

Planning Statement

ONE YMCA

90 Peartree Lane, Welwyn Garden City,
AL7 3UL

October 2019

Prepared by

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Appendices

- 1 Pre-Application Response from Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council 13 June 2019

Quality Standards Control

The signatories below verify that this document has been prepared in accordance with our quality control requirements. These procedures do not affect the content and views expressed by the originator.

This document must only be treated as a draft unless it has been signed by the Originators and approved by a Business or Associate Director.

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Limitations

This document has been prepared for the stated objective and should not be used for any other purpose without the prior written authority of GL Hearn; we accept no responsibility or liability for the consequences of this document being used for a purpose other than for which it was commissioned.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared on behalf of One YMCA, in support of a hybrid planning application for development of a site at 90 Peartree Lane, Welwyn Garden City, AL7 3UL.

1.2 The planning application seeks permission for:

“Demolition of existing hostel; development of a four storey 100 bed YMCA hostel (all details submitted for determination) and a 2, 3 and 4 storey building providing up to 43 residential apartments (all details retained for future determination as Reserved Matters, except means of access), with associated car parking and landscaping.”

1.3 The proposed development has been subject to a pre-application meeting on 15 May 2019 with Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council with a written response received on 13 June 2019.

1.4 This Planning Statement should be read in conjunction with the accompanying plans and drawings submitted as part of the application, as well as the following documents:

- Application forms with certificate (B)
- Design and Access Statement- Saunders
- Landscape Character and Visual Impact Assessment- Saunders
- Landscaping Scheme- Saunders
- Lighting Assessment Report- Saunders
- Affordable Housing and Viability Statement- Turner Morum LLP
- Statement of Community Involvement- YMCA
- Arboriculture Survey- Bradley Murphy Design Ltd
- Ecological Report- Bradley Murphy Design Ltd
- Transport Assessment and Travel Plan- Transport Planning Associates
- Flood Risk and Drainage Assessment- Pinnacle
- Site Waste Management Plan- WSP
- Contaminated Land Survey- Argyll
- Noise Impact Assessment Report- Sharps Gayler
- Energy Strategy- Stroma

1.5 The accompanying sketches are listed below:

- 8057/P010 Existing Site Plan
- 8057/P011 Existing Plans
- 8057/P012 Existing Elevations
- 8057/P013 Demolition Plan
- 8057/P100 Application Site Location Plan
- 8057/P101 Proposed Site Layout
- 8057/P102 Indicative Site Section Plan
- 8057/P110 Hostel Ground Floor Site Plan
- 8057/P111 Hostel First Floor Plan
- 8057/P112 Hostel Second and Third Floor Plan

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- 8057/P113 Hostel Roof Plan
- 8057/P114 Hostel East and North Elevations
- 8057/P115 Hostel West and South Elevations
- 8057/P116 Hostel Sections
- 8057/P117 Detailed façade Study- Plan, Section and Elevation
- 8057/P118 Cycle Store Details- Plan Elevations
- 8057/P120 Block Plans
- 8057/P121 Indicative Street Scene/ Elevations
- 8057/P122 Residential Open Space

2 THE SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

Location

- 2.1 The Site is located in Welwyn Garden City on Peartree Lane. The Site lies 0.7miles east of Welwyn Garden City town centre and 0.8miles east of Welwyn Garden City railway station.
- 2.2 The Site is a 10 minute walk to the town centre and mainline railway station. The pedestrian route from the site to the town centre and railway station is a well-established public walkway. The Site is accessible and well connected by public transport. The Site is a 10-minute bus to the town centre and 8-minute bus to the mainline railway station. In addition, there is a 28-minute journey time between Welwyn Garden City railway station and London Moorgate station.

Site Description

- 2.3 The Site is owned and operated by One YMCA and is approximately 0.72ha in size. The Site currently consists of a YMCA hostel providing 125 units and ancillary facilities. The Site whilst in operation no longer meets the standards that YMCA expects of its accommodation. The existing buildings are 1 and 2 storeys in height.
- 2.4 The hostel is mainly accommodated in the 2 storey buildings towards the rear of the Site, whilst the front of the site mainly accommodates the hostels maintenance facilities and office space for complementary charity organisations.
- 2.5 There are few landscape features on the site, however, there are currently trees located to the front of the Site.
- 2.6 The Site benefits from existing vehicular access from Peartree Lane which connects northwards to the Hydeway.

Surrounding land uses (immediate area)

- 2.7 The Site is bounded by a range of building uses and spaces. The residential area of Peartree is located east of the Site. The predominantly commercial/industrial area along Broadwater Road is located west of the Site. North of the Site are several light industrial uses (including motor repair garages). South of the Site there are residential apartments.
- 2.8 Between the Site and Broadwater Road there is a car park which is owned by Hertfordshire County Council. The Hertfordshire County Council site has been out of use for over 10 years and is largely a car park. There are several fast-food takeaways and a pharmacy located within close proximity of the Site. A coach park is located adjacent to the rear of the Site.

- 2.9 Peartree Lane has a boulevard appearance consisting of a wide treed line street. The residential properties along Peartree Road facing the application Site are 2 storeys in height, however the properties are raised from the height of the road. The residential apartments south of the Site are also 2 storeys. Most of the light industrial uses adjacent to the Site are 1 storey.

Surrounding land uses (wider area)

- 2.10 The Site is identified as a transition Site between the new development coming forward further to the north of the Site and the existing traditional lower density development to the wider south and west of the Site. The design of the Site will therefore consider and respect both types of surrounding development.
- 2.11 There are several applications in the surrounding wider area which propose residential uses. The surrounding forthcoming developments largely include residential apartment blocks.
- 2.12 The former Shredded Wheat Factory which is within close proximity of the Site has been granted planning permission for the development of up to 1,340 residential dwellings. In addition, the Xerox Site on Bessemer Road was granted permission for the replacement of an existing plant room with 44 apartments and the erection of 4 apartment blocks with up to 235 units. There are further applications for residential development in the surrounding area which have been granted permission or are awaiting determination.
- 2.13 The proposal will be consistent with the mixed-use character of the area which has seen several residential developments in the surrounding area permitted in recent years.

Further information

- 2.14 The Site does not include any listed buildings and does not fall within a Conservation Area

3 PLANNING HISTORY

3.1 The Council's online register outlines only a few applications relating to the Site as follows.

Reference	Description	Decision	Date
N6/1996/0994/FP	Erection of two storey bedroom block	Granted	14/03/1997
W6/1993/5345/EM	Extension to YMCA hostel to provide 34no. bed/sitting rooms, new store, car port and associated car parking	Granted	28/10/1993
W6/1993/5340/EM	Erection of single storey front extension to provide new entrance reception and administration office	Granted	04/10/1993
W6/1990/5289/EM	Replacement of existing windows and alterations to form childcare centre	Granted	03/12/1990

3.2 There are a several surrounding applications which propose residential uses, including:

Site	Reference	Description	Decision	Date
37 Broadwater Road	6/2018/2387/MAJ	Construction of new build 22 x 2 Bedroom and 2 x 3 Bedroom residential apartments with balconies and a roof garden. Layout of 26 car parking spaces, cycle parking, refuse store, internal access routes, landscaping and supporting infrastructure.	Pending	
Former Norton Building, Bride Road East	6/2019/0018/PN11	Prior approval for change of use first, second and third floors from office (B1 (a)) to residential (C3).	Approved	28/02/2019
Former Shredded Wheat Factory, Bridge Road	6/2018/0171/MAJ	Creation of a mixed-use quarter comprising of the erection of up to 1,340 residential dwellings including 414 (31%) affordable dwellings (Use Class C3); 114 extra care homes (Use Class C2); the erection of a civic building comprising 497 m2 of health (Use Class D1), 497 m2 of community (Use Class D1), 883 m2 of office (Use Class B1) and 590 m2 of retail (Class A1/A2/A3/A4/A5); alterations, additions and change of use of Grade II Listed Building and retained Silos to provide 5,279 m2 of flexible business floor space (Use Class B1), 270 m2 Combined Heat and Power (Sui Generis), 2,057 m2 International Art Centre (Use Class D1), 1,235 m2 Gymnasium (Use Class D2), 1,683 m2 of restaurant/coffee shop/bar (Use Class A1/A3/A4/A5), Creche/ Day Nursery (Use Class D1) of 671 m2 as well as Network Rail TOC Building (Use Class B1) of 360 m2; plus, associated car parking, access, landscaping, public art	Approved	15/02/2019

		and other supporting infrastructure.		
51 Bridge Road East	6/2017/2104/MAJ	Erection of 54 residential flats consisting of (19 x 1 bed and 35 x 2 bed), with associated access, car parking, amenity space and landscaping involving demolition of existing office building (B1).	Approved	29/05/2018
Inspira House, Martinfield	6/2017/1519/PN11	Prior Approval for Change of use from office to residential for the creation of 54 dwellings.	Approved	05/09/2017
Empire House, Bessemer Road	6/2016/2960/MAJ	Erection of a 5-storey building to provide 30 x 2-bedroom residential flats.	Approved	20/04/2017
Mercury House, 1 Broadwater Road	6/2016/2624/FULL	Full planning application for change of use from B1(a) office to C3 residential, construction of roof and side extensions, creation of 43 residential apartments and cycle storage compound.	Approved	14/07/2017
Former Roche Products Site, 40 Broadwater Road	6/2016/1882/FULL	Change of use of former Roche Products Factory (Class B offices, research and manufacturing) to provide 34 residential units (Class C3) across basement, ground and first to third floors, with associated external alterations including excavation to the rear lightwell of southern elevation, additional and altered fenestration to northern and southern elevations, creation of additional car parking and associated landscaping, together with internal alterations including the subdivision and reconfiguration of floor space, the introduction of 5 new spiral staircases and provision of servicing within the building.	Approved	18/10/2018
Xerox Site, Bessemer Road	6/2015/2213/MAJ	Hybrid planning application comprising: Full details for replacement of existing plant rooms with 44 (total apartments) on Enterprise Centre and Development Centre. Outline application for residential redevelopment and erection of 4 apartment blocks of up to 235 residential units with only access for consideration.	Approved	02/06/2016

3.3 The above applications demonstrate that redevelopment of Sites for new residential units have been considered acceptable by the Council.

4 PRE-APPLICATION DISCUSSIONS

4.1 Prior to the submission of this planning application, the applicant undertook pre-application discussions with Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council.

4.2 Pre-application advice is attached as Appendix 1.

4.3 A pre-application meeting was held on 15 May 2019 with written responses received from the on 13 June 2019.

4.4 In summary, the pre-application comments were as follows:

- Development in principle is acceptable subject to satisfying other applicable policies in the development plan;
- The proposed height and density of buildings may conflict with design policies;
- The 5-storey hostel may appear excessively tall onsite;
- The proposal should ensure dwellings are dual aspect;
- It is recommended that the private apartments to the front of the site reflect a Garden City vernacular;
- The private apartments should not result in adverse harm to neighbouring properties;
- May be a requirement for a specific noise insulation and ventilation scheme;
- BS4142 assessment of noise;
- Less parking provision needs justifying;
- 30% affordable housing requirement on private residences;
- 20% accessible housing is required;
- Measures to maximise energy conservation;
- Environmental Impact Assessment is not required;
- Section 106 Agreements required to be completed before the determination of the planning application;
- A hybrid application is acceptable.

4.5 The applicants have taken each of the above matters into account and have sought to revise scheme proposals to ensure that the scheme can be supported.

5 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

5.1 The proposal is a hybrid application which seeks outline planning for one part of the site and full planning permission for another part of the same site.

5.2 The description of the development is as follows:

“Demolition of existing hostel; development of a four storey 100 bed YMCA hostel (all details submitted for determination) and a 2, 3 and 4 storey building providing up to 43 residential apartments (all details retained for future determination as Reserved Matters, except means of access), with associated car parking and landscaping.”

Hostel

Description

5.3 The proposed development seeks full planning permission for the hostel. The application proposes 100 units which will be provided over 4 storeys. The hostel will occupy the rear of the application site.

Land Use and Internal Arrangement

5.4 The hostel element of the scheme will provide 100 units. The unit mix is as follows;

- Ground Floor- 3 x ensuite room, 6 x studio flat, 2 x accessible studio flat
- Second Floor- 29 x studio flat
- Third Floor- 30 x studio flat
- Fourth Floor- 30 x studio flat
- Total- 100 units (3 x ensuite room, 95 x studio flat, 2 x accessible studio flat)

Design

5.5 The proposed development takes the form of one block located towards the rear of the site. The proposed building is 4 storeys in height.

5.6 The proposed design and massing responds to the surroundings by reflecting the higher density forthcoming developments to the wider north of the site. The mass and bulk of the proposed scheme is entirely appropriate for the site in its setting and location.

5.7 The proposed development has been carefully designed to avoid overlooking or a sense of enclosure and avoids adversely impacting on neighbouring daylight and sunlight levels.

5.8 The proposal includes provision for waste refuse and recycling easily accessible and incorporated within the ground floor design of the proposed building.

The core principles of Secured by Design will be adopted in the proposed hostel.

Materials/ appearance

- 5.9 The east and north elevation of the building is the front face of the building and will feature patterned brick on the ground floor and through the vertical entrance recess (8057/P114).
- 5.10 The east and north elevations also feature patterned brick (8057/P114).

Scale

- 5.11 The hostel is 4 storeys in height. The height of the building is 13.5m (8057/P115) however the height of the building to the top of the parapet is 15.2m (8057/P114).

Layout

- 5.12 The hostel building is located at the rear of the application Site. Hostel parking is located in the north west corner of the application site (8057/P110). The private garden and a number of soft landscaping features are proposed for the front of the building. In addition, a quiet garden has been proposed to the rear of the building (8057/P110).

Landscaping

- 5.13 The proposal allows for soft landscaping which provides amenity space for residents. A quiet garden and private garden have been proposed alongside a number of soft landscaping features (8057/P110).

Means of Access

- 5.14 The Site is accessed from Peartree Lane which connects northwards to the Hydeway.

Cycle and Car Parking

- 5.15 Due to the Site's sustainable location and good transport links, a total of 28 car parking spaces have been proposed for the hostel element of the application Site. The site currently has an established car park with 28 spaces which serves 125 residents and staff, the new development is for 100 residents, therefore the need for parking is reduced meaning more car parking spaces will be made available.
- 5.16 A secure cycle store including 34 spaces has also been proposed to encourage sustainable modes of transport.

Residential Apartments

Description

- 5.17 The proposal seeks outline planning permission for up to 43 residential apartments. All details of the application are retained for approval as Reserved Matters, except for means of access. The residential apartments will occupy the front of the site.
- 5.18 The residential apartments will comprise of 6 blocks with varying heights (8057/P120).
- Block A- 2 storeys
 - Block B- 3 storeys
 - Block C- 2 storeys
 - Block D- 3 storeys
 - Block E- 4 storeys
 - Block F- 3 storeys
- 5.19 The residential apartments in Blocks A-C fronting Peartree Lane will be 2-3 storeys in height to mirror the height of the opposite residences.
- 5.20 The apartments behind will range between 3-4 storeys in height. The proposed hostel adjacent is also 4 storeys in height.
- 5.21 The apartments fronting Peartree Lane will have a Garden City vernacular to maintain the character of the area. Traditional red brick and white windows frames will be used to ensure the proposed private apartments are in keeping with the surrounding lower density residential area.
- 5.22 A total of 39 car parking spaces have been proposed for the residential apartments, 1 of the spaces is a disabled space.
- 5.23 2 cycle stores have been proposed.
- 5.24 2 bin stores have been proposed.

Means of Access

- 5.25 The site is accessed from Peartree Lane which connects northwards to the Hydeway.

Affordable Housing

- 5.26 The Viability Appraisal which will be submitted alongside this application states that no affordable housing can be released. The private residential apartments are needed to cross fund the development of the hostel. Without this, the redevelopment of the site is not viable.

6 PUBLIC CONSULTATION

- 6.1 The applicant has also conducted formal pre-application with the Local Planning Authority.
- 6.2 The applicant has consulted several groups regarding the planning application, including; local councillors, staff teams, existing residents, local community groups and the general public.
- 6.3 The Police and Fire Brigade have both been engaged in the consultation meetings and have provided their perspectives as statutory consultees.
- 6.4 Full details of the consultation undertaken are set out in the separate Statement of Community Involvement.

7 PLANNING POLICY

7.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires any planning application to be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material consideration indicates otherwise.

7.2 The development plan consists of the following:

- Welwyn Hatfield District Plan

7.3 In addition, the following documents are material considerations when considering the proposed application:

- The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF),
- Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council Draft Local Plan Proposed Submission (2016)
- Supplementary Design Guidance (2005)
- Supplementary Planning Guidance- Parking Standards (2004)
- Interim Policy for Car Parking Standards and Garage Sizes (2014)

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2019)

7.4 The NPPF sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied.

7.5 The NPPF is a material consideration in planning decisions.

7.6 Paragraph 7 of the NPPF states that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. Paragraph 8 states that achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has three overarching objectives, including; an economic objective, a social objective, and an environmental objective. Paragraph 10 of the NPPF states that at the heart of the framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development.

7.7 Paragraph 39 of the NPPF emphasises the importance of pre-application engagement in enabling better coordination between public and private resources and improved outcomes for the community

7.8 Section 5 of the NPPF sets out the Government's approach to ensuring a sufficient amount and variety of land can come forward where it is needed and that the needs of groups with specific housing requirements are addressed. Paragraph 63 states that "*To support the reuse of brownfield and, where vacant buildings are being reused or redeveloped, any affordable housing contribution due should be reduced by a proportionate amount*".

7.9 Paragraph 57 in the NPPF states that "*It is up to the applicant to demonstrate whether particular circumstances justify the need for a viability assessment at the application stage*."

The weight to be given to a viability assessment is a matter for the decision maker, having regard to all the circumstances in the case, including whether the plan and the viability evidence underpinning it is up to date, and any change in site circumstances since the plan was brought into force”.

7.10 Paragraph 117 of the NPPF states that *“planning policies and decisions should promote an 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”.*

7.11 Overall the NPPF seeks to support sustainable development, housing delivery, promote the effective use of land.

Welwyn Hatfield District Plan (2005)

7.12 The Welwyn Hatfield District Plan (2005) is the current adopted Local Plan and provides a framework for planning decisions in the borough.

7.13 The policies in the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan that are considered the most relevant for the proposed development at Peartree Lane are considered below.

7.14 Policy SD1 Sustainable Development- Development proposals are required to demonstrate that the principles of sustainable development are satisfied and accord with the objectives and policies of the plan.

7.15 Policy R1 Maximising the Use of Previously Developed Land- The District Plan seeks to maximise the use of previously developed land in order to make the best use of land in the district. The Council requires development to take place on land which has been previously used or developed.

7.16 Policy R3 Energy Efficiency- All developments are required to include measures to maximise energy conservation through the design of buildings, site layout and provision of landscaping and incorporate the best practical environmental option for energy supply.

7.17 Policy R5 Waste Management- Applications for larger schemes are required to include details of the waste management measures taken.

7.18 Policy R11 Biodiversity and Development- All new development is required to demonstrate how it will contribute positively to the biodiversity of the site.

7.19 Policy R18 Air Quality- The council will have regard to the potential effects of a development on local air quality when determining planning applications. Consideration will be given to both the operational characteristics of the development and to the traffic generated by it.

- 7.20 Policy R19 Noise and Vibration Pollution- Adequate protection is required against noise or vibration. Proposals should be in accordance with the Supplementary Design Guidance.
- 7.21 Policy M1 Integrating Transport and Land Use- Developments are required to integrate different modes of travel.
- 7.22 Policy M5 Pedestrian Facilities- Developments are required to provide improved facilities for the safe and convenient movement of pedestrians.
- 7.23 Policy M6 Cycle Routes and Facilities- Development proposals are required to encourage cycling through the inclusion of safe cycle routes and parking for cycles, and where appropriate secure waterproof storage and changing facilities for cyclists.
- 7.24 Policy M14 Parking Standards for New Development- New developments are required to accord with the parking standards in the council's supplementary guidance on parking.
- 7.25 Policy D1 Quality of Design- The standard of design in all new development is required to be of a high quality.
- 7.26 Policy D2 Character and Context- All new developments are required to respect and relate to the character and context of the area in which it is proposed. Development proposals as a minimum maintain, and where possible enhance or improve the character of the existing area.
- 7.27 Policy D3 Continuity and Enclosure- All new development is required to incorporate the principles of continuity and enclosure to distinguish between public and private spaces.
- 7.28 Policy D4 Quality of the Public Realm- All new development is required to where appropriate, either create or enhance public areas and the public realm.
- 7.29 Policy D5 Design for Movement- All new development is required to take account of its impact on existing and proposed movement patterns. New development will be required to make provision for pedestrian, cyclist and passenger transport facilities.
- 7.30 Policy D6 Legibility- All new development is required to enhance and contribute to the legibility of the development itself and the area in which it is located.
- 7.31 Policy D7 Safety by Design- The design of new developments is required to contribute to safer communities.
- 7.32 Policy D8 Landscaping- All new developments are required to include landscaping as an integral part of the overall design.

- 7.33 Policy D9 Access and Design for People with Disabilities- All new developments are required to be designed to allow access by the disabled, young children in prams and pushchairs and those who are temporarily disabled.
- 7.34 Policy IM2 Planning Obligations- Developments are required to provide the infrastructure, services and facilities which directly relate to the granting of planning permission. Developers will be required to provide or finance the cost of all such provision which is fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development.
- 7.35 Sites which have not been allocated in Policy H1 of the District Plan, will be considered as windfall housing and therefore Policy H2 (Location of Windfall Residential Development) is relevant.
- 7.36 Policy H6 Densities- New residential developments in central areas with good accessibility by modes of transport, other than car, are required to be close to or exceed 50 dwellings per hectare providing the development will not have an adverse impact on the character of the surrounding area.
- 7.37 Policy H7 Affordable Housing- Proposals for residential developments with 25 units or more, are required to include the provision of affordable housing to meet the needs of local people who can not afford to occupy dwellings generally available on the market. The council through a process of negotiation will seek a proportion of affordable housing, which as a minimum should comprise of 30% subsidised housing.
- 7.38 Policy H10 Accessible Housing- The District Plan seeks to ensure that all residential developments involving 5 or more dwellings, the Council will seek to secure a proportion of dwellings to be built to lifetime homes standard.
- 7.39 Policy OS3 Play Space and Informal Open Space Provision in New Residential Development- New residential developments (of 0.4ha or above) are expected to contribute to the provision of children's play space and informal open space.

Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council Draft Local Plan Proposed Submission (2016)

- 7.40 The Local Plan is about supporting the growth of Welwyn Hatfield until 2032. The independent examination of the Draft Local Plan is now in progress. The relevant policies from the Draft Local Plan are listed below:
- Policy SP1- Delivering Sustainable Development
 - Policy SP2- Targets for Growth
 - Policy SADM1- Windfall Development
 - Policy SADM2- Highway Network and Safety
 - Policy SP7- Type and Mix of Housing
 - Policy SP8- The Local Economy
 - Policy SP9- Place Making and High Quality Design

- Policy SADM11- Amenity and Layout
- Policy SADM12- Parking, Servicing and Refuse
- Policy SP10- Sustainable Design and Construction
- Policy SADM13- Sustainability Requirements
- Policy SADM18- Environmental Pollution

Supplementary Design Guidance (2005)

- 7.41 The design guidance has been written to provide guidance on the design and layout of all new development in the district to supplement the policies in the District Plan.

Supplementary Planning Guidance- Parking Standards (2004)

- 7.42 The guidance supports Policy M19 Parking Standards for New Development in the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan Review which seeks to promote the use of maximum demand-based car parking standards as part of a strategy to reduce dependence on the car and encourage greater use of non-car modes of travel.
- 7.43 Residential development will generally be expected to accommodate all parking demand on site.
- 7.44 Car parking standards are set to achieve average of 1.5 off-street parking spaces per dwelling.
- 7.45 To be in accordance with the councils parking standards, a 1-bedroom unit requires 0.75 spaces, a 2-bedroom dwelling requires 1 space and a 3-bedroom dwelling requires 1.5 spaces.
- 7.46 Cycle parking is considered important for new development to enable people to cycle. Cycle stands are satisfactory for short-term cycle parking, but supervised 'cycle parks', with at least 50% of stands covered, providing better weather and security protection, will be expected for long-term parking.

Interim Policy for Car Parking Standards and Garage Sizes (2014)

- 7.47 The Council will treat all car parking standards set out in the Welwyn Hatfield Parking Standards Supplementary Planning Guidance as guidelines rather than maximums.
- 7.48 Planning applications will be determined on a case-by-case basis to achieve a sensible level of provision taking account of existing SPG standards, NPPF Guidance, the relevant circumstances of the proposal, it's site context and its wider surroundings.

8 CONSIDERATIONS

Principle of development

Re-provision of new YMCA meeting current and future requirements

- 8.1 The existing YMCA hostel on site will be redeveloped to provide a more efficient, high quality hostel. The proposal will include the replacement of the existing YMCA hostel and therefore the existing hostel use will be retained and enhanced through the re-provision. However, the same type of housing within the new hostel is not being provided. At present, over 95% of residents share some sort of facilities whether it be kitchens or bathrooms. Also, currently 70% of residents are in single rooms with shared bathrooms and communal dining. The proposed hostel will provide a new solution where 97% of the new building will be self-contained units which will be of a higher standard and promote independent living. The new hostel will provide much needed new and improved facilities for residents and staff.
- 8.2 One YMCA aims to combat homelessness and runs three hostels across Hertfordshire and Buckinghamshire which provide over 400 rooms and over 100,000 nights' sleep each year for single homeless people between 18 and 59. The YMCA hostel in Welwyn Garden City provides a home and support for local people who might otherwise be homeless. The continued provision of the hostel in this location is an essential element of the charity and ensures that residents have access to services that the town centre provides. The existing buildings are unsuitable and do not assist YMCA in providing the best service for the less fortunate.

Delivery of new homes contributing to housing supply at a sustainable location

- 8.3 The Site is located in a sustainable location within close proximity of Welwyn Garden City train station and town centre. The proposal is therefore in accordance with Policy SD1 which requires development proposals to demonstrate that the principles of sustainable development are satisfied and accord with the objectives within the District Plan. The proposed development is in line with the Paragraph 10 of the NPPF which states that at the heart of the framework there is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. The application site is easily accessible and well connected to public transport. The proposed private apartments will provide much needed housing in a sustainable location.

Making use of a previously developed (brownfield) site for a hostel and residential uses

- 8.4 Paragraph 117 of the NPPF supports the proposed scheme as it involves the redevelopment of previously developed land. The proposal also satisfies Policy R1 of the District Plan as it would be the continuation of the existing use of land. In addition, to the replacement hostel the proposed development will provide up to 43 residential units in a sustainable location making the best use of the application site.

Surrounding area

- 8.5 There are a number of new residential schemes coming forward in the surrounding area which have been considered appropriate by the Council. The majority of the residential schemes coming forward comprise of apartments blocks. The proposed development will reflect both the forthcoming residential schemes to the wider north of the site whilst also reflecting traditional lower density housing to the south of the site. Therefore, the modern design of the hostel and more traditionally designed private apartments are appropriate and reflect the design of the surrounding developments.

Design, Density and Layout

- 8.6 Given that this scheme aims to redevelop the existing Site, the proposed development should improve the appearance and design of the site. The proposal intends to deliver a high quality development therefore the proposal is supported by Policy D1 of the District Plan which requires the standard of design in all new developments to be of a high quality.
- 8.7 The proposed residential apartments facing Peartree Lane will have a Garden City vernacular to maintain the area's character. This is accordance with Policy D2 of the District Plan which requires all developments to respect and relate to the character of the area. The principle characteristics of the Garden City are its formality of its layout and architecture and the complete integration of landscape within the built form which will be reflected in the residential apartments. The hostel will be of modern design however it will complement the apartments to the front of the site.
- 8.8 The layout is designed to create courtyard areas within the proposed buildings for parking and landscaping. The additional parking area to the north east of the site is located as such due to the location of the small lock-up motor mechanics.
- 8.9 Through the formal pre-application process the heights of the proposed buildings were discussed. The hostel will now be 4 storeys and the residential apartments will be between 2-4 storeys. The residential apartments facing Peartree Lane will be 2-3 storeys and the residential apartments behind will be 3-4 storeys. The residential apartments fronting Peartree Lane will mirror the height of the residences on the opposite side of the street which are 2 storeys in height but are raised from the road.
- 8.10 The proposed heights of the buildings are informed by the transitional nature of the site which has informed what is considered to be an appropriate density for the location. The site is surrounded by a number of forthcoming residential developments which largely include apartment blocks and the hostel will seek to reflect these in terms of efficiency and design. It is also recognised that the site is surrounded to the south and west by lower density traditional

housing and therefore the proposed residential apartments which range between 2-4 storeys, are designed through a layout and massing to reflect the character of the area.

Landscaping

- 8.11 Policy D8 of the District Plan requires all new developments to include landscaping as an integral part of the design. In terms of landscaping there are few landscape features currently on the site. The proposed development will therefore enhance the landscaping on the site to create a visually attractive setting, in keeping with the Garden City ethos. This includes retaining the existing green buffer and landscaping features, such as existing trees, whilst also planting trees and hedges to add interest and soften the car parking onsite.

Car Parking

- 8.12 The residential aspect of the proposal meets parking standards and will provide 39 car parking spaces and is therefore in line with Policy M14 which requires new development to accord with the Parking Standards in the Council's Supplementary Planning Guidance.

- 8.13 Car parking for the hostel will be assessed on a case-by-case basis. 28 car parking spaces have been proposed for the hostel. The level of parking is considered to be appropriate given the sustainable location of the site and nature of the proposed hostel use.

Cycle Parking

- 8.14 3 cycle stores have been proposed across the application site, 2 for the residential apartments and 1 for the hostel. Therefore, meeting requirements and encouraging residents to use a more sustainable mode of transport.

Waste and Recycling

- 8.15 3 bin stores have been proposed across the application site, 2 for the residential apartments and 1 for the hostel. All easily accessed by residents.

Affordable Housing

- 8.16 Affordable housing can not be released with this application due to the fact that the private residential aspect of the development is needed to cross fund the development of the hostel. Without this the YMCA will not be able to provide the hostel facility. The social benefits created by the development of the hostel should be reiterated as an alternative to the contribution of affordable housing. The benefits provided by the hostel to the community would significantly outweigh an affordable housing contribution which would result in the scheme being unviable.

9 CONCLUSION

- 9.1 The application hereby submitted proposes the redevelopment of the YMCA site at Peartree Lane. This hybrid planning application seeks permission for the demolition of the existing hostel, development of a replacement 100 bed YMCA hostel (full details submitted for determination) and up to 43 residential apartments (all details retained for future determination, except means of access), with associated car parking and landscaping.
- 9.2 The proposal seeks to provide an improved hostel facility and new residential units to cross fund the hostel. The existing YMCA hostel facility no longer meets the standards that YMCA expects of its accommodation. It has therefore become necessary to either replace the facility or dispose of it and redirect the land receipt into the wider YMCA estate. Refurbishment is not a viable option and would not overcome a number of inherent issues with the buildings/site. The residential element of the redevelopment of the site is required to fund the replacement of the hostel building and without this the redevelopment proposals cannot be delivered.
- 9.3 The development is required to ensure that this charity and its accommodation are retained in a key location close to the town centre. One YMCA aims to combat homelessness and runs three hostels across Hertfordshire and Bedfordshire which provide 400 rooms and over 100,000 nights' sleep each year for single homeless people between 18 and 59. The hostel provides a home and much needed support for local people who might otherwise be homeless. The continued provision of a hostel is vital to the less fortunate in the community.
- 9.4 The application site is unable to provide affordable housing as the private residential aspect of the development is required to fund the hostel. To include affordable housing requirements would widen the funding gap which would subsequently place doubt over the applicants ability to deliver the new hostel.
- 9.5 The development site is in the transition between a number of forthcoming residential developments which largely consist of apartment blocks and traditional lower density housing. The proposed residential apartments will reflect the traditional character of the area. The proposed hostel whilst modern and contemporary will complement the proposed residential apartments.
- 9.6 The proposed redevelopment of the site makes use of previously developed land which is required by both local and national policy. The site is located in a sustainable location due to its close proximity to Welwyn Garden City train station and town centre. In addition, the site is well connected by public transport.
- 9.7 It is considered that the proposed development is in accordance with the adopted Development Plan and in line with the NPPF. It is therefore requested that full planning permission for the hostel and outline planning permission for the residential apartments is approved.



Colin Haigh
Head of Planning

Sir/Madam
GL Hearn Limited
65 Grsham Street
London
EC2V 7NQ

Reply To: address as below
Direct Tel: 01707357000
Email: planning@welhat.gov.uk

13 June 2019

Dear Sir/Madam,

Application Reference: 6/2019/0679/PA

Proposal: Pre application advice for replacement 100-bed YMCA hostel and the erection of new apartment buildings to provide 43no. Residential units with associated car parking and landscaping

Location: ONE YMCA 90 Peartree Lane Welwyn Garden City AL7 3UL

Advice: Level 2 and 3 Dwellings 10 or more units

Thank you for your pre-application enquiry which was received on 29 March 2019, further to our meeting on 15th May 2019 please find below the Council's response to your proposal.

This pre-application has sought advice regarding demolishing the existing 1 and 2 storey buildings onsite, and erection of a 5 storey block to the rear of the site and 3 storey private apartment buildings to the front of the site. The development equates to 100 rooms in the hostel building and 43 units in the private apartments. The private development would comprise a mix of one, two and three bed apartments, with refuse and cycle provision provided within communal stores. In addition, 28 car parking spaces are proposed for the private apartments and 28 car parking spaces are proposed for the hostel.

Please note that the response regarding amenity and design is limited due to the information provided at this stage and therefore a conclusive outcome regarding the acceptability of the scheme is not achievable at this stage.

The relevant planning documents you should be aware of include the National Planning Policy Framework 2019 (NPPF), Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005, Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council Draft Local Plan Proposed Submission August 2016 and supplementary planning documents such as Supplementary Design Guidance 2005 Supplementary Planning Guidance – Parking Standards 2004 and Interim Policy for Car Parking Standards and Garage Sizes 2014.

In regards to this pre-application this site is designated in the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005 as falling within Peartree ward located within the settlement of Welwyn Garden City. The site is also in close proximity to the public right of way – Welwyn Garden City 061 and adjacent an area of urban open land.

This letter will begin by assessing the principle of development, followed by considering the proposed design, impact of development upon neighbour amenity and any other planning matters.

Principle of Development

In terms of the principle of development, it would be undertaken on land which is occupied by permanent structures, including the curtilage of the developed land and associated fixed surface infrastructure, such as the car parking on brownfield land. As such, the proposed scheme would involve the development of previously developed land which is supported within Paragraph 117 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and Policy R1 of the District Plan.

In terms of the principle of development of a hostel, this does not fall under a particular policy within the District Plan, nor the emerging Local Plan. Notwithstanding this, the proposal satisfies Policy R1 of the District and it would be a continuation of the existing use of the land. Further to this, the proposal would be located within a sustainable location, in accordance with Policy SD1. The development would also not contravene the Council's settlement strategy, in accordance with Policy GBSP2. As such, the principle of a hostel, which has a sui generis use, at this site would not be objected to.

As for the principle of the private residential apartments the site is not part of an allocated housing site within the existing or proposed local plan. As such, the residential development would be considered as windfall housing and therefore Policy H2 of the District Plan and Policy SADM 1 of the Draft Local Plan are both relevant. In this instance, it is considered that the development would accord with the criteria for both policies subject to satisfying S106 obligations.

The development as a whole is therefore considered to be in principle acceptable, subject to satisfying with other applicable policies within the development plan such as design, residential amenity, affordable housing etc.

Design, Density and Layout

In regards to design, there has been limited information submitted at this stage of the pre-application, including no elevational drawings, thus limiting the response. Notwithstanding this, the supporting Pre-Application Report by Saunders provides some insight to your proposal which I can comment upon.

In terms of density, the pre-application cover letter states that the size of the site is approximately 0.7ha. As the development would total to 143 residential units, the density of the scheme would equate to a total of 204 dwellings per hectare. As the site is within a central area with good accessibility modes of transport other than car the density is not objected to subject to the development not having an adverse impact on the character of the surrounding area and satisfying the design policies of the plan. Given that this scheme would be a redevelopment of the existing site, the proposed development should improve the appearance and design of the site.

I have concern that the proposed height and density of the buildings may conflict with design policies. The introduction of a three storey apartment building to the front of the site, would fail to respect the character and context of the area and that of neighbouring buildings (.i.e. height, mass, scale). The majority of neighbouring properties along Peartree Lane are two storey. The proposal of having three storey apartments along the front of the site would therefore appear obtrusive and incongruous within the streetscene. As such, the private apartments along the front of the site must be two storey.

The proposed residential apartments to the front of the site, would be erected close to the north east and south west boundaries. Whilst it is recognized that the existing structure currently abuts the boundary line, setting the development in, particularly the built form on the north eastern boundary, may afford the ability for taller buildings to the front of the site. By setting back the built form from the south west boundary, this would allow for an area of increased landscaping, which would offset the visual dominance of three storey buildings. You should also be cautious of the relationship between the north eastern boundary between the apartment and the residential dwelling adjacent.

As for the five storey hostel there are no elevations or indicative drawings submitted restricting my ability to comment. Given the importance of design for a tall building there are concerns regarding the building appearing excessively tall on this site. It is therefore advised that on submission of any future planning application, cross section plans are included comparing the height of the proposed five storey building in relation to the other buildings within the wider area. This should help demonstrate that it would not appear unduly out of keeping. It is advised that you ensure the design of the tall building does not result in a clustering of existing/proposed tall buildings and its potential impacts on; long distance view, skyline, built/natural environment and its interaction with the street.

Also, the proposal should ensure dwellings are dual aspect to enable passive ventilation and avoid the need for mechanical ventilation (unless required to make it acceptable) due to the site's proximity to noise source of commercial uses and HCC depot.

Secondly, in regards to car parking layout, attempts have been made to obscure views of car parking from the street scene. Such an approach is supported, however, due to the density of the scheme and no justification for the lack of parking submitted, there is insufficient car parking provision proposed. Car parking provision is expressed in further detail below, under the heading '*Car Parking and Cycle Provision*'.

In respect of landscaping, there are currently trees located to the front of the site. In terms of landscaping within the application site, there are few landscape features. As such, I would expect the scheme to enhance the landscaping on site to create a visually attractive setting, in keeping with the Garden City ethos. This includes retaining the existing green buffer and landscaping features, such as existing trees, whilst also planting trees and hedges to add interest and soften the car parking on site. Where any pockets of soft landscaping are proposed, these should include low level lighting to deter crime. Details would also be required of who would be responsible for the maintenance of the landscaping onsite, as well as a landscape scheme. I advise these be submitted with the planning application to prevent pre-commencement conditions.

It is noted, that there are currently fences erected to the north, south and west of the site currently and you seek to retain them. As these are for security purposes and not significantly visible from the street scene close bordered fences in these localities would not be objected to. Notwithstanding this, the use of close-boarded fencing, or brick walls, along development edges which are visible within the street scene would be objected to. Instead soft landscaping such as mature trees or hedgerows should be planted.

Whilst no elevation drawings have been submitted which identify the architectural design of the scheme it is strongly recommended that the apartments to the front of the site, reflect a traditional Garden City vernacular. The principle characteristics of the Garden City are its formality of its layout and architecture and the complete integration of its landscape within the built form. In addition to this, architectural details such as brickwork (including flemish bonding), and materials including red brick and white fenestrations all contribute to the Garden City appearance, which I would expect to see within any scheme submitted. A modern design of the five storey hostel may be able to be supported, however it should incorporate materials and characteristics that are identified within Welwyn Garden City, thus complementing the apartments to the front of the site.

For the above reasons, there is concern regarding the density of the overall scheme, resulting in a development which is not in keeping with the character of the area, particularly regarding the apartments scale and height to the front of the site, and there also being a lack of car parking provision.

As for the impact of the development upon neighbour amenity, because only an indicative layout has been submitted limited comments can be provided upon this matter. Having said that I have the following points regarding residential amenity which are worth raising. In terms of back to back distances the Council have no prescriptive figures. It is for the applicant to ensure that adequate separation distances are maintained and that no direct overlooking would result. Having said that, back to back distances of approximately 21 metres are considered acceptable.

Careful attention should also be afforded towards the siting of the 3 storey private apartments, which are adjacent the existing residential houses. As previously mentioned, there is concern that 3 storey apartments to the front of the site appearing out of keeping within the locality. Due to the proximity of the neighbouring properties, it is essential that the siting, design and scale of these buildings do not result in adverse harm upon neighbouring occupiers by way of overbearing, overlooking or a loss of light. Further to this, care should also be taken regarding the positioning of windows to ensure existing and future occupier's privacy is maintained and natural surveillance is achieved of outdoor spaces.

There is also the potential of noise pollution, due to the amount of traffic along Peartree Lane and from the neighbouring commercial/industrial units. This may result in detrimental harm upon the amenity of the proposed development. As a result, there may be a requirement for a specific noise insulation and ventilation scheme to comply with the noise levels found within BS8233 and to prevent overheating in the summer if residents need to keep windows closed to maintain reasonable internal noise levels. Outdoor amenity areas must meet the 55dB WHO Guidelines for Community Noise Level.

Please note, that in terms of the noise generated from the commercial/industrial units, levels seen by occupants as reasonable would be lower than that accepted for traffic noise. A full BS4142 assessment of noise from commercial/industrial premises which may impact on the proposed development would be required. In addition to this, if any new plant and equipment is to be installed, such as commercial kitchen extracts and air conditioning units, then these items will need to be 10dB below the background at the nearest residential properties (5dB if no tonality is present).

Car Parking and Cycle Provision

Turning to parking, Policy M14 requires new development to accord with the Parking Standards in the Councils Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG). The site falls within zone 2 of the council's parking zones where as a guideline, 25-50% of standards would apply. An accommodation schedule has not been provided and therefore a precise number of car parking provision required cannot be provided.

Having said that, to be in accordance with the council's parking standards, a 1 bedroom unit requires 0.75 spaces, a 2 bedroom dwelling requires 1 space and a 3 bedroom dwelling requires 1.5 spaces. These figures relate to the residential development only. In terms of the car parking for the hostel, this is assessed on a case by case basis and therefore justification is required for this.

As expressed within the Interim Policy for Car Parking Standards and Garage Sizes the Council has agreed to treat its existing car parking standards as guidelines rather than maximums. This means that higher or lower car parking standards than those set out in the SPG can be proposed (by landowners, developers, etc) and determined (by officers and elected councillors) on a case-by-case basis taking account of the relevant circumstances of the proposal, its size context and its wider surroundings, as well as the NPPF guidance set out above.

The diagram included in the Pre-Application Document indicates a potential to include 56 car parking spaces (50:50) for the proposed C3 and hostel uses. It is unclear however if the car parking spaces for the residential apartments will meet the standards, as the bedroom mix is not specified.

It was expressed at the meeting that the hostel will require less car parking spaces. As expressed above, the onus is on the developer (yourselves) to demonstrate through transport information submitted alongside your planning application that a greater or lesser level of car parking provision is appropriate for the hostel.

Currently the pre-application does not obtain this justification, and therefore the parking would not be supported. The lack of residential parking and density proposed, would also suggest that there are too many residential units proposed on the site. For these reasons I strongly advise justification to be submitted with any future pre-application or application and the scale of the scheme be reduced.

In addition to car parking, one long term cycle parking space is required for each flat.

Accessible Housing

In terms of other planning matters, Policy H10 requires at least 20% of all new dwellings on sites involving 5 or more new dwellings to meet Building Regulations Part M4(2) standards for 'accessible and adaptable dwellings' the delivery of which should be distributed across market and affordable tenures. It is considered that this proportion may vary where a proportion of dwellings are proposed to meet Part M4(3) standards for 'wheelchair user dwellings'. In addition, a proportion of dwellings should be built to lifetime homes standard. In this case, it appears there are no reasons to prevent the properties being built to this standard. Therefore, I advise you achieve lifetime homes standard on all properties.

Flood Risk and Drainage

As for flood risk and drainage matters whilst the site does not fall within Flood Zone 1, if it is over 1ha a Flood Risk Assessments will therefore need to be submitted. It is recommended, you seek pre-application advice separately from the Lead Local Flood Authority. As such, we would recommend any concerns raised by the LLFA are tackled.

Thames Water advised that with regard to Foul Water sewage network infrastructure capacity, they would not have any objection to the above pre-application, based on the information provided.

With regard to surface water drainage, Thames Water would advise that if the developer follows the sequential approach to the disposal of surface water we would have no objection. Where the developer proposes to discharge to a public sewer, prior approval from Thames Water Developer Services will be required. Should you require further information please refer to our website. <https://developers.thameswater.co.uk/Developing-a-large-site/Apply-and-pay-for-services/Wastewater-services>

Early discussions with Hertfordshire County Council as the Sustainable Drainage System (SuDS) Approving Body are also encouraged. Consent for drainage schemes is likely to be required from this body in the future. Applicants are required to assess all sources of flooding including surface water and managing run-off from new developments under the NPPF. In considering the design of SuDS you should take careful consideration of the ground condition and obtain the necessary specialist advice.

Contaminated Land

Due to the proximity to commercial/industrial businesses, there is the potential for contamination to be present in the ground which may be disturbed when foundations are dug. A phased contaminated land assessment, would most likely be requested via condition. As with other aspects of the development, the overall risk and mitigation required will very much depend on the final design of the site, for instance, domestic gardens will be a higher risk than paved over areas.

Energy and Sustainability

Policy R3 of the District Plan requires that all development includes measures to maximise energy conservation through the design of buildings, site layout and provision of landscaping and incorporate the best practical environmental option for energy supply. It is recommended that new dwellings deliver some of their energy requirements from decentralised and renewable or low-carbon sources. A statement illustrating how this would be achieved would be required to be submitted with any planning application.

Environmental Impact Assessment

Whilst the applicant has not submitted an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) screening request, the Local Planning Authority has undertaken one. The development is not contained within Schedule 1 of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 (the Regulations). The proposal is considered an Urban Development Project, as listed at 10(b) of Schedule 2, however the development would take place on a site less than 5 hectares, would not include more than 150 dwellings and would not include more than 1 hectare of urban development which is not dwellinghouse development. An EIA is therefore not required.

Planning Obligations

In order to assist applicants a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) on S106 Planning Obligations was adopted by the Council on the 7 February 2012. The SPD expands on Local Plan Policy IM2 and relates to new development in the Borough. The SPD provides detailed guidance on the type and scale of planning obligations sought, in addition to setting out the Council's approach to securing planning obligations, with the aim of establishing a transparent, fair and consistent process for negotiating and monitoring planning obligations. Based on the information submitted, a contribution will be sought to mitigate the impact of the development on the locality in accordance with Policy IM2 of the District Plan.

i) Affordable Housing and Mix

Policy H7 of the District Plan 2005 and Policy SP7 of the emerging Local Plan, the Council will expect the site to include the minimal provision of 30% affordable housing.

In this instance, 30% of affordable housing would be sought on the 43 private residential apartments only, given that the other 100 residential units are considered to be within a hostel. It would therefore be expected that 13, private residential apartments are affordable housing units. Comments have been received from the Affordable Housing scheme expressing support for development

In regards to the housing mix, it is advised that you contact Jeremy Morton in the housing department he can be contacted j.morton@welhat.gov.uk as the housing mix may change as the Council housing needs vary dependent on other schemes.

ii) Additional Contributions

In accordance with the Council's SPD Planning Obligations there is potential for financial contributions to the following:

- Play Facilities
- Green Space
- Outdoor Sport Facilities
- Indoor Sport Facilities
- Community Facilities
- Waste and Recycling
- NHS contributions

Please note that any planning obligations which may be relevant are also subject to an additional 5% administrative monitoring charge (up to a maximum amount of £5,000 and will be included in the S106). There is an additional charge for officer time connected with the discussions for the preparation of this legal agreement during the application process. Please check the table on website for the latest figure at: www.welhat.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=1048 at the time of the planning submission. This is in addition to solicitors costs.

iii) Hertfordshire County Council Obligations

With regard to the contributions requested by Hertfordshire County Council, (HCC) obligations monies would be sought from the 43 residential apartments towards education, library, fire hydrants and youth services to minimise the impact of development on HCC service's for the local community.

With regard to the above contributions required, the applicant will be expected to submit heads of terms with their application, for agreement by the Council. Before entering into an obligation, the Council would recommend that the applicant consults a solicitor. Please note that the applicant will be required to pay any legal fees incurred in the drafting and checking of legal documents on by Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council and Hertfordshire County Council and a solicitor's undertaking will be required form the applicant before proceeding with this work.

iv) Other Planning Obligation Matters

At the meeting you raised that the private market apartments were to fund the hostel and therefore queried whether affordable housing and other provisions were required. It is acknowledged that in some circumstances, scheme viability may be affected by the overall requirements for planning obligations, including affordable housing. If you consider that a scheme is unable to deliver affordable housing this would need to be justified, and the onus is upon yourselves to demonstrate to the council why viability would be a barrier to the delivery of policy requirements. This should involve submitting an open book appraisal of the scheme. The Council has commissioned a bespoke Toolkit to assist with such an appraisal that can be read in section 4.12 of the Planning Obligations SPD

In summary, as part of any planning application, the following information is required in order to have a valid proposal:

1. A solicitors undertaking on behalf of the applicant undertaking to pay the reasonable legal fees of the Borough Council and County Council in drawing up the agreement(s);
2. Whether you are looking to complete an agreement or undertaking;
3. Whether your solicitors would be preparing the first draft;
4. The name, address, phone number and email address of your solicitor;
5. An up to date certificate of title from your solicitor or up to date official copies or certified copies of title documents;
6. If the planning applicant is not the freehold owner of the land and/or any other person, mortgagee, company, corporation, executor or trustee, has a legal interest in the land then please provide full contact details of all other parties involved and their solicitors;
7. Copies of a site location plan for inclusion within any agreement;
8. Heads of terms (if not already submitted with the application) including trigger dates for payments/provision.

Please be aware that the Council would expect that any S106 agreements are completed before the determination of the planning application to avoid a refusal on the grounds of failing to satisfy the requirements of Policies M4 and IM2 of the District Plan and the Supplementary Planning Document on Planning Obligations.

Validation Checklist

With regard to the details that are required to be submitted with a planning application, the Council has a Planning Application Validation Checklist. A copy of the completed validation requirements is enclosed. The planning application form may also be found on the website, if not applying electronically through the Planning Portal. Subject to the detail of the application, the additional information set out below may be required.

- Planning statement
- Design and access statement
- Affordable housing statement
- Statement of community involvement

- Landscape character and visual impact assessment – elevations, levels, verified views and sections
- Arboricultural survey and landscaping scheme
- Ecological report
- Transport assessment and travel plan
- Flood risk and drainage assessment
- Site waste management plan
- Contaminated land survey
- Noise impact assessment report
- Lighting Assessment Report
- Ecological report
- Energy strategy

Is the development likely to be approved or refused?

To conclude on the above, there has been limited information submitted including elevations which makes it difficult to make an informed decision. In terms of the principle of development this is supported, however as discussed above and at the pre-application meeting, concerns remain regarding the scale and car parking provision, due to the density of the scheme proposed.

As discussed at the pre-application meeting the submission of a hybrid application would be acceptable for this scheme.

I would suggest that you discuss the proposal with neighbours before submitting the application as we will consult them once the application is received. You may also like to refer to the Council's Statement of Community Involvement when considering your pre-application consultations.

Please note that pre-application advice has not been sought from Hertfordshire County Council, Transport Programmes and Strategy, Environment Agency or the Lead Local Flood Authority as they each provide their own pre-application advice service, subject to a fee.

This advice represents my personal professional opinion and is given without prejudice to the decision of the Local Planning Authority in respect of this enquiry or any future application which may be submitted. Please note that there may be other issues which come to light when a planning application is submitted and consultations carried out.

Should you have any questions, please contact me.

Yours sincerely,

Ms Clare Howe

Development Management Officer