

Substantive response

Substantive response to the local planning authority (LPA) from the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) as a statutory consultee for developments that include a relevant building.

To LPA	Welwyn Hatfield
LPA planning ref no	6/2022/1355/MAJ
Our ref	Pgo-1988
Site address	Former Beales Hotel Comet Way Hatfield AL10 9NG
Proposal description	Demolition of existing building and construction of 145 residential units (Use Class C3) with private and communal amenity space, landscaping, access, associated car and cycle parking, refuse and recycling storage and supporting infrastructure.
Date on fire statement	24/05/2022
Date consultation received	22/09/2022
Date response sent	21/10/2022

Headline response from HSE

Headline Response from HSE ('Advice to LPA' - Some Concern)

1. Substantive response for the local planning authority

Thank you for consulting HSE about this application.

◀ Nature of Response Advice provided to the planning authority Nature of Response ▶

Scope of consultation

1.1 It is noted that the above application relates to the demolition of the existing building and the development of 145 residential units with associated amenity spaces and car and cycle parking.

- 1.2 It is noted that this development will be one relevant building with separate cores i.e. single stair towers. The staircases represent the escape stair as well as the firefighting stair. There will be 4 separate single stair towers, detailed in this substantive response as Cores A – D. The heights of the cores are detailed below:
- Core A – 13.65 m (5 storeys)
 - Core B – 19.95 m (7 storeys)
 - Core C – 19.95 m (7 storeys)
 - Core D – 19.95 m (7 storeys)
- 1.3 It is noted from the information provided within the fire statement that the adopted fire standard for this application is BS 9991:2015.

Means of escape and Fire Service access and facilities

- 1.4 Drawings show that single staircase serving Core A descends to the basement. A single staircase should not descend to a basement level due to the risk posed to the only means of escape.
- 1.5 The fire safety standard states where a stair forms part of the only escape route from an upper storey or part thereof, the stair should not continue down to the basement except where it is a small building (less than 11m in height). Design changes necessary to provide alternative, separated, basement access and egress will affect land use planning considerations such as layout and appearance of the development.
- 1.6 It is noted that drawings provided show the basement level has a single staircase from Core A connecting with ancillary accommodation, such as a plant room.
- 1.7 The fire safety standard states that a common stair forming part of the only escape route from a flat should not serve any of the following: covered car park, boiler room, fuel storage space or other ancillary accommodation of similar fire risk. Design changes necessary to provide alternative, separated, access and egress to such areas will affect land use planning considerations such as layout and appearance of the development.
- 1.8 It is noted that drawings show the lift within Core A descend into the basement.
- 1.9 The fire safety standard states that a lift shaft serving storeys above ground level should not serve any basement if there is only one escape stair serving storeys above ground level. Smoke from a basement fire would adversely affect escape routes in the upper storeys. Design changes necessary to resolve this issue will affect land use planning considerations such as the design, appearance and layout of the development.

2. Supplementary information

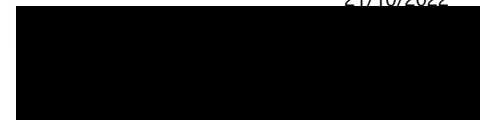
The following points do not contribute to HSE's substantive response, as they are unlikely to affect land use planning considerations, and are intended only as advice. These comments identify items that could usefully be considered now to reduce the risk of making changes to the design at a later stage, which could have planning implications.

Communal roof terrace

- 2.1 It is noted from section 7 of the fire statement that an occupancy of 512 persons has been calculated for the communal roof terrace. Should smoke enter stair core A, only one escape route would be available from this area i.e. via stair core B. This stair core would also be required for firefighting purposes. The occupancy figure of 512 persons is not suitable for this area. This will be subject to later regulatory consideration.

Yours sincerely

21/10/2022



Steve Hatton

Fire Safety Information Assessor

Signed by: steve.hatton

This substantive response provides fire safety advice to the local planning authority. It's based on the information provided as it relates to land use planning.

It takes into account any fire safety information from section 9 of the fire statement form (where it relates to land use planning).

This response does not provide advice on any of the following:

- **matters that are or will be subject to Building Regulations regardless of whether such matters have been provided as part of the application**
- **matters related to planning applications around major hazard sites, licensed explosive sites and pipelines**
- **applications for hazardous substances consent**

