



PROGRESS PLANNING

Planning Statement

Birchwood House (previously land adjacent to London School of Theology), Green Lane, Northwood, HA6 2UZ

Erection of a residential building comprising 13 flats with associated parking, cycle storage, motorcycle parking, disabled parking and bin storage following demolition of existing residential block and pair of semi-detached houses.

Prepared by Progress Planning on behalf of:

Westcombe Homes Ltd

May 2022

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Executive Summary



This statement has been prepared by Progress Planning on behalf of Westcombe Homes Ltd to support a full planning application an amendment to the internal layout and number of units. This application builds on the previously accepted scheme of 10112/APP/2019/1244, which sought the 'erection of a residential building comprising 15 flats with associated parking, cycle storage, motorcycle parking, disabled parking, and bin storage following demolition of existing residential block and pair of semi detached houses) for changes to the internal layout, reduction of units, and allocation of affordable housing'.

The proposed alterations would not intensify the use of the site and the reduction in unit numbers would make the ancillary spaces / services such as parking and external amenity, more generous for future occupiers. The new mix would increase the number of 3 bedroom family sized units which the Council has greater demand for.

The changes would not affect the external appearance of the building, nor affect neighbouring properties.

The affordable offer is more generous than that secured originally despite the reduction in unit numbers.

As the proposal would improve the quality of the scheme from a planning policy perspective, it is considered that the Council will welcome the changes and approve this application.

The Site

The proposed development site forms the eastern side of the grounds of the London School of Theology. It is accessed from Green Lane. The main college buildings are located to the west of the proposed development site. The site comprises two residential buildings which are now redundant. There is a change in levels across the college site, with this site occupying higher ground to the north. Adjoining the site to the north and west are traditional residential areas. The application site is surplus to college requirements. The existing buildings date from the late 20th century and are undistinguished, being partly student accommodation in a two storey block, and a pair of semi-detached houses, surrounded by lawn. Between the site and Green Lane is Aldis Hall, a locally listed building. The main campus building to the west is predominately three storeys.

Proposed development

The proposal relates to a full planning application in order to amend the planning permission ref: 10112/APP/2019/1244 (Erection of a residential building comprising 15 flats with associated parking, cycle storage, motorcycle parking, disabled parking, and bin storage following demolition of existing residential block and pair of semi detached houses) for changes to the internal layout, reduction of units, and allocation of affordable housing.

Planning History

The most relevant planning application on the records is the application which we seek to vary (first application below). There was also an earlier application that sought planning permission for 12 units which is no longer of any interest.

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10112/APP/2019/1244

Erection of a residential building comprising 15 flats with associated parking, cycle storage, motorcycle parking, disabled parking, and bin storage following demolition of existing residential block and pair of semi detached houses.

APPROVED

10112/APP/2017/2077

Erection of a residential building comprising 12 flats with associated parking, cycle storage, motorcycle parking, disabled parking, and bin storage following demolition of existing residential block and pair of semi detached houses.

APPROVED

Planning Policy

The proposed development would be assessed against the Development Plan Policies contained within Hillingdon's Local Plan: Part 1 & 2, the London Plan, the NPPF and supplementary planning guidance by both the London Borough of Hillingdon and GLA.

Assessment

Planning permission for 15 flats has already been approved on this site. This application only seeks to vary the development as there are buyers of the flats which want bespoke design and layouts to the individual units. Unfortunately, although the changes are internal (so they do not affect the external appearance of the building), they would be material, and as such regularisation of the planning permission is required. Hence, this application has been submitted to secure consent for these minor amendments to the scheme.

The key changes to the scheme comprise:

1. Flat 6 and 7 (of original scheme) to be amalgamated along with increasing the size of Unit 5 (of original scheme) which results in the loss of 3 x 2 bedroom units to provide 2 x 3 bedroom family sized units (Flats 5, 6, and 7 become Flats 5 and 6 in the updated scheme).
2. Internal reconfiguration of Unit 4 (to provide 'Jack and Jill' ensuite for Bedroom 1 and 3; additional ensuite for Bedroom 2; additional cupboard space and open plan kitchen / living room.
3. Flat 11 and 12 (of original scheme) to be amalgamated along with increasing the size of Unit 10 (of original scheme) which results in the loss of 3 x 2 bedroom units to provide 2 x 3 bedroom family sized units (Flats 10, 11, and 12 become Flats 9 and 10 in the updated scheme).
4. Internal reconfiguration of Unit 9 (in the original scheme but Flat 8 in updated scheme) to provide 'Jack and Jill' ensuite for Bedroom 1 and 3; additional ensuite for Bedroom 2; additional cupboard space and open plan kitchen / living room.
5. Reallocation of Discount Market units from Flats 11 & 12 to Flats 1 & 2 (increase of affordable floorspace from 192.4m² to 292.08 – Change from 2 x 2 bedroom units to 1 x 2 bedroom and 1 x 3 bedroom unit).

Now this statement will address each of these changes in turn and whether they are acceptable in planning terms.

With regards to change 1 & 3 listed above, this rejigging of the internal layout (ground and first floor levels respectively) will result in the loss of a residential unit on each floor. Subsequently, the total No. of units within the development will be reduced from 15 to 13 flats. Therefore, the scheme reduces the number of new homes, however, the mix of the new units are larger with 2 additional 3 bedroom units. As such, the change in the number of occupants would be immaterial. In addition, the provision of 3 bedroom family sized units is more generally sought by planning policy given there is greater need for these size of units. Thus, it is considered that the new mix would be welcomed.

Change 2 and 4 above are the same alterations but to respective flats on the ground and first floor levels. These changes are very minor in nature and would not result in any harm. Generally, the alterations would improve the quality of the internal space for future occupiers so should also be accepted.

Change 5 is a consequence of change 3 where 3 units are being amalgamated to create 2 x 3 bedroom units. Not that it is relevant for planning, but this change is being sought for because an end user wishes to purchase the new 3 bedroom flats on the eastern side of the building. However, the original planning permission secured units 11 and 12 as Discount Market Units (2 x 2 bedroom units). Unfortunately, unit 11 would no longer exist as its floor area would be consumed by what was Unit 10 and 12, and it would principally become a large 3 bedroom (Unit 10). As such, a solution was needed to find replacement Discount Market Units. The Applicant has decided to offer Units 1 & 2 (a 2 x 2 bedroom and a 3 bedroom units at lower ground floor level) to replace the affordable units. These units are significantly larger (192.4m² increasing to 292.08m² and also now providing a family sized unit). Given the size of the affordable offer is increasing and the development overall is reducing in unit numbers, it is considered that this proposal is exceptionally generous and will be accepted.

The proposed alterations would not intensify the use of the site and the reduction in unit numbers would make the ancillary spaces / services such as parking and external amenity, more generous for future occupiers. The new mix would increase the number of 3 bedroom family sized units which the Council has greater demand for.

The changes would not affect the external appearance of the building, nor affect neighbouring properties.

The affordable offer is more generous than that secured originally despite the reduction in unit numbers.

As the proposal would improve the quality of the scheme from a planning policy perspective, it is considered that the Council will welcome the changes and approve this application.