within the site with Grosvenor Road being at a higher level than Victoria Road.

St Katherine Court lies to the north of the site. This building comprises nine flats provided over six floors. It is of relatively recent construction, post 2010, and is completed in a white render finish. Of most particular relevance to the current proposal is the position of bedroom windows in the recessed part of the south elevation of this building

26 Grosvenor Road lies to the south west and comprises a three storey building with a basement and a variety of outbuildings to the rear. It is adjacent to the junction with frontages onto both roads with access to the outbuildings provided from Queens Road. 28 Grosvenor Road is a single storey building which occupies a mid terrace position between 28 and 30 Grosvenor Road. 26, 28 and 30 Grosvenor Road are Grade II listed buildings dating from the late 19th century. 26 and 28 Grosvenor Road have been vacant for some time and were last used for retail purposes on the ground floor with ancillary storage and office uses on the remaining floors. The upper floors of 26 Grosvenor Road are finished in yellow bricks with arched windows of classical design following a regular pattern and form. The outbuildings are screened from general view by boundary walls and wooden doors which enclose the rear of the site. There is no car parking provision within the site. There is a difference in levels in the area with Queens Road being at a higher level than Grosvenor Road.

Wesley Chambers occupies a corner position to the west of the site and is a Grade II\* listed building. Whilst historically this building was used as a Methodist Chapel, it has been deconsecrated and is now used for commercial, educational and health purposes. 27 Grosvenor Road occupiers a corner position to the south of the site and is also a Grade II listed building. It is two storey and is used as for retail purposes at ground floor with ancillary accommodation above.

182-188 Victoria Road lies to the east of the site and comprises a three storey building with retail uses on the ground floor and flats above. In the planning statement the agent advises that vehicular access to the rear of the application site is via a driveway between this building and the application site. It is noted that this driveway is excluded from the application site.

183-187 Victoria Road lie to the south of the site. They comprise single and two storey buildings in a combination of retail and residential uses.

## RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

In 1970 planning permission, ALB 1248/18, was granted for offices at the junction of Victoria Road and Grosvenor Road. This was subsequently varied in 1971, ALB 1248/20, when offices were granted for use by Social Services and the Careers Office. This permission was implemented.

In 1994 planning permission, 94/00595/COU, was granted for the erection of a two storey rear extension, new lobby and change of use of the ground floor and part of the first floor to a day centre to provide psychiatric care and the use of the remainder of the first floor as office accommodation. This permission was implemented.

In 2007 planning permission, 07/00603/FUL, was granted for the demolition of the existing building (formerly 19 Grosvenor Road) and erection of a building providing 9 flats. This was implemented and is now St Katherine Court 21 Grosvenor Road. Of particular note is the location of recessed bedroom windows in proximity to the northern boundary of the application site. In 2010 a non material amendment, 10/00721/NMA, was approved to this planning permission to allow minor alterations to the elevations, configuration of the roof of the approved building and use of render external finishing

There is a current application, 18/00481/FULPP, for the retention of 6 retail units on the ground floor and conversion of the upper floors and a two-storey extension range to the rear into a total of 7 flats (comprising 4 X 1-bedroom and 3 X 2-bedroom units) at 182-192 Victoria Road; conversion of existing warehouse building into 4 X 1-bedroom flats on upper

floors and provision of a parking and bin-store area on the ground floor with vehicular access opened up to Union Terrace at the Old Warehouse; demolition of the single-storey garage block adjoining the Old Warehouse backing onto Union Terrace and erection of a new-build 4-storey extension attached to the side of the Old Warehouse building to provide a further 3 X 2-bedroom flats, one each on the upper floors (14 flats in total); and provision of 22 parking spaces, bin stores and landscape planting in Star Yard.

This application site immediately adjoins the current application site to the east. Of particular note is the proposal to landscape the front of the site by the entrance from Victoria Road immediately adjacent to the eastern boundary of the application site and the formation of two parking spaces and additional landscaping between the northern boundary of the application site and the Old Warehouse. The application is under consideration and will be reported to the Development Management committee in due course. The applicants for Willow House have been notified of this application. Their planning agent submitted a late objection to the proposal on the following grounds:

"I am writing to OBJECT in the strongest possible terms, on behalf of the owners of 181-187 Victoria Road, Aldershot, namely ACE Liberty and Stone Plc.

- The planning application, number 18/00481/FULPP, includes a site plan, which shows a number of parking spaces and landscaping strips being created within the Star Yard area.
- The proposal is not legally implementable, because my clients own a right of access and egress over the whole of the Star Yard area, in order to gain access to the their property.
- All of the obstructions, including parking bays and landscaping strips, need to be removed from the plans, which will mean that the application proposal should include far fewer parking bays and no landscaping.

A copy of the land registry title details are attached, which confirm the above."

The information submitted in relation to rights of access has given rise to further queries, particularly in terms of who benefits from the rights and exactly what these rights are. These have been raised with the agent and a reply is awaited. An update will be given to the meeting. In the absence of clarity on this issue, the proposal as set out below is being considered on the basis that the access and service yard are outside the defined application site as indicated on the submitted plans.

The current proposal is for the demolition of the existing building and the erection of a part 3, part 4 and part 5-storey building containing 23 flats (2 x studios, 13 x one bedroom and 8 x two bedroom) and 2 retail units, with associated bin and cycle storage. The building is contemporary in design with a flat roof. Glazed shopfronts are proposed for the retail units with large glazed windows/doors shown for the proposed flats. The five storey element of the building is on the Grosvenor Road frontage with the lower parts of the building fronting onto Victoria Road. The proposed external materials include brick, render, metal windows and railings and zinc and copper panels.

The ground floor would provide two retail units with basement accommodation, having frontages onto Victoria Road and Grosvenor Road. Two studio flats are proposed on the Victoria Road frontage with a two bedroom flat proposed behind the retail units overlooking the rear yard. The first and second floors, having a similar footprint to the ground floor, would provide 4 one bedroom and 2 two bedroom flats per floor giving a total of 12 flats. The third and fourth floors have smaller floor areas than the lower floors and would provide 2 one

bedroom and 2 two bedroom flats and 3 one bedroom and an one bedroom flats respectively. With the exception on one of the studios on the ground floor each flat would have its own balcony amenity space. A light well is proposed from the second floor level up adjoining St Katherine Court.

No car parking is proposed to serve the development. Parking for 32 cycles is proposed within the rear yard area to the east of the proposed building. Refuse storage for the proposed flats is proposed at ground floor level at the eastern of the building with access onto the driveway between the site and 182-192 Victoria Road.

The application is supported by a planning statement, a design and access statement, a built heritage statement, a transport statement, a technical note on deliveries and parking and framework travel plan, a noise assessment and a viability report.

## **Consultee Responses**

Crime Prevention Design Advisor	advises that having considered the supplementary information the comments made in the previous consultation remain relevant.
Community - Contracts Manager	provides information on what bins are required for the residential part of the development
Parks Development Officer	raises no objection to the proposal subject to a financial contribution.
Conservation Team	raise objection to the proposal
HCC Highways Development Planning	raise objection to the proposal.
Hampshire Fire & Rescue Service	advises that the development should take place in accordance with Approved Document B5 of the Building Regulations and section 12 of the Hampshire Act 1983. Advice is also given in relation to access for high reach appliances, water supplies, fire protection , the testing of fire safety systems, fire fighting and the environment and timber framed buildings.
Environmental Health	raises objection to the proposal
Housing	raise a query on the accuracy of the information submitted, the viability of the scheme and the accommodation being provided.
Natural England	raises objection to the proposal.
Planning Policy	raises concerns about the design of the proposal.
Crime Prevention Design Advisor	raises concerns about the connectivity of the residential and retail uses, potential increased burden on on-street parking given parking restrictions and absence of parking from the development and impact

	of deliveries given loading restrictions. Comments are also made about pedestrian access, security of cycle store and ground floor apartments and lighting
Surface Water Drainage Consultations	No information has been submitted on drainage
Thames Water	advises that there would be no objection in relation to the waste water network and process infrastructure. It notes that the development is within 15 metres of TW underground waste water assets and seeks an informative to safeguard these assets. If the developer follows the sequential approach to the disposals of surface water no objection is raised to the proposal in terms of surface water drainage.
Aldershot Town Centre And Cultural Manager	No views received.

## Neighbours notified

In addition to posting a site notice and press advertisement, 133 individual letters of notification were sent to addresses in Cross Street, Frederick Street, Grosvenor Road, Queens Road, Union Street, Upper Union Terrace, Victoria Road

#### Neighbour comments

Cllr Roberts objects to the proposal on the basis that the additional rear building is totally out of character with the surrounding properties.

The Aldershot Civic Society object to the proposal on the following grounds:

- the building is out of character for the area;
- it has an unfavourable impact on the views of the Aldershot West conservation area especially Wesley Chambers for the rest of the town, particularly when looking up from Victoria Road;
- there does not appear to be an access point for the bin area
- insufficient information about commercial waste removal;
- no parking;
- impact on local traffic associated with deliveries for both commercial and residential occupiers.

Objections have been received from 4 South Walk and 175 Victoria Road on the following grounds:

- 23 flats is too dense especially with no parking provision;
- it would be compounding an already difficult parking situation locally;
- it is entirely fanciful that the residents will be cycling around Aldershot;
- the development is aesthetically harmful to the adjacent Aldershot West conservation area;
- the design is bland and does not fit in with the heritage buildings around it;
- new residential development with no provision for any parking for its residents should obviously not be allowed.

## Policy and determining issues

The site is within Aldershot town centre. As such Policies SS1 (The Spatial Strategy), SP3 (Aldershot town centre), CP1 (Sustainable Development Principles), CP2 (Design and Heritage), CP3 (Renewable Energy and Sustainable Construction), CP4 (Surface Water Flooding), CP5 (Meeting Housing Needs and Housing Mix), CP6 (Affordable Housing), CP8 (Supporting Economic Development), CP10 (Infrastructure Provision), CP12 (Open Space, Sport and Recreation), CP13 (Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area), CP16 (Reducing and Managing Travel Demand) and CP17 (Investing in Transport) of the Rushmoor Core Strategy are relevant to the consideration of the submitted proposal as are "saved" local plan policies ENV16 (Development Characteristics), ENV23 (New Development affecting Listed Buildings). ENV25 (Demolition of a Listed Building/Non Listed Building in a Conservation Area), ENV26 (Development adjoining listed buildings), ENV32 (Conservation Areas), ENV33 (Demolition of a building in a Conservation Area), ENV34 (Development in Conservation Areas), ENV36, (Use of Materials in a Conservation Area), ENV37 (Views from Conservation Areas), ENV48, ENV49, ENV50 and ENV51 (Environmental Pollution and Noise), H14 (amenity space), TR10 (Contributions for Local Transport Infrastructure), OR4 (open space provision), TC1 (Policies for Aldershot and Farnborough Town Centres and North Camp District Centre), and TC5 (B1 use in town and district centres). The Council's adopted planning documents (SPD) on 'Housing Density and Design' (May 2006), 'Planning Contributions - Transport' 2008; 'Car and Cycle Parking Standards', 2017 and Aldershot Town Centre Prospectus (January 2016), the Rushmoor Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area Interim Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy as updated, policy NRM6 of the South East plan and the advice contained in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and National Planning Practice Guidance are also relevant.

The Council published the draft submission version of the Local Plan for public consultation between Friday 9 June and Friday 21 July 2017. The Council's Planning Policy team have processed all the representations that have been received, prepared a report which has summarised the issues raised during the consultation and set out the Council's response. On 2 February 2018, this report, together with all the 'duly made' representations received during the consultation period, were submitted to the Planning Inspectorate for examination, alongside the plan and its supporting documents.

A planning inspector has been appointed. She held a public hearing which took place in May this year. Given this, and recognising that they currently have limited weight, policies SS1 (Presumption in favour of sustainable development), SS2 (Spatial Strategy), IN2 (Transport), HE1 (Heritage), HE2 (Demolition of a heritage asset), HE3 (Development within or adjoining a conservation area), D1 (Design in the Built Environment), DE2 (Residential Internal Space Standards), DE3 (Residential Amenity Space Standards), DE4 (Sustainable Water Use), DE6 (Open Space, Sport and Recreation), DE10 (Pollution), LN1 (Housing mix), NE1 (Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area), NE3 (Trees and Landscaping), NE4 (Biodiversity) and NE8 (Sustainable Drainage Systems), as proposed to be amended are considered relevant to the current proposal.

Part of the site is within the Aldershot West Conservation Area on the edge of Aldershot town centre. Section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 imposes a duty on the Local Planning Authority to have special regard to the desirability of preserving a listed building or its setting. Section 72 in this Act (special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that conservation area) is also relevant.

The main determining issues are the principle of development, the effect on the character of the area having regard to the Aldershot West conservation area and adjoining listed buildings, the impact on neighbours, the living environment created, the provision of affordable housing, flood risk and drainage issues, highway considerations, open space provision, nature conservation and renewable energy and construction.

# Commentary

# The principle of development

The site is located within Aldershot town centre. The site is identified in the Aldershot town centre prospectus supplementary document as a site with development opportunity. The existing building makes little contribution to the area therefore there would be no objection to its demolition. The building has been vacant for some time and it is evident that it does not meet the current requirements for office users. As such there is no objection to the loss of the office use on this site.

The introduction of residential development on this site is supported by policy SP3 of the Rushmoor Core Strategy, subject to development management criteria as considered below. With regard to the proposed retail units, the site is outside of the shopping core as defined by the Rushmoor Core Strategy and the primary and secondary retail frontages as identified in the emerging Local Plan. Planning Policy and Conservation has raised a concern, given the current level of vacancy within defined shopping core, whether the proposed retail units would be an effective use of land. However as the market will determine the success or failure of such uses in this location it is not considered appropriate to raise a formal objection to the proposal in this regard but is recognised finding retail occupiers in this location may be problematic.

Having regard to the above there is no objection to the principle of development subject to the consideration of the following issues.

# The effect on the character of the area having regard to the Aldershot West conservation area and proximity to adjoining listed buildings

The application is supported by design and access and built heritage statements which explain and justify in detail the design rationale behind the development and its impact on the character of the area and adjoining heritage assets. In this regard Planning Policy advise that there is a conflict with policy CP2 of the Rushmoor Core Strategy in that the proposal does not respect the character and appearance of the local area. At its highest point, the building is five storeys along the frontage with Grosvenor Road and turning the corner into Victoria Road. Whilst the line of the top floor is set back from the main building line, the building will likely appear to be more dominant in the context of the Victoria Road street scene, particularly when viewed from the elevated position of Queens Road. A fifth storey is considered excessive in this location, and a step change in height between 27 Grosvenor Road and the adjacent St Katherine Court would be preferred. However, it is noted that that the proposed development steps back on the Grosvenor Road frontage to allow for a better turn at the corner with Victoria Road, which is welcomed.

The Council's Conservation Officer has been consulted on this application. She advises that:

"There is no objection to the demolition of the existing building, which does not add to the character or appearance of the area. The three corner buildings that make up the crossroads

are listed and traditional buildings, one being a redundant church, now in alternative uses. The other two corner buildings are of a classical and Italianate architectural style, with principle key proportions and design details that could inform the design of this plot. The principle detail being the ground floor as a plinth or band that ground the building, but the rhythm of fenestration and their proportions are also important. Equally, the depth of the corner plots are that of the existing building, forming a corner block, they do not extend along the roads, as the proposed does, extending along Victoria Road. A break in the building along Victoria Road would address this and provide an opportunity to address the different styles and proportions of the street frontages.

This application proposes to set the building back by 1.4m on the Grosvenor Road elevation and 300mm on the Victoria Road elevation. The set back on the Grosvenor Road now sets the whole building back, when the building line of the existing properties along Grosvenor Road front directly onto the pavement. This set back services the now proposed retail spaces and the setback was original requested to protect private spaces from the public. The setback on the Victoria Road is not enough to provide planting or a buffer between the private and public spaces. Victoria Road retains retail up to this plot, so switching retail to this ground floor space would be more in keeping with the ground floor uses along Victoria Road.

Where the brick façade extends out beyond the building creating a clean detail; it is questioned as to whether this detail can be built out in brick or would need to be supported/design changed or an alternative material."

In the absence of amendment, she recommends the refusal as the present scheme does not enhance or preserve the character or appearance of the conservation area nor preserve the setting of the listed buildings.

Notwithstanding these comments there are also concerns that the increase the massing and height of the proposed building relative to Wesley Chambers, is considered to close down the space within which this building is viewed. As such the proposal would diminish the contribution of the Wesley Chambers as a landmark in views along Victoria Road. It is also noted that adjoining development to Wesley Chambers is visually subordinate such as to retain the setting of this building. The proposal introduces a significant increase in height when compared to the existing building which is considered to be harmful in planning terms. Whilst the proposed doors and windows on the upper floors follow the general rhythm of adjoining development to its detriment.

Having regard to the above commentary objection is raised to the proposal in terms of its impact on character of the area having regard to the Aldershot West conservation area and adjoining listed buildings

## The impact on neighbours

The closest residential neighbours to the site are situated at St Katherine Court. This building is located to the north of the site and comprises nine flats. It has an unusual relationship to the application site in that part of the south elevation is recessed (just under a metre) adjacent to the common boundary. Stairwell windows are situated in the south elevation with bedroom windows facing east and west. The application is supported by a daylight and sunlight report which concludes:

"The south facing flank windows of St Katherine's Court were consented into a position where the lowest levels were very constrained against Willow House with the upper floors experiencing an unusually open outlook above Willow House but potentially fettering the future development of this site. The scheme however responds well be increasing the width of the lightwell from the existing position.

In such circumstances the BRE guide suggests a contextual baseline assessment should be undertaken to assess the proposals against development following the design principles of St Katherine's Court. The result of the this assessment show an improvement to all windows when compared against this "mirrored" baseline and the proposal therefore confirms with the design principles set out in the BRE"

These comments are noted, however there are concerns in this regard. The proposed light well measures some 4.4 metres by 6.3 metres in area. Whilst the baseline assessment may indicate an improvement as a result of the development, this is in the context of very poor existing daylight levels. The combination of the proximity of the new building and the height of the three walls to form the light well are considered to materially worsen the existing situation for residents of St Katherine Court in terms of loss of light and is also considered to result in an unacceptable sense of enclosure. Objection is raised to the proposal in this regard.

Given existing building relationships in proximity to the site, including separation distances retained, the proposal is not considered to have an adverse impact (overbearing or overshadowing) or material loss of privacy to occupiers of Wesley Chambers or 26-28 Grosvenor Road (commercial and residential uses considered) such that the proposal should be refused on these grounds.

With regard to the impact on the adjoining warehouse it is acknowledged that as existing there is inter and overlooking between the buildings which is considered acceptable given the commercial uses on both sites. Whilst the proposal will increase the overlooking from the site into the adjoining warehouse, given its indirect nature and/or the ability to impose conditions concerning balcony areas it is not considered to be materially harmful in planning terms. Given the existing building relationships no objection is raised on overshadowing or overbearing impacts arising from the development.

With regard to the impact on 182-188 Victoria Road, it is considered that this arises from potential increase in overlooking. Given that there are no windows in the side elevation serving habitable rooms no objection is raised to the proposal in this regard.

The height of the new building will have an impact on occupiers of 183-187 Victoria Road in terms of potential overbearing and overshadowing impacts and loss of privacy. However given the site's town centre location and the separation distances retained these impacts are not considered to be significantly harmful such that the proposal should be refused on these grounds.

#### The living environment created

The submission indicates that the residential accommodation to be provided will meet the Technical Housing standard -nationally described space standard as published by the

Department of Communities and Local Government in March 2015. However it is noted that some of the one-bedroom units fall below the minimum standard for a two-person unit notwithstanding that double beds are shown on the floorplan but meet the standard for a one-person unit (flats 2.2, 2.5, 3.2, 4.2 and 4.3). The two-bedroom units at flats 2.6 and 4.1 also fall short of the standard for a four-person unit but meet the standard for a three-person unit, notwithstanding that two double beds are show on the floorplan. Furthermore no built in storage is shown on the floorplans.

In addition, given the height of existing and proposed buildings, the orientation of development and the relationship to the rear courtyard and service area beyond there are concerns about the outlook and living environment created for future residents of flats G1, 1.1 and 2.1 and as such objection is raised to the proposal in this regard.

There would be inter and overlooking within the development particularly in relation to windows and balconies serving flats G1, 1.1 and 1.5, 2.1 and 2.5, 3.1 and 3.4. However it is considered that any material loss of privacy may be satisfactorily addressed by the imposition of conditions, in the event that planning permission were to be granted, securing the use of obscure glazing and screening as appropriate. On this basis no objection is raised to the proposal in this regard.

Environmental Health have been consulted on this application and confirm that the submitted Noise is considered broadly acceptable. They advise that table 8 of the report provides recommended acoustic performance criteria for the various elements of the external building fabric. Provided this level of acoustic insulation is provided as a minimum then a satisfactory internal noise environment can be achieved subject to condition.

The submitted details show balconies overlooking Grosvenor Road. The Noise Assessment report however does not consider noise at these locations, even though the noise measurement results indicates these spaces will experience noise levels in excess of the upper guideline value of 55dB LAeq,16hrs (as high as 67db LAeq,16hrs).

BS 8233:2014 "Guidance on sound insulation and noise reduction for buildings" recommends that "For traditional external garden space, such as gardens and patios, it is desirable that the external noise levels not exceed 50dB LAeq,T, with an upper guideline value of 55dB LAeq,16hrs which would be acceptable in noisier environments. However it also recognizes that these guideline values are not necessarily appropriate in "other locations, such as balconies, roof gardens and terraces". It also states that "Small balconies may be included for uses such as drying washing or growing pot plants, and noise limits should not be necessary for these uses. However the general guidance on noise in amenity space is still appropriate for larger balconies, roof gardens and terraces, which might be intended to be used for relaxation". "In high-noise areas, consideration should be given to protecting these areas by screening or building design to achieve the lowest practicable levels".

It seems therefore that the noise environment on the balcony spaces may well be suitable if they are to be only used sparingly, but not if they are to be used for relaxation purposes. If residents intend to spend a significant period of time sitting out on them, then the balcony spaces will not offer a comfortable acoustic environment in which to relax.

In this case, it appears that the balconies are intended to be part of the development's amenity space allocation and are therefore intended to be enjoyed by residents. Noise levels at the façade of the development indicate that these balconies are not suitable spaces for such amenity use. In the absence of any details to mitigate this impact it has not therefore

been satisfactorily demonstrated to Environmental Health that an acceptable noise environment may be created.

The Council's Contracts team has confirmed that the number of bins proposed is acceptable to serve the residential development.

Having regard to the above it has not been adequately demonstrated that a satisfactory living environment has been created for all future residents and objections are raised to the proposal in this regard.

# The provision of affordable housing

The proposal is for 23 residential dwellings. Policy CP6 requires a 'minimum of 35% of dwellings on sites of more than 15 or more net dwellings' to be in the form of affordable housing, subject to site viability. No affordable housing is being proposed and a financial viability assessment has been submitted in this regard. The Council's Housing team raised a concern that this assessment does not relate to the development being proposed (ie the report is based on 15 one bedroom and 8 two bedroom units) and gueried the sales values used. This report has been considered by the District Valuer. He has assessed the submitted information but in the context of the development proposed ie including the studio flats and has come to different views on the gross development value of the scheme and the developer profit. Notwithstanding this he concludes that their appraisal shows a deficit figure of -£354,339 and the development would not be viable if affordable housing were to be provided on site or an affordable housing contribution in lieu of on site provision were to be sought. On this basis no objection is raised to the proposal in respect of policy CP6. Notwithstanding this he does query the sustainability of the proposed scheme based on his assessment. It is noted that whilst contributions associated with the provision of SANG mitigation have been included in the submitted assessment, no reference is made to the provision of a contribution towards open space (£23,263.83). This is considered to further undermine the viability of the scheme.

## Flood risk and drainage issues

The site is within Flood Zone 1 and as such is considered to be at low risk of fluvial flooding. However no information has been submitted with the application on this issue which has been noted by Hampshire County Council (HCC) as Lead Local Flood Authority. Policy CP4 seeks to return run off rates and volumes back to the original greenfield discharge and the provision and maintenance of SUDS. Given the site constraints and the existing and proposed building footprints, it is difficult to see how policy CP4 may be satisfactorily addressed. Thames Water raise no objection to the proposal. Having regard to the above comments, it has not been satisfactorily demonstrated that the proposal incorporates an acceptable drainage strategy for the site having regard to policy CP4 and objection is raised to the proposal in this regard.

## Highway considerations

No car parking provision is being made to serve the development. Roads in the vicinity of the site are subject to parking controls including double yellow lines and traffic regulation orders. The Council's adopted Car and Cycle Parking standards 2017 require a minimum provision of one space per dwelling in town centres which in relation to the proposed development would generate a requirement of 23 spaces. The application is supported by a Transport statement, a framework travel plan and Technical note 1 on deliveries and parking. The Transport statement concludes by advising that:

- the site benefits from access to a good network that serves the local area and a range of local facilities and is ideally located to encourage people to travel to the site by more sustainable modes of transport;
- it has been shown that the proposals are unlikely to have a material impact upon the local transport network, particularly having regard to the extant office use;
- servicing will continue from the existing Victoria Road access which was designed to serve a commercial use;
- the use of bicycles will be encouraged through the provision of cycle parking that meets the adopted standards and
- the provision of a residential travel plan will ensure the use of more sustainable modes of transport.

The County Highway Authority have been consulted on this proposal and they advise:

"The parking standards for the site are laid down by Rushmoor Borough Council (RBC) as the local parking authority, in accordance with their Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) as adopted in November 2017.

These standards require a minimum provision of 1 car parking space per one bed dwelling, and 2 car parking spaces per two bed dwelling. This results in a total quantum of 31 spaces for the residential element of the site. The same is also required for cycle storage.

The total parking requirements, in accordance to the RBC Parking Standards, are therefore 46 car parking spaces and 34 cycle spaces.

#### **Residential parking**

In accordance to the RBC Parking Standards SPD, a minimum of 31 vehicle and 31 cycle parking spaces are required. Zero parking spaces and 32 cycle parking spaces are proposed.

Whilst it is ultimately for RBC to stipulate the number of vehicle parking spaces required for the residential element of the development, given the location of the site, HCC as Highway Authority would not necessarily have concerns to a reduction in standards. However a parking provision would remain a justified requirement given that even with various retail and employment opportunities, as well as sustainable transport options in close proximity, research demonstrates that car ownership remains for the 'occasional' journey. Given this, it would be requested that RBC ensure their parking standards are fully considered, as without this there would be concerns that overspill parking could result in highway obstruction (physical and in regard to visibility) that could onwards become a highway concern.

In regard to cycle parking however, there would be no highway concerns in regard to the provision proposed.

#### Commercial parking

The standards for the retail element of the proposals require in the region of 15-20 spaces, and 3 cycle spaces.

Again RBC will need to assess whether the vehicle parking proposed for the site (zero spaces) is acceptable, and this should take into consideration any spare capacity of existing public car parks in the local vicinity that could be utilised by customers. It would be requested that if there is insufficient spare capacity, then RBC officers inform HCC, given that the shortfall could overspill onto the highway, causing a highway safety concern in terms of loss of visibility and obstruction.

It is suggested that two short term cycle hoops are provided at the front of the retail units for public use, as all cycle spaces are currently at the rear of the site and not suitable for retail customer use. This can be secured through a suitably worded condition.

## Servicing

Concern is raised over the expected size of delivery vehicles to the site. Victoria Road has Traffic Regulation Orders in place within the vicinity of the site that prevents on street parking and loading. Therefore all deliveries and refuse collection would need to be operated at the rear of the site. Therefore tracking drawings showing that access and egress in forward gear is achievable for both delivery vehicles and large refuse vehicles is requested. It is also noted that this service yard is not under the control of the applicant, and therefore further details should be provided as to how deliveries would be made.

## Trip generation/Developer contributions

The submitted analysis of TRICS data regarding the proposed level of trips is deemed acceptable. The Highway Authority concurs that the expected level of trips is not expected to be greater than that of the existing use of the building, and therefore no contributions would be sought against mitigating the impact of the development on the local road network.

## Additional information

Due to the proximity to high volume roads and existing retail and residential units, a Construction Method Statement is required to be submitted for approval prior to any development commencing.

Having regards to the above, the Highway Authority would place a holding objection until the requested details have been confirmed or submitted for review."

The County Highway Authority have been advised of the objection to the proposal on grounds of lack of car parking and if any further views are received they will be updated at the meeting.

The Hampshire Constabulary Crime Prevention Design Advisor has also made comments on the issues of car parking and deliveries as follows:

"The development creates 23 apartments but no onsite parking is provided. On street parking within the area is restricted, we would be concerned if this development placed an additional burden on any existing on street parking provision. I would remind you that vehicles parked on the public highway are many more times likely to be the subject of an incident when compared to those parked on private space. Therefore, a parking solution should be found to provide at least one parking space per dwelling.

I do note that the traffic restriction on both Grosvenor Road and Victoria Road is "No Loading

at any time", we would be concerned if this development caused vehicles to park on this busy junction to affect deliveries to either the apartments or the retail units. Some consideration should be given to provision of a layby to facilitate deliveries."

The Council's Contracts team have commented in relation to the refuse storage facilities. They recommend that the bin store should have a double door that opens outwards and the ground surface between the bin store and the vehicle stopping point should be smooth and flat. They also note that no bin storage provision has been made for the retail units and confirms that business and household waste must be kept separately.

The submitted information and the consultation responses have been carefully considered. Given the comments about car ownership above and the associated need to park a vehicle and the Council's adopted parking standards the proposal is considered to be unacceptable in that no car parking provision is made to serve any part of the development. Given the extant office use on the site it is accepted that the car parking provision for the proposed retail floorspace may be accommodated within the wider town centre and as such no objection is raised to the proposal in this regard. However reference is made to the servicing of the proposed development from the access drive from Victoria Road. As this and the service area beyond is outside the application site the Council has no certainty that this would be achievable. On this basis objection is raised that it has not been satisfactorily demonstrated that appropriate cycle and refuse storage facilities are proposed to serve the development. However as set out above the agent for this application has raised objection to the development proposal on the adjoining site primarily on the grounds that the applicants own a right of access and egress over the whole of the Star Yard area and any obstructions to his clients land should be removed from the submitted proposal to ensure such rights are maintained. Queries have been raised on the submitted information and an update will be given to the meeting on any further details received. Having regard to the above, objection is raised to the proposal on highway grounds.

## Open space provision

The Local Plan seeks to ensure that adequate open space provision is made to cater for future residents in connection with new residential developments. "Saved" local plan policies OR4 and OR4.1 allow provision to be made on the site, or in appropriate circumstances a contribution to be made towards upgrading facilities nearby. The policy does not set a threshold of a particular number of dwellings or size of site above which the provision is required. Open Space requirements comprise three elements; amenity area/parkland, childrens play area and sports pitches. Given the playground upgrade at Municipal Gardens a contribution in respect of amenity area/parkland and sport pitches is sought which would normally be secured by way of legal agreement. No such agreement has been completed and objection is therefore raised to the proposal in this regard.

#### Nature conservation

The European Court of Justice judgement in 'People Over Wind, Peter Sweetman v Coillte Teoranta C-323/17' established the legal principle that a full appropriate assessment (AA) must be carried out for all planning applications involving a net gain in residential units in areas affected by the Thames Basin Heaths SPA, and that this process cannot take into account any proposed measures to mitigate any likely impact at the assessment stage.

The applicant is responsible for carrying out a full appropriate assessment following the requirements of The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010.

As a result of this judgement, the Council can no longer conclude that the assignment of, or provision of, mitigation capacity at the point of application is sufficient to remove the requirement for a full appropriate assessment. The applicant was asked to provide further information in support of the application in relation to an appropriate assessment. The applicant has declined to do so and asked for the application to be determined. A Habitats Assessment form was subsequently sent to the agent but a completed form has not been returned at the time of the preparation of this report. Having regard to the above the Local Planning Authority is unable to conclude that there would be no likelihood of significant impact on the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area arising from the proposed development and as such objection is raised to the proposal in this regard.

Notwithstanding this, the Rushmoor Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area Interim Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy is in place. However, as there is no available mitigation within the Council's ownership or control which could be allocated to a scheme of 23 units in this part of the Borough at the present time, the development would not, in any event, be able to mitigate its impact on the features of interest within the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area. In the absence of mitigation being in place Natural England have also objected to this proposal.

In the Planning statement it states that in the event that the if the Council has no SANG available or if it is reluctant to allocate SANG to this development proposal, the applicant will acquire and has sourced SANG from an alternative source and provide further details in due course. No such details have been provided. Given the above the proposal does not mitigate its impact on the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area and on this basis objection is raised to the proposal in this regard.

#### Renewable energy and construction.

Following the Royal Assent of the Deregulation Bill 2015 (26 March 2015) the government's current policy position is that planning permissions should not be granted requiring or subject to conditions requiring, compliance with any technical housing standards for example the Code for Sustainable Homes, other than for those areas where authorities have existing policies. In Rushmoor's case this means that the Council can require energy performance in accordance with Code Level 4 as set out in policy CP3 of the Rushmoor Core Strategy. No detailed information has been provided by the applicant in this regard. As such it is considered that this matter may be satisfactorily addressed by way of condition in the event that planning permission were to be granted. On this basis no objection is raised to the proposal in terms of policy CP3.

In conclusion it is recognised that there are some benefits associated with the development in that it would provide additional housing and new retail space and provide employment during and post construction. It could also provide economic benefits in terms of support for local shops and services through operational demands of retail uses and the residents. However, whilst having regard to these benefits, the harm associated with the proposal as set out above is so significant that, in the planning balance, they do not override the harm associated with the development and as such the proposal is recommended for refusal.

## **Full Recommendation**

It is recommended that planning permission be **REFUSED** for the following reasons:

- 1 By virtue of its height, massing and design the proposed building does not respect the character and appearance of the local area and is also considered to adversely affect the setting of Wesley Chambers, a Grade II \* listed building located within the Aldershot West conservation area. As such the proposal is considered to conflict with policies CP1 and CP2 of the Rushmoor Core Strategy, "saved" local plan policies ENV16, ENV26, ENV34, ENV35 and ENV37 and paragraphs 127, 130, 192, 194, 195, 196 and 200 of the National Planning Policy Framework. Regard has also been had to policies HE1, HE3 and D1 of the Rushmoor Local Plan Draft Submission June 2017 as proposed to be amended.
- 2 By virtue of the proximity, footprint and height of the building the proposal is considered to result in an unacceptable loss of light and outlook and create an unacceptable sense of enclosure to residents of St Katherine Court. As such the proposal conflicts with policy CP2 of the Rushmoor Core Strategy and "saved" local plan policy ENV16.
- 3 It has not been satisfactorily demonstrated that the proposed dwellings would provide an acceptable internal residential environment or appropriate external amenity space for future residents. As such the proposal conflicts with policy CP2 of the Rushmoor Core Strategy and "saved" local plan policies ENV16 and H14. Regard has also been had to policies DE2 and DE3 of the Rushmoor Local Plan Draft Submission June 2017.
- 4 The development is unacceptable in highway terms in that no car parking has been provided. Moreover it has not been satisfactorily demonstrated that acceptable refuse collection arrangements and cycle storage facilities can be provided. The proposal conflicts with the objectives of policy CP16 of the Rushmoor Core Strategy and the Council's adopted Car and Cycle Parking Standards 2017. Regard has also been had to policy IN2 of the Rushmoor Local Plan Draft Submission June 2017.
- 5 Given the existing hardsurfacing within the site and the proposed footprint of building it has not been satisfactorily demonstrated that the proposal would make acceptable arrangements for the disposal surface water drainage and the provision of SUDs. As such the proposal conflicts with the objectives of policy CP4 of the Rushmoor Core Strategy and paragraph 165 of the National Planning Policy Framework. Regard has also been had to policy NE6 of the Rushmoor Local Plan Draft Submission 2017 as proposed to be amended.
- 6 The proposal fails to address the impact of the development on the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area as required by the Habitats Regulations in accordance with the Council's Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area Interim Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy and is therefore contrary to Policy CP13 of the Rushmoor Core Strategy, NRM6 of the South East Plan and paragraph 175 of the National Planning Policy Framework. Regard has been had to policies NE1 and NE4 of the Rushmoor Local Plan Draft Submission 2017 as proposed to be amended.
- 7 The proposed development would fail to make provision for open space contrary to the provisions of policy CP12 of the Rushmoor Core Strategy and "saved" policy OR4 of the Rushmoor Local Plan Review 1996-2011. Regard has also been had to policy DE6 of the Rushmoor Local Plan Draft Submission 2017.

# Informative

1 INFORMATIVE – The Local Planning Authority's commitment to working with the applicants in a positive and proactive way is demonstrated by its offer of preapplication discussion to all, and assistance in the validation and determination of applications through the provision of clear guidance regarding necessary supporting information or amendments both before and after submission,













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