

Planning Statement, May 2022.

On Behalf of Hanslink Ltd in relation to the 'Demolition of existing buildings and erection of 22 apartments' (8 x 2-bed apartments and 16 x 1- bed apartments) at Trinity Hall, South Street, Reading RG1 4QU (the site).

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The site comprises an existing three storey 1980s brick building containing 24 bedspaces of student accommodation (including a wardens flat and office). The building has been unoccupied since August 2014. Located on the north-western corner of South Street and Sidmouth Street, the site fronts onto both roads. There is an existing vehicular access from South Street to an off-street tarmac parking area for 12 cars (one of these spaces being within a detached garage building located adjacent to Livery Close and which adjoins the site to the west). There is a small amount of existing landscaping around the site. Internally, the facilities in the existing are basic when compared with more recent student accommodation, including having shared toilets (no 'en-suites') and cooking facilities (no individual 'cooking facilities').

1.2 The site is located within the Reading Central Area. The site is *not* however within a designated Office Core or Shopping Core, and *nor* is it within a Conservation Area. The Site *is* however within an air quality management area (AQMA).

1.3 The surrounding area comprises a mix of residential and commercial uses, and the buildings themselves encompass a wide variety of styles and ages. There are a number of 4 storey and part 4, part 5 storey buildings close to the site, including the majority of buildings on the south side of South Street. Others have the appearance of greater height because of their commercial-storeys, high parapets, large roof forms and steep roof pitches. For further information on the surrounding area see the Design and Access Statement which also accompanies the planning application. Immediately to the north are three storey office buildings, located on the junction of Sidmouth Street and Queens Road, with off-street parking adjoining the Site. To the east on the opposite side of the Road is the Grade II Listed 3 & 5 Sidmouth Street, a 1880s 2,1/2 - 3 storey pair in the Butterfield Vicarage style. Also to the east is the modern 3 storey Sidmouth Court flats. Diagonally and to the south-east is the Grade II Listed 9 Sidmouth Street, a 2 storey end of terrace grey brick building from the 1850s. No.s 50-52 South Street, to the south of the site, is a 3 storey building occupied by the Reading Islamic Centre. To the west of this is the 4 storey Shepton House residential building. To the west of the site, on the other side of Livery Close, no.s 43-49 (odd) South

Street are Grade II Listed and is a mid-19th century 2 storey and basement residential terrace, with Bath ashlar front and flint with brick dressings and quoins behind.

1.4 The relevant historic environment records have been consulted. There are no heritage assets on the site and there are no locally listed buildings nearby. Consulting the Historic Environment Record reveals no archaeological features on the site. There are also no significant views with heritage interest to protect.

2. PROPOSALS

2.1 Full planning permission is sought for the erection of a part 4, part 5 storey building (with the fifth floor set back 'off-the shoulder' of the building) to provide 22 new apartments (including 6 affordable apartments and 2 wheelchair user apartments on the ground floor in line with M4(3) of the Building Regulations) with secure cycle parking for 22 cycles and 11 allocated car parking spaces, including 2 disabled car parking spaces. This will follow the demolition of the existing three storey building.

2.2 A range of associated works are also proposed, such as new landscaping and step free access to the building, the reduction from 12 to 11 (including 2 disabled) on-site parking spaces, integrated cycle parking and waste storage areas, altered access and associated changes to the boundary treatments.

2.3 The exact composition of the proposed accommodation is as follows:

(a) 8 x 2-bed and 14 x 1-bed apartments; together with

(b) 11 allocated car parking spaces (including 2 car parking spaces for people with limited mobility), 22 cycle stands in a secure store, refuse store able to accommodate 6 x 1100L refuse bins. These can all be adequately accessed by prospective users.

3. PLANNING HISTORY

3.1 The site was the subject of a planning permission for the 'Erection of part 3, part 4 storey building to provide 25 student units(42 bedspaces) (Sui Generis) and associated works, following demolition of existing 3 storey building (Sui Generis)' on the 3 December 2015 under application ref. 151356. This planning permission has expired.

4. LEGAL AND PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

4.1 Sections 16(2) and 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires the local planning authority to have special regard to the desirability of preserving a listed building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.

4.2 Section 72 (1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires the local planning authority in the exercise of its functions to pay special attention

to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a conservation area.

4.3 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that proposals be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Material considerations include relevant policies in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) - among them the 'presumption in favour of sustainable development', which means 'approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay' (NPPF paragraph 11).

4.4 The development plan is in one document, the Reading Borough Local Plan (November 2019) (the Local Plan). The Local Plan replaced the Core Strategy, the Sites and Detailed Policies Document and the Reading Central Area Action Plan.

4.5 The relevant national and local policies / guidance are:

National Planning Policy Framework (2021): the following NPPF chapters are the most relevant (others apply to a lesser extent):

- 2. Achieving sustainable development
- 4. Decision-making
- 5. Delivering a sufficient supply of homes
- 6. Building a strong, competitive economy
- 7. Ensuring the vitality of town centres
- 8. Promoting healthy and safe communities
- 9. Promoting sustainable transport
- 11. Making effective use of land
- 12. Achieving well-designed places
- 16. Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

National Planning Policy Guidance (2014 onwards).

Relevant Local Plan 2019 policies are:

- CC1: Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
- CC2: Sustainable Design and Construction
- CC3: Adaptation to Climate Change
- CC4: Decentralised Energy
- CC5: Waste Minimisation and Storage
- CC6: Accessibility and the Intensity of Development
- CC7: Design and the Public Realm
- CC8: Safeguarding Amenity
- CC9: Securing Infrastructure
- EN1: Protection and Enhancement of the Historic Environment
- EN2: Areas of Archaeological Significance
- EN4: Locally Important Heritage Assets
- EN5: Protection of Significant Views with Heritage Interest

EN6: New Development in an Historic Context
EN7: Local Green Space and Public Open Space
EN9: Provision of Open Space
EN10: Access to Open Space
EN12: Biodiversity and the Green Network
EN14: Trees, Hedges and Woodland
EN15: Air Quality
EN16: Pollution and Water Resources
EN18: Flooding and Drainage
H1: Provision of Housing
H2: Density and Mix
H3: Affordable Housing
H5: Standards for New Housing
H10: Private and Communal Outdoor Space
TR1: Achieving the Transport Strategy
TR3: Access, Traffic and Highway-Related Matters
TR4: Cycle Routes and Facilities
TR5: Car and Cycle Parking and Electric Vehicle Charging
CR1: Definition of Central Reading
CR2: Design in Central Reading
CR3: Public Realm in Central Reading
CR6: Living in Central Reading

Relevant Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD) are:

Affordable Housing (March 2021)
Employment, Skills and Training (2013)
Revised Parking Standards and Design (2011)
Planning Obligations under Section 106 (2015)
Sustainable Design and Construction (2019)

Other relevant documents include:

Reading Borough Council Tree Strategy (March 2021)
Reading Biodiversity Action Plan (March 2021)
Reading Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) (November 2019)
Local Transport Note 1/20 – Cycle Infrastructure Design (July 2020)
BRE Site Layout Planning for Daylight and Sunlight – A guide to good practice, 2nd edition (2011)
The National Design Guide (2019)
DCLG Technical housing standards – nationally described space standard (2015)
Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 2: Managing Significance in Decision-Taking (Historic England, 2015)
Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning: 3 (2nd Edition) The Setting of Heritage Assets (Historic England, 2017)
Reading Open Space Strategy (2007)

5. APPRAISAL

5.1 The main issues are considered to be:

- 1) The principle of the development and associated land use considerations, including density, residential mix and the provision of affordable housing;
- 2) Design related matters – including demolition, proposed layout, scale, townscape and effect on heritage assets;
- 3) Quality of the accommodation for future occupiers;
- 4) Amenity for nearby occupiers;
- 5) Transport and highways (including access);
- 6) Trees, landscaping and ecology;
- 7) Sustainability and energy; and
- 8) The overall planning balance.

1) Principle of development and associated land use considerations, including density, residential mix and provision of affordable housing

Principle:

5.2 The application seeks the redevelopment of an existing site located within the central area that has been lawfully used for student accommodation (*Sui Generis*), but which has been unused for almost 8 years, since August 2014. There is no specific Local Plan policy relating to the retention of the student accommodation. The principle of replacing the student accommodation, which in addition to being unused for a considerable period is relatively sub-standard when compared to modern student accommodation, with the proposed 22 apartments ought to be acceptable in principle as it would:

- (a) count towards the housing targets Boroughwide under Local Plan Policy H1; and
- (b) be on a site that lies within the central area which also ought to be acceptable in principle under Local Plan Policy CR6, general note 5.3.22 of which advises that *“The centre of Reading is becoming ever more important as a residential location”*.

Density, residential mix and affordable housing:

5.3 The proposed development would deliver 256 dwellings per hectare, which meets the indicative minimum ‘Above 100’ density indicatively specified at Figure 4.5 of general note 4.4.8 to Local Plan Policy H2. The development will therefore contribute towards providing a high-density to capitalise on the central area’s role as one of the most accessible locations in the South East.

5.4 In terms of the appropriate mix, general notes 4.4.9 and 4.4.10 to Local Plan advise:

“4.4.9...the Berkshire SHMA considered this issue when assessing the level of housing need. The overall percentages needed are set out in figure 4.6. For market housing, it identified a particular need within both Reading and the Western Berkshire HMA for family housing of three bedrooms or more. For affordable housing, the focus of need was on one and two-bedroom accommodation. When taken as a whole however, homes with two or more bedrooms, capable of accommodating families, represent the majority of the need, and this Plan identifies this provision as a priority (see policy H3). One-bedroom accommodation tends to have a higher turnover, meaning that more existing accommodation is likely to become available. In addition, there should clearly be an emphasis on providing homes for families in need. In overall terms, there is clearly a need for over half of new dwellings to be of three or more bedrooms.”

“4.4.10 In terms of a policy requirement, it is not possible to introduce a blanket requirement across the whole Borough. A very substantial amount of Reading’s housing need will need to be met in the town centre due to the availability of sites, and delivery of a substantial amount of family housing on these sites will not be achievable. This places a particular onus on those sites outside centres to help to meet the needs for family homes.

The site lies in the central area and achieves eight homes with two-bedrooms, capable of accommodating families, and which represent the majority of the need in Reading. All 22 of the homes proposed are one or two-bedroom accommodation which is the focus of the need for affordable housing. The application proposes that six on-site units of accommodation are provided as affordable housing in the first instance (see the ‘Affordable housing’ section below and the Affordable Housing Statement that accompanies the application) and these could all be one-bedroom units where the focus of need is greatest at 43.4% (see Figure 4.6 below).

5.5 Figure 4.6 is reproduced below.

Figure 4.6: Estimated size of accommodation type required in Reading (Source: SHMA 2016)

	1 bedroom	2 bedroom	3 bedroom	4+ bedroom
Market	10.3%	29.6%	41.5%	18.5%
Affordable	43.4%	32.9%	21.6%	2.1%
Overall	18.6%	30.5%	36.5%	14.4%

From Figure 4.6 almost 40% (39.9%) of the accommodation required in Reading for Market homes, and over 76% (76.3%) for Affordable homes, is for 1 and 2-bedroom homes towards which the proposed development will contribute.

5.6 General note 4.4.11 advises that:

“Within the centre of Reading, the considerations will be somewhat different, and Policy CR6 in the Central Reading section sets out specific requirements.”

Policy CR6 gives four criteria i) – iv) against which proposals for residential development within the central area will be assessed as follows (author's highlighting in bold):

- i) All proposals for residential development within the central area will be required to contribute towards **a mix of different sized units** within the development. This will be measured by the number of bedrooms provided within individual units. **Ideally, a mixture of one, two and three bedroom units should be provided. As a guide, in developments of 15 dwellings or more, a maximum of 40% of units should be 1-bed/ studios, and a minimum of 5% of units should be at least 3-bed, unless it can be clearly demonstrated that this would render a development unviable.***
- ii) Proposals for new residential development within the central area will be required to demonstrate how the issue of potential noise disturbance from neighbouring land uses and other sources, and air quality implications of residential development, have been considered and if necessary, mitigated. New residential development should not be located next to existing town centre uses where those uses would give rise to unacceptable levels of noise and disturbance to the occupiers of the new scheme, unless this can be mitigated.*
- iii) **In meeting the requirement to provide affordable housing, in the central area an over- concentration of social renting for single persons will be avoided.***
- iv) Where proposals for serviced apartments and apart-hotels fall outside the C3 use class, they will be located within the Central Core. Such proposals will not be permitted unless the duration of occupation of residents is restricted, to ensure the units are used on a short stay basis and not as residential flats, and information monitoring the implementation of this restriction is regularly supplied.*

The proposal provides for a mix of 8 x 2-bed and 14 x 1-bed units in accordance with criteria i). Whilst 'as a guide' criteria i) seeks a maximum of 40% of 1-bed/studio units and a minimum of 5% of at least 3-bed units, these are guidance figures. In terms of smaller units, Policy CR6 guards against an over-provision of 1- bed/studio units in the town centre. In the case of planning application ref. 182252/OUT the guidance percentage for 1-bed/studio units was exceeded and 196 x 1-bed together with 72 x studio units were permitted. Whilst ideally a maximum of 40% or 8 of the proposed 22 units would be 1-bed/studio units and a minimum of 5% or 2 of the 22 units would be 3-bed, given these are guidance figures only in this sustainable central area location and given the presence of the proposed 2 x 1-bed disabled units on the ground floor and the high demand for 1-bed affordable accommodation, this shortfall ought to be acceptable in this specific instance. In overall terms a mix of unit sizes and types are proposed, which largely accord with the policy objectives.

5.7 Policy CC6 is clear in detailing that the scale and density of development relates to its accessibility level, by walking, cycling and public transport to a range of services and facilities. This supports the approach that the densest and largest scale development should take place in the most accessible locations. This is also recognised by Policy H2, amongst other factors. The proposed location, within the central area of Reading and within an easy walking distance of the centre of Reading and the railway station, when also considered within the context of the need to maximise the efficient use of land and the characteristics

of the area (other factors referenced by Policy H2) means the proposed scale and density ought to be considered appropriate in principle.

5.8 An Affordable Housing Statement accompanies the application. In accordance with Local Plan Policy H3, the applicant looks forward to receiving the Council's assessment of the site size, suitability and type of units to be delivered in relation to the current evidence of identified needs (taking into account criteria iii) of Policy CR6) so that an appropriate tenure mix of affordable housing is provided, subject to viability considerations. In this case 30% of the total of 22 apartments would be 6.6 apartments and the applicant proposes that 6 on site apartments are provided as affordable housing in the first instance with a financial contribution being negotiated with the Council to make up the full requirement comprising 0.6 of an apartment under a Section 106 planning obligation. The provision of affordable housing would make a contribution to the assessed need of 406 affordable homes per year in Reading (as per the SHMA, referenced in Chapter 3 of the Affordable Housing SPD 2021). In the case of planning application ref. 182252/OUT the acceptance of 98 units equated to a 15.81% provision of on-site affordable housing, below the Policy H3 30% requirement, and this reinforces the need to secure 30% affordable housing provision elsewhere in Reading, and particularly in the central area.

5.9 Policy H3 of the Local Plan specifies that priority needs are currently for housing with two or more bedrooms that can house families. In addition, paragraph 4.29 of the SPD details that site circumstances will be taken into account, with a town centre flatted scheme needing to have a differing mix to suburban development. Accordingly, set within the context of the central area location, and the fact that Policy H3 states 2-bed units can house families, it is considered that the non-provision of 3-bed units ought to be acceptable, as it was in the case of planning application ref. 182252/OUT.

2) Design related matters – including demolition, proposed layout, scale, townscape and the effect on heritage assets

5.10 The existing buildings are not considered to be of any particular special architectural merit to warrant its retention. As such, the demolition of the existing building ought to be considered to be acceptable.

Layout:

5.11 The layout of the proposed development comprises 22 apartments (8 x 2-bed and 14 x 1-bed), 11 allocated car parking spaces (including 2 car parking spaces for people with limited mobility), 22 cycle stands in a secure store, refuse store able to accommodate 6 x 1100L refuse bins. These can all be adequately accessed by prospective users.

5.12 The proposed Landscape Principles demonstrate that the existing landscaping on the site will be enhanced, including on site tree planting, and which will provide value to the public realm for both residents and passers-by alike. The proposal incorporates the use of trees and other planting as part of a landscape scheme to provide shading to the building and the street, and with trees that have been carefully selected that will be managed and are adaptable to meet the predicted changed climatic conditions. The proposal will

minimise the impact of surface water runoff from the development in the design of the drainage system.

Scale:

5.13 The scale of the new building has been designed with similar buildings in the local area in mind, and includes a significant setback of the upper 2 apartments away from the shoulders of the building. The scale of the proposed building takes into account the slope of the site (to 'hide' the undercroft car parking in the lowest part of the site), the expired planning permission for a part 3, part 4 storey building, the scale of the buildings in the nearby area as shown in the photograph on page 8 of the Design and Access Statement (to the right and including commercial-storey office buildings), and other part 4 , part 5 storey buildings and recent planning permissions for apartment buildings in the local area. The proposal in the current application adds a floor to the permitted building and would be separated from no's 43-49 South Street by Livery Close.

5.14 Car-free sites are fairly common in Reading, but generally on a smaller scale than the development proposed here. However, even the lowest parking Zone in Reading (Zone 1) generally requires 0.5 spaces per dwelling. The application provides for 11 allocated car parking spaces for the 22 apartments, including parking spaces for people with limited mobility for which some support is provided in Local Plan Policy H6 'Accommodation for vulnerable people'.

5.15 The scale, form and materials of the building are a suitable response to its setting and takes visual cues from the local area. The scale of the development aligns with Policy CC6 of the Reading Borough Local Plan November 2019 which advises that: *"the scale and density of development will be related to its level of accessibility by walking, cycling and public transport to a range of services and facilities, with the densest and largest scale development taking place in the most accessible locations"*. The site is in a most accessible location in Reading and the scale of the new building reflects this.

Townscape and the effect on heritage assets:

5.15 The existing, rather undistinguished buildings on this corner site of South Street and Sidmouth Street will be demolished. An increase in height is considered to be appropriate in design terms, bearing in mind the varied heights of buildings in the area and that this corner site is considered the most appropriate in design terms to introduce additional height. The proposal is an opportunity to improve the design quality of the building at the junction of South Street and Sidmouth Street on this corner site.

5.16 The Design and Access Statement includes a Heritage Statement which concludes that the effect on the nearby listed buildings is considered to be at worse at a very low degree of 'less than substantial' harm being caused by the proposed development. In the planning balance any harmful impacts of the proposed development need to be weighed with the benefits of the proposal, such as the on-site provision of affordable housing (and in the context of a challenging viability climate), the suitably high standard and energy

efficiency of the proposed residential accommodation (compared for example to the existing student accommodation and warden's flat), provision of cycle storage facilities, and the potential for a significant Biodiversity Net Gain of 77% are all tangible planning benefits of the proposed development. In this case it is considered that in a suitable planning balance the public benefits of the proposal outweigh any heritage harm that *may* be identified.

3) Quality of the accommodation for future occupiers

5.17 The units are appropriately sized for the number of bedrooms proposed and are regular in shape, providing outlook in all cases, maximising dual aspect units and minimising the number single aspect north-facing units.

5.18 The proposal will provide 22 new apartments (including 6 affordable apartments) and 2 (9% of the units) wheelchair user apartments on the ground floor in line with M4(3) of the Building Regulations) in line with Policy H5f, with secure cycle parking for 22 cycles and 11 allocated car parking spaces, including 2 disabled car parking spaces. All the other residential units have been designed to allow for ease of adaptability to meet M4(2) of the Building Regulations, as required by Policy H5e.

5.19 In terms of private amenity space for future occupiers, it is relevant to note that a significant number of the units either include protruding or inset balconies, thereby providing small individual areas of private outdoor amenity space. The ability to walk to public open space nearby in the central area, Kennet Riverside and also Eldon Square public open space which is in a comfortable walking distance being about 0.5km away is also notable.

4) Amenity for nearby occupiers

5.20 With regard to privacy and overlooking matters, the distance of the proposed building to the neighbouring occupiers and the relationships, particularly with the end of the listed building on the opposite side of Livery Close and the existing car parking to the rear, means no significant detrimental impacts are anticipated to existing neighbouring or future occupiers.

5) Transport and highways (including access)

5.21 The existing access onto South Street to the existing car park which provides for 12 existing car parking spaces, including an awkwardly placed garage building, will be altered and 11 car parking spaces, including 2 disabled space, provided...a reduction of 1 car parking space over the existing.

5.22 The site is located in Zone 2 and is well served by public transport. As detailed in the Council's 'Revised Parking Standards and Design' for 1-2 bed flats in Zone 2, parking is generally required at a rate of 1 space per flat. However, the standards also state that:

“Should a developer require fewer spaces than are set out here then there would need to be demonstration, to the Highway Authority’s satisfaction, that there would be no detriment to highway safety as a result.”

Given that the site lies within the RCA, the close proximity of the site to Reading town centre, the nearby parking restrictions and the number of nearby alternative sustainable travel opportunities, the provision of 11 allocated car parking spaces is considered to be appropriate would not result in a detrimental impact on highway safety in the context of the Council’s parking standards. Car-free sites are fairly common in Reading, but generally on a smaller scale than the development proposed here. However, even the lowest parking Zone in Reading (Zone 1) generally requires 0.5 spaces per dwelling. The application provides for 11 allocated car parking spaces for the 22 apartments, including 2 parking spaces for people with limited mobility for which some support is provided in Local Plan Policy H6 ‘Accommodation for vulnerable people’.

5.23 Policy TR5 requires the provision of electric vehicle charging points and, in this case, it is intended that the proposed 11 car parking spaces will be allocated, rather than communal. The precise details are not known at this stage, and it is noted that Policy TR5 requires all houses with dedicated off-street parking to be provided with charging points, and 10% in communal car parks. The precise details could be the subject of an appropriately worded condition if necessary.

5.24 Dedicated cycle and waste storage facilities are provided within the new building in accordance with the relevant guidelines as detailed in the Design and Access Statement accompanying the application.

6) Trees, landscaping and ecology

5.25 Plans of the existing Landscape Features and Landscape Principles accompany the application. There is existing landscaping around the site which is of a relatively low height. Enhancement of the existing landscape strips, in particular those along South Street and Sidmouth Street, is proposed and in which there are no quality trees growing. Tree planting is incorporated into the proposal along both frontages, with the ground floor plan showing 8 trees in all and intended to be planted as a mix of 'Ligustrum japonicum' and 'Photinia fraseri Red Robin' trees. The proposal incorporates the use of trees and other planting as part of a landscape scheme to provide shading to the building and the street, and with trees that have been carefully selected that will be managed and are adaptable to meet the predicted changed climatic conditions. The details of the hard and soft landscaping scheme, including specifications of the tree pits and for the maintenance of all the landscaping can be secured by condition.

5.26 An Ecological Appraisal and Biodiversity Metric accompany the application which shows that there will be a significant 77% biodiversity net gain including the intended provision of 6 x Swift Boxes, 6x Solitary Bee blocks and a single bat roost. The details of the biodiversity measures can be secured by condition if necessary.

7) Sustainability and energy

5.27 The site is in a sustainable location being within the central area. An Energy Statement accompanies the application which follows the policies (CC2, CC3, CC4 and H5) contained within the Local Plan and the guidance in the SPD's. A sequential approach is adopted in line with the Energy Hierarchy, assessing in turn, the feasibility of reducing the energy demand of the new building, using energy more cleanly and finally applying renewable technologies. The Energy Statement defines a strategy to reduce emissions by 35% (minimum) using energy efficiency measures compared to the regulated emissions from a building designed to meet Building Regulations (2013) Part L1A.

8) The overall planning balance

5.28 The application is required to be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise, as per Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. Any harmful impacts of the proposal that *may* be identified need to be weighed against the benefits.

5.29 In the overall planning balance the effect on the nearby listed buildings is considered to be at worse at a very low degree of 'less than substantial' harm being caused by the proposed development and, in developments of 15 dwellings or more, it is a 'guide' that a maximum of 40% of units should be 1-bed/ studios, and a minimum of 5% of units should be at least 3-bed. In this case weighed with all the benefits of the proposal identified, and that the building has been unoccupied since August 2014 and fails to make efficient use of the site. As such, it ought to be concluded that any conflict with the development plan are outweighed by all the benefits of the proposal in this instance in applying a suitable planning balance.

6. CONCLUSIONS

6.1 The proposal is considered to be acceptable within the context of national and local planning policies, as detailed in the appraisal above. As such, planning permission ought to be granted, subject to any necessary conditions and the completion of any necessary S106 Legal Agreement.