

DELEGATED APPLICATION REPORT

Ward: Katesgrove

App Ref: 171477/FUL

Address: 125 Highgrove Street, Reading, RG1 5EJ

Proposals: Erection of 8 new dwellings (Use Class C3) including landscaping. Demolition of existing buildings within site.

Case Officer: Steve Vigar

Applicant: al3d Limited

Date received (valid from): 5 September 2017

Target Decision date: 24 November 2017

1. INTRODUCTION

The application relates to a site to the rear of 107 to 123 Highgrove Street, 112-124 Kendrick Road and 1 to 19 Christchurch Road. The site is bounded on the southern side by the Christchurch Conservation Area and to the north by the Kendrick Conservation Area. 1 to 33 Christchurch Road are listed buildings.

2. PROPOSAL AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Full planning permission is sought for the erection of 8 new dwellings (Use Class C3) including landscaping. Demolition of existing buildings within site.

Plans considered

285/100 Rev.3 - Location and Site Plan - dated 3 November 2017, received 14 November 2017,

285/111 Rev. 4 - Proposed Site Plan Ground Floor, dated 3 November 2017, received 14 November 2017,

285/112 Rev.3 - Proposed Site Plan First Floor, dated 3 November 2017, received 14 November 2017,

285/113 Rev.3 - Proposed Site Plan Roofs, dated 3 November 2017, received 14 November 2017,

285/114 Rev.4 - Proposed Longitudinal elevations, dated 3 November 2017, received 14 November 2017,

285/116 Rev.1 - Section AA and BB, dated 10 November 2017, received 14 November 2017.

285/117 Rev.1 - Section CC and DD, dated 10 November 2017, received 14 December 2017.

285/118 Rev.3 - Section EE & FF, dated 10 November 2017, received 14 November 2017.

285/119 Rev.3 - Elevations seen from adjacent dwellings, dated 3 November 2017, received 14 November 2017

285/120 Rev. 5 - Elevations and plans of unit 1 and 2, dated 14 December 2017, received 14 December 2017.

285/121 Rev. 4 - Elevations and plans of unit 3, dated 13 December 2017, received 13 December 2017

285/122 Rev.2 - Elevations and plans of unit 4, dated 13 December 2017, received 13 December 2017

285/123 Rev.2 - Elevations and plans of unit 5, dated 24 August 2017, received 14 November 2017

285/124 Rev.3 - Elevations and plans of unit 6, dated 3 November 2017, received 14 December 2017.

285/125 Rev.3 - Elevations and plans of units 7 and 8, dated 18 December 2017, received 18 December 2017.

285/127 Rev.1 - Refuse vehicle turning circles, dated 24 October 2017, received 14 November 2017

285/128 Rev.0 - Schematic site cross section, dated 17 August 2017, received 14 November 2017.

285/129 Rev.0 - Existing Site Plan, dated 1 November 2017, received 14 November 2017 [topographical survey]

285/130 Rev.0 10.2m Dennis Sabre Fire Engine turning circles, dated 3 November 2017, received 14 November 2017

285/131 Rev.0 - Schematic louvre system, dated 23 November 2017, received 24 November 2017

285/132 Rev.0 - Schematic amenity space plan, dated 4 December 2017, received 4 December 2017

Arboricultural Method Statement ref:4421/17-03 dated 22 October 2017, received 31 October 2017, including Tree Protection Plan PJC/4422/17/C dated 20 October 2017.

3. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

170126/PRE - Pre-application advice for proposed residential development for 7 individual 2-storey units and 2 single storey units on existing light industrial site

4. CONSULTATIONS

RBC Transport

Highgrove Street is a one way street and is located in Zone 2, Primary Core Area, of the Revised Parking Standards and Reading Design SPD. This zone directly surrounds the Central Core and extends to walking distances of 2 kilometres from the centre of Reading. This zone is well served by public transport, with buses continuing either into or out of the Central Core Area via this zone. In accordance with the adopted Parking SPD, the development would be required to provide 1 on-site parking space per 1-2 bedroom dwelling. This therefore equates to a required provision of 8 parking spaces for the total development; however as previously advised in the

Pre App (170126) given the close proximity to town and the available transport links to the town centre and station it has been agreed that a “Car Free” development would be acceptable for this site.

Parking restrictions in the form of double yellow lines and a “Doctor Only” parking bay are in place directly outside the existing site entrance. In addition to this the development site is located in an area designated as a Residents Parking Permit Area; Zone 10R. Under the Borough’s current parking standards, this proposal would generate additional pressure for parking in the area. Therefore if this application is approved there should be an assumption that any future occupants of the proposed dwelling will not be issued with a resident parking permit. The standard conditions and informative facilitating this should be applied. This will ensure that the development does not harm the existing amenities of the neighbouring residential properties by adding to the already high level of on street car parking in the area.

The revised version of the plans are acceptable, however it should be noted that the tracking illustrated for the entry and turning manoeuvre for the refuse vehicle and Fire engine does show the vehicles encroaching on to the common amenity space (Drawing No 285/111 Proposed Site Plan- 01/11/2016).

Full details of cycle storage can dealt with by way of condition.

Transport do not have any objections to this application subject to the following conditions and informatives:

CONDITIONS:

Restriction on parking within the site.

CO2 Construction Method Statement

DC7 Parking permits 1

DC8 Parking permits 2

DC5 Bicycle parking - plans to be approved

DC6 Bin storage

DC7 Parking permits 1

DC8 Parking permits 2

INFORMATIVES:

IF3 Highways

I13 Parking Permits

RBC Environmental Protection

The site was historically used as a builders yard and more recently has had a garage with car repairs, a hand car wash and a number of other work shops.

A ‘phase 1’ desk study has been submitted with the application that has identified possible pollutant linkages which could pose a risk to future users of the site, further intrusive investigation is deemed necessary.

Investigation must be carried out by a suitably qualified person to ensure that the site is suitable for the proposed use or can be made so by remedial action.

Conditions are recommended to secure full investigation and remediation as necessary to ensure that future occupants are not put at undue risk from contamination.

EP have concerns about potential noise, dust and bonfires associated with the construction (and demolition) of the proposed development and possible adverse impact on nearby residents (and businesses). Conditions to secure noise/dust controls during construction, restriction on the hours of construction and a restriction on burning of construction waste are recommended.

Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service

No additional fire hydrants are required.

Access requirements are to meet the functional requirements of the Building Regulations and the relevant provisions of the Berkshire Act. Any gates required for emergency access should achieve a minimum of 3.1m clear opening.

Review of the layout for fire safety provisions is the responsibility of the Building Regulations Department or Approved Inspector.

Archaeology

The HER holds a number of records within the vicinity of the site. These include Bronze Age or Iron Age cremation burials c150m to the south, evidence for Roman activity to the west uncovered during 19th century gravel digging and house building and a number of prehistoric worked flint tools. Although the existing buildings on site will have had some level of impact it is possible that this has been limited. As the level of impact is currently unknown, and given the proposals include substantial ground reduction across the site, BA recommend that further information from field investigation is required in order to determine previous impacts and the site's archaeological potential. An initial phase of trial trenching prior to development would be suitable and depending on the results of the trial trenching further phases of investigation prior to development may be required and adequate time should be allowed for this within the development programme.

A condition requiring approval of a written scheme of archaeological investigation is recommended.

RBC Tree Officer

With reference to the AIA dated 20 October 2017, the AMS dated 22 October 2017 (both from PJC Consultancy), the Boundary wall condition document from al3d, Proposed Site Plan Ground Floor 285/111 Rev 4, Fire Engine turning circles drawing 285/130 and Refuse Vehicles turning circles drawing 285/127 Rev 1:

The AIA informs the AMS, the latter being fundamentally acceptable. However, I note from the Boundary wall condition document that it is intended to replace the wall bordering the Kendrick Road properties as follows:

'These will be replaced with a good -quality wall 2.4 m above the existing garden level of those properties and will be secured to a concrete or block and reinforcement retaining wall below the ground level'.

As you are aware, there was concern over potential root issues from the dwellings hence trial trenches were dug for these to determine what roots (if any) were present. As detailed in the AIA, some smaller roots were found so whilst root encroachment was not considerable, roots had entered the site under the existing boundary wall. I am therefore concerned about potential

wall replacement, specifically the underground requirements which are not dealt with in the AIA or AMS. Further consideration / information on this is required.

A reduction of the TPO Horse Chestnut at 118 Kendrick Road is suggested in the AIA. For clarity, this work via this planning application is not approved. A separate TPO application has been made by the tree owner and approved for a crown reduction (ref 171208/TPO).

No objection based on revised drawings and submitted Arboricultural Method Statement. Subject to the conditions below. The Reinforced grass system to shared amenity space is noted.

L2a Landscaping - When details need to be submitted for approval

L2b Landscaping implementation

L3 Standard Landscaping Maintenance

L6b Arboricultural method statement to be followed

New condition: No development shall take place until full details and method of installation of the eastern boundary wall (abutting Kendrick Road properties) has been submitted and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

RBC Ecologist

The bat survey has been undertaken to an appropriate standard and concludes that the risk of bats being affected by the proposals is minimal. There are therefore no objections to this application on ecology grounds. However should you be minded to permit the development it is recommended that a condition is included to secure biodiversity enhancements (bird and bat boxes/tiles/bricks, and native/wildlife-friendly landscaping).

Southern Gas Networks

No comment received

Thames Water

No comment received

Scottish and Southern Electricity

No comment received

Properties adjoining the site were consulted by letter. A site notice was displayed at the entrance to the site.

Letters of representation have been received from 13 addresses, summarised below:

- A bat has never been seen flying at the site. The Council should be pleased that the site is changing to residential.
- 2 storey, Units 3 and 4 too high and would affect boundary wall.
- Obscure glazed window to Unit 3 would be openable and would look into Kendrick Road property. Window now added to Unit 4 which would also overlook.
- The long windows to the NE elevation of Unit 3 do not tie up with the floorplans.
- Overdevelopment due to the number of units and the two storey height.
- Security risk while site being developed once boundary walls removed.
- Broadly welcome the proposals but concerns over treatment of boundary walls. Need assurance that the buildings will be inside the site and not replace existing boundary wall.
- Proposed boundary treatment for rear of 124 Kendrick Road not clear.
- Overlooking from the front and rear windows of Units 1 and 2 into Kendrick Road properties.
- Small gardens will result in noise affecting Kendrick Road properties.

- Highgrove Street is already extremely busy with traffic and dangerous with the lack of access when busy, it would only get worse with extra houses. The disruption caused by any building works and extra residents would cause more problems when it comes to parking and litter in the area.
- Root damage to protected tree.
- Ground levels on the Kendrick Road side of the wall are higher. What plans are there to maintain the height of existing walls to ensure that the development 'barely protrudes above the fencing line'?
- How will excavations not undermine the foundations of the existing boundary walls?
- How will rats be stopped from using the narrow gap between new walls and the boundary wall?
- Concerns over future pressure to prune back neighbouring trees due to leaf fall etc. Also difficulty in accessing trees to prune, if required.
- No provision for car ownership.
- No multi-storey buildings should be accepted in the back gardens in order to protect privacy, light and views.
- The east facade (unit 2) has 2 storeys without windows. Clearly, the applicant intends to respect privacy. However, the result is a massive, monolith block sitting on the border wall. The existing trees will not hide this building without leaves in winter.
- The windows to the north (unit 1 and 2) are overlooking my garden and affecting my privacy. As Kendrick Road is on a hill, my garden is situated approx. 3-4 feet lower than the planned buildings at the north end of the plot. As a result, a 2-storey building appears even higher. I have illustrated the effect below:
- Overlooking, overbearing and loss of privacy to rear of Highgrove Street property due to two-storey design.
- More space required between units 3 and 4 and boundary to allow access for maintenance of neighbouring outbuilding. Concerns that excavations could undermine outbuilding.
- Any screening to Kendrick Rd properties that did exist from trees has gone as five trees have recently died.
- The suggested core palate of materials in section 16 of the D&A statement is appreciated. The Foundry Mews and Newhall Be schemes both rely on simple forms, repetition and a tightly restricted palate of high quality well-detailed materials. The propose elevations drawing and visuals in D&A statement do not reflect these, in particular the irregular window openings and wide array of materials and textures.
- How will drainage be achieved given the proposed reduction in ground levels?
- Concern that common amenity area behind 111 Highgrove street could become a place which could encourage anti social behaviour and allow access to Highgrove St gardens - because it is dark and secluded.
- Street lighting within site could disturb residents in Highgrove St.
- How will refuse lorry reach bins at units 1 and 2?
- 15 Christchurch Road has legal right of access through the site to access the garage - how will access be maintained, including during construction?
- Bin stores will be smelly in the summer months. Communal store should be avoided for this reason.

5. LEGAL AND PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

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'.

Section 16(2) 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 interest which it possesses.

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.

The following local and national planning policy and guidance is relevant to this application:

National Policy

National Planning Policy Framework
National Planning Practice Guidance

Reading Borough Local Development Framework Core Strategy (2008)

CS1 (Sustainable Design and Construction)
CS2 (Waste Minimisation)
CS4 (Accessibility and the Intensity of Development)
CS5 (Inclusive Access)
CS7 (Design and the Public Realm)
CS9 (Infrastructure, Services, Resources and Amenities)
CS11 (Use of Employment Land for Alternative Uses)
CS15 (Location, Accessibility, Density and Housing Mix)
CS16 (Affordable Housing)
CS20 (Implementation of The Reading Transport Strategy)
CS22 (Transport Assessments)
CS24 (Car/Cycle Parking)
CS29 (Provision of Open Space)
CS30 (Access to Open Space)
CS33 (Protection and Enhancement of the Historic Environment)
CS34 (Pollution and Water Resources)
CS35 (Flooding)
CS36 (Biodiversity and Geology)
CS38 (Trees, Hedges and Woodlands)

Sites and Detailed Policies Document (2012)

SD1 (Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development)
DM1 (Adaptation to Climate Change)
DM2 (Decentralised Energy)
DM3 (Infrastructure Planning)
DM4 (Safeguarding Amenity)
DM6 (Affordable Housing)
DM10 (Private and Communal Outdoor Space)
DM12 (Access, Traffic and Highway Related Matters)
DM18 (Tree Planting)
DM19 (Air Quality)

SPG/SPD

- Section 106 SPD
- Affordable Housing SPD
- Sustainable Design and Construction (Supplementary Planning Guidance).
- Parking Standards and Design (Supplementary Planning Document).

6. APPRAISAL

Character

The site is an unusual shape and heavily constrained by surrounding development. It is apparent that there would be clear benefits in regenerating the site and removing the existing poor quality buildings which form part of the setting of the Christchurch Conservation Area and that of the row of listed buildings fronting Christchurch Road, which back onto the site.

The site sits within the middle of the historic street block and although the site has existed separately from neighbouring gardens for a long period of time, any new development could very easily appear incongruous with the historic street layout. Any development would therefore need to remain subservient to the surrounding housing and visually discreet.

Concerns were raised at pre-application stage regarding a version of the scheme with a predominantly two storey scale. This has been reduced to some extent at application stage and it is considered that the scale has been reduced sufficiently by reducing a number of the units to single storey and by reducing the ground levels within the site. The resulting scheme would appear suitably recessive in relation to the more dominant scale of buildings fronting the surrounding streets. Furthermore, much of the proposal, including the remaining two storey buildings, would not be readily visible from surrounding streets.

It is considered that the scale, layout and appearance of the development, together with the significant visual improvement over the existing situation, would preserve the setting of listed buildings fronting Christchurch Road and the setting of Kendrick and Christchurch Conservation Areas.

The proposals are of a contemporary design, which lends itself to the unusual character of the site and the need to fit buildings around the space available, which results in some unusual building shapes. It is considered that the proposals would appear as a creative solution to developing the site. The range of materials proposed is not necessarily inappropriate, provided that the materials (samples to be secured by condition) are of a high quality and installed correctly. The suggested palette of timber, zinc, brick, render and concrete would reinforce the distinctive and unusual design. The appropriate scale referred to above, would ensure that this remains appropriately discreet and not visually dominant within the setting of the conservation areas, listed buildings or the wider streetscene. A more restrained palette such as the Hanwell example referred to by the applicant could miss the opportunities to add visual interest and reflect the individual character of this site.

The proposals are therefore considered to be in accordance with Policies CS7 and CS33, together with national policy and statutory requirements in respect of heritage assets.

Neighbouring Amenity

Visual impact and overbearing effects

The ground levels would be lower within the site compared to that of surrounding housing, which would reduce the apparent bulk of the development when viewed from the rear of surrounding dwellings in Kendrick Road, Highgrove Street and Christchurch Road. The submitted drawings demonstrate that the proposals would be visible from the rear of Kendrick Road properties, however the combination of the shallow-pitched roof, reduced ground level and the replacement boundary wall to the same height as existing, or higher (as shown on the long elevation drawings and in the submitted boundary treatment statement) would ensure that the building would not appear overly dominant or overbearing in relation to these neighbouring properties.

The intervening vegetation at the end of Kendrick Road gardens is noted, as are the references to the recent death of mature trees. Whilst any remaining vegetation would soften the visual impact of the proposal, the above assessment has been made assuming a worst-case situation with no vegetation.

The proposals would be set off the boundary with the rear of Highgrove Street properties, with the exception of Unit 1. Unit 1 has a 19.5 metre long back garden and this, together with the measures to reduce the apparent scale of the building (shallow roof, lowered ground level) would ensure that the proposal would not cause harm in term of overbearing effects. Other Highgrove St properties would have greater separation from the buildings and the proposal would not cause harmful overbearing effects to these.

Single storey buildings, Units 7 and 8, would sit adjacent to the rear garden boundaries of Christchurch Road properties. These would be similar in scale and position to the existing single storey building and would not result in harmful overbearing effects on these neighbours.

Privacy

The concerns raised by neighbours regarding overlooking from first floor windows are noted. It is certainly the case that normal first floor windows would cause loss of privacy to Highgrove Street and Kendrick Road gardens where they face directly onto neighbouring land. This issue has been subject to detailed discussions and the revised proposals now include a range of privacy measures to prevent direct overlooking of neighbouring gardens. A combination of windows fitted with Privacy louvres and obscured glazing are proposed at first floor facing the rear of Highgrove Street properties. It is considered that this arrangement would prevent harmful overlooking to these properties.

The first floor rear windows of Units 1 and 2 would face the end of the rear garden of 112 Kendrick Road. Four of the six panes would have privacy louvres fitted. The remaining two would be clear glazed but have been revised to have a higher cill level. These units would be lowered into the ground, compared with existing ground levels and a relatively tall boundary treatment is proposed. It is considered that the combination of the privacy window measures, the lowered position of the new dwelling and the boundary treatment would avoid harmful overlooking of the end of the rear garden of 112 Kendrick Road.

The first floor windows within the front elevation of Units 1 and 2 would be treated with privacy louvres on the outermost windows with clear glazed panes to the centre of the building. It is considered that this arrangement would reduce any overlooking of Kendrick Road gardens to an acceptable degree as only oblique views of the ends of the gardens would be possible.

The large first floor window in the east elevation of Unit 3 would face directly on to the rear garden of 116 Kendrick Road. However this window is shown as fixed, non-openable, and obscure glazed.

A condition requiring implementation and retention of the proposed privacy measures described above, and as detailed on the submitted drawings, is recommended. It is also recommended that full details of all boundary treatment, based on the principles shown on the submitted drawings, should also be secured by condition.

Although unlikely, use of the proposed flat and shallow pitched roofs as a sitting out area or terrace would be harmful to neighbouring privacy and a condition is recommended preventing this.

Daylight

It is considered that the proposed buildings are sufficiently low and distant from neighbouring dwellings to prevent harmful loss of daylight.

Boundaries

Many of the concerns raised by neighbours relate to the replacement of existing boundary walls. The applicant has stated that these are owned by the owner of the application site, whereas a number of neighbours state that these are their ownership. This boundary dispute is not a planning matter and is a civil matter to be resolved between the respective parties. A grant of planning permission does not give any rights of ownership to the developer. A condition is recommended requiring details of boundary treatment to be submitted for approval, and implemented prior to first occupation (or to an agreed timetable). This will prevent a scenario whereby the new houses are occupied without the new boundary treatments being provided. If the legal matters are not resolved, it will not be possible to implement the current proposed scheme and further permission will be required for an alternative approach.

Light

The submitted lighting details suggest low level and downward angled lighting. A condition restricting outdoor lighting and making the precise details subject to LPA approval is recommended.

Waste

Waste storage is proposed in various locations around the site, close to their respective dwellings, reducing concerns raised by neighbours in respect of odour that may result from a large communal store.

Noise from Occupiers

The proposals are sufficiently distant from neighbouring houses and the proposed residential use is not inherently noisy, any more than any other residential use within what is a densely populated area. There is no evidence to suggest that future occupiers would harm the amenity of neighbours in this regard. Any individual cases of noise nuisance that do occur would be controllable separately under Environmental Health legislation.

Anti-social behaviour

Concerns have been raised by neighbours that the communal amenity area could attract anti-social behaviour. It is considered that this would be unlikely due to the natural surveillance from, and proximity to, the new houses.

Construction Phase

Although some disturbance to neighbours is inevitable, conditions are recommended to restrict hours of construction, secure a Construction Method Statement, secure controls over noise and dust during works, and restrict bonfires.

It is considered that the revised proposals are in accordance with Policy DM4 on the basis of the above assessment.

Amenity of Future Occupiers

The regeneration of this unusually-shaped site in a viable way almost inevitably requires a degree of flexibility in terms of standard approaches to providing residential accommodation. It is considered that the proposed dwellings, although small, successfully provide a reasonable degree of daylight (improved through the use of skylights), outlook and privacy for all future occupiers. Each dwelling would have its own outdoor private amenity space, which are considered appropriate for the scale of the dwellings they serve and taking into account the character of the site. Some limited additional amenity would be provided by the shared outdoor space to the far end of the site. It is considered that the design approach to the scheme has given sufficient thought to the amenity of future occupiers and would ensure that the development would not feel overly cramped or unpleasant. The proposals are considered to be in accordance with Policy DM4 on this basis.

Parking and Access

The Council's Transport section have agreed that because of the sustainable location and the fact that the Council is able to control and regulate the parking in the area via the Residents Parking Scheme we could accept a 'car free' development. This would be on the basis that the Council's parking service retain control future occupiers, who would not be entitled to a residents' parking permit.

Waste storage areas and access for refuse collection vehicles have been assessed by Transport and found to be acceptable.

Access for a large fire engine has also been demonstrated to the satisfaction of the Highways Authority.

A condition (wording agreed with RBC Transport) is recommended to prevent parking of vehicles anywhere within the site. Reference to 'parking' would still allow for short term loading/unloading/alighting, including waste collection, supermarket deliveries etc.. The condition also includes a restriction on any obstruction of the emergency access route within the fire engine tracked lines shown on the submitted drawing.

The neighbour's comments regarding rights of access to their garage through the site are noted. The proposals allow for this to be maintained in terms of a physical route through the development. Importantly, a grant of planning permission would not remove any of the legal rights that the neighbour possesses in respect of access, and this remains a private legal matter to be resolved between the respective parties.

Policies CS7, CS20, CS24, DM12 and the Revised Parking Standards and Design SPD apply.

Trees and Landscape

The revised details and AMS are now considered acceptable in respect of existing trees neighbouring the site.

It is apparent that the site will have a largely hard surfaced character and high quality paving etc will be required. Opportunities for limited soft landscaping will exist within gardens and to the edges of the communal space adjacent Unit 3. The applicant indicates climbing plants to boundary walls, which will also be expected to be shown in the detailed landscaping design, secured by condition.

The residents of the Kendrick Road are likely to value the remaining trees close to the site boundary for the screening and the privacy they provide. There is no legal restriction preventing Kendrick Road residents from planting or allowing the existing deciduous trees or hedges to grow up and screen the new properties should they wish to do so. This could affect windows on the eastern side of the development. Residents within the new development would have no legal right to reduce the height of the trees beyond their common law right to cut back any overhang back to their property boundaries. It is not considered that this is situation would be sufficiently harmful to warrant refusal as east facing windows would be obscure glazed and other windows and skylights allow daylight to enter from other directions.

The proposal is considered to be in accordance with policies CS7, CS33, CS38 and DM18.

Ecology

The existing site is of low ecological value and the proposals are considered acceptable, as confirmed by the Council's Ecologist. Conditions securing wildlife friendly landscaping and ecological enhancement (bird and bat boxes) are recommended. The proposals accord with Policy CS36 on this basis.

Contaminated Land

The proposed site has had a number of light industrial uses over the years. Also pollution incidents involving engine oil.

The developer is responsible for ensuring that development site is safe and suitable for use for the intended purpose or can be made so by remedial action.

As per advice from the Council's Environmental Protection team, it is considered that the risk can be adequately managed by condition. The proposals are considered to be in accordance with Policy CS34 on this basis.

Drainage

The submitted details suggest that the site would connect to existing sewerage, already within the site. Given that the ground levels are proposed to be lowered, and the somewhat isolated nature of the site, behind other houses, it is considered necessary and reasonable to secure full details of the proposed drainage system, both foul and surface water, prior to commencement. Surface water should be handled in accordance with SuDS principles. Policies CS34, DM1 and CS1 apply.

Archaeology

The Historic Environment Record holds a number of records within the vicinity of the site. These include Bronze Age or Iron Age cremation burials c150m to the south, evidence for Roman activity to the west uncovered during 19th century gravel digging and house building and a number of prehistoric worked flint tools.

Given that the current plans include ground reduction within the site, increasing the overall below ground impact of the proposal, a pre-commencement condition securing archaeological investigations is required.

Affordable Housing

Policy DM6 applies to the proposal and requires 20% of the dwellings to be provided as Affordable Housing, on site in the first instance. The policy allows for financial viability considerations to be taken into account and the applicant has submitted a viability assessment. The Council's Valuer has assessed this and advises

7. CONCLUSION

The proposed development would not be harmful to the character or appearance of the site, or the setting of nearby listed buildings, or the setting of adjacent conservation areas. The proposals would not harm the amenity of neighbouring properties. As such the proposed works are considered to be in accordance with the above relevant policies and permission can be granted.

Equality Act

In determining this application the Council is required to have regard to its obligations under the Equality Act 2010. The key equalities protected characteristics include age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation. It is considered that there is no indication or evidence (including from consultation on the current applications) that the protected groups have or will have different needs, experiences, issues and priorities in relation to this particular planning application.

8.0 RECOMMENDATION

GRANT Full Planning Permission, subject to the outcome of ongoing viability discussions (which may require a S106 agreement to secure Affordable Housing).