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Our ref: 1322259.2.BM
Your ref: PP-13447548

30th September 2024

Dear Planning,

THE TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990 (AS AMENDED)

Planning Application for external alterations to apartment building at Hawthorne Court, Ryefield Crescent, Pinner, Northwood, HA6 1LS

Introduction

1. This Planning Statement has been prepared on behalf of Bankway Properties Ltd ("the Applicant") to accompany a planning application for external alterations to the apartment building known as Hawthorne Court, Ryefield Crescent, Pinner, Northwood, HA6 1LS ("the Site"). The proposed development comprises the following elements:
 - Additional insulation to existing external walls (100mm of stone wool);
 - Re-rendering of all external walls in a variety of grey and off-white shades, as communicated on the 'Existing and Proposed Elevations Full Render' sheet;
 - Replacement windows and doors to ground floor openings, to include obscure glazing panels and partial 'blocking up' where smaller openings than existing are proposed;
 - Rationalisation of the existing drainage pipes; *and*
 - Removal of commercial signage to existing commercial unit fronts.
2. The following drawings and documents, prepared by rg+p Architects unless otherwise stated, have been submitted electronically via the Planning Portal as part of this application and should be read in conjunction with this Planning Statement:
 - Site Location Plan, drawing no. 101-173/(P)022 rev C
 - Existing Block Plan, drawing no. 101-173/(P)029 rev B
 - Proposed Ground Floor Plan, drawing no. 101-173/(P)030 rev B
 - Existing and Proposed Elevations Full Render, drawing no. 101-173/(P)021 rev E
 - Existing and Proposed Sections Full Render, drawing no. 101-173/(P)024



- Design and Access Statement
- Construction Management Plan, prepared by Marrons

3. A BACS payment for the sum of £509.00, the correct fee for an application of this type, has been sent to the Planning Portal alongside the £70.00 administration fee.

Background and Site Description

4. The application site is located in Northwood, a suburb of North West London identified by the Local Development Plan as a 'Minor Town Centre'. In its current form, the building is 3-storey of mixed use, with existing residential units on the upper 2 floors. The majority of the ground floor has extant permission for conversion from Class E to residential use (Class C3), under prior approval application refs: 77316/APP/2022/1726 and 20331/APP/2023/564. Unit 14-16 is the last remaining section of the building with a permitted commercial use (as an MOT centre, *sui generis*). However, an application has been prepared and submitted to change the use of the unit to a 1-bed apartment (ref: PP-13393482).

5. The site is located within a primarily residential area and is surrounded by existing built-form to all aspects. Adjoining Ryefield Crescent to the south are semi-detached residential units, and to the east is a block of flats known as 'Rail Lodge'. To the west there is a small high-street with commercial uses backing on to the site, and to the north of the site lies a railway line servicing Northwood Hills Station.

6. Ryefield Crescent is a cul-de-sac with minimal through traffic (due to it being a no-through road) and limited parking on the street. Northwood Hills Underground Station is less than a 2-minute walk, providing access to the Metropolitan Line with links to Watford and Baker Street. In addition, there are convenient bus links to Harrow, Southall and Ruislip.

7. The site falls within Flood Zone 1 where there is a low probability of flooding and there are no Listed Buildings or other Heritage Assets in close proximity to the application site. There are no trees or vegetation of any kind on the application site, nor is there anything of significant ecological value.

i. Planning History

8. The planning history of the site is summarised in Table 1 below, as available on the Council's public access page.

Application Ref.	Description	Date of Decision	Decision
77316/APP/2022/1726	Conversion of commercial (Class E) space to 5 no. residential units comprising 4 one-bed units and 1 two-bed unit (class C3) (Application for	11 th August 2022	Approved



	Prior Approval under Schedule 2, Part 3, Class MA of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended)).		
20331/APP/2023/564	Change of use of the building from Class B1a (Class E) to 15 residential units (1 x studio, 10 x 1-bedroom and 4 x 2-bedroom units) (Class C3) (Application for Prior Approval under Schedule 2, Part 3, Class MA of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended)).	17 th July 2023	Approved

Table 1 – The planning history of the application site, as available on the Council's public access page.

ii. Pre-Application Enquiry

9. A pre-application advice request was submitted to the Council in February 2024, with a Teams meeting held with the allocated Case Officer on 12th June. The subsequent written advice was received on 28th June, and at p.6 it is stated that the proposed works “*would improve the visual aspect of the site*”. At p.9, it is stated that “*the proposed fenestration on the ground floor include elements of obscure glazing to improve privacy however it appears unlikely that this would significantly reduce daylight/sunlight or outlook*”. The remainder of the written advice focuses on the proposed change of use of Unit 14-16 to residential use (a separate application).

The Proposal

10. The proposals comprise the following elements:

- Additional insulation to existing external walls (100mm of stone wool);
- Re-rendering of all external walls in a variety of grey and off-white shades, as communicated on the 'Existing and Proposed Elevations Full Render' sheet;
- Replacement windows and doors to ground floor openings, to include obscure glazing panels and partial 'blocking up' where smaller openings than existing are proposed;
- Rationalisation of the existing drainage pipes; and
- Removal of commercial signage to existing commercial unit fronts.



11. The proposed works will increase the energy efficiency of the building, thereby having an economic and social benefit for existing and future residents (reduction in energy bills and improved comfort). Externally, the proposed works will serve to significantly improve the appearance of the building and wider site.

Planning Policy Context

12. The Development Plan for the application site consists of the relevant policies of the adopted Local Plan Part 1 (adopted November 2012), the Local Plan Part 2 (adopted January 2020) and the London Plan (adopted March 2021). The National Planning Policy Framework (December 2023) will also be a material consideration in the determination of the application. It is noted that there is a new draft version of the NPPF (July 2024) which has just completed the consultation process. As the findings of the consultation have not yet been published however, no weight can be attributed to the changes proposed within.

i. Local Plan Part 1 (adopted 2012)

13. The following policies from the Local Plan Part 1 are considered to be relevant to this full planning application:

- Policy NPPF1: National Planning Policy Framework – Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
- Policy BE1: Built Environment

ii. Local Plan Part 2 – Development Management Policies

14. The following policies from the Local Plan Part 2 are considered to be relevant to this full planning application:

- Policy DMHB 11: Design of New Development

iii. London Plan

15. The following policies from the London Plan are considered to be relevant to this full planning application:

- D4 – Delivering Good Design
- D6 – Housing Quality and Standards
- SI13 – Sustainable drainage

iv. National Planning Policy Framework (December 2023)

16. The following Sections of the Framework are considered to be relevant to this full planning application:



- Section 2: Achieving sustainable development
- Section 8: Promoting healthy and safe communities
- Section 12: Achieving well-designed and beautiful places

Planning Policy Assessment

i. Principle of Development

17. Policy NPPF1 of the Local Plan Part 1 and Section 2 of the Framework are both concerned with achieving sustainable development. Paragraph 8 of the Framework elaborates upon the definition of sustainable development, and states that the planning system has three overarching objectives:

- a) *“an economic objective – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure;”*
- b) *“a social objective – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering a well-designed and safe built environment, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities’ health, social and cultural well-being; and”*
- c) *“an environmental objective – to contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, helping to improve biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy”.*

18. Central to the Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development, which means that proposals which comply with an up to date Development Plan should be approved without delay, unless *“any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits”* when assessed against the policies within the Framework. Whilst Part 1 of the Local Plan is aged, Part 2 is considered up to date. Both Parts and the London Plan are consistent with the objectives of the Framework, and can be afforded due weight in the decision making process.

19. The majority of Hawthorne Court is within residential use (either existing or permitted), with the exception of a single residual commercial unit (a MOT centre) which is currently subject of a recently submitted change of use application (to a 1-bed apartment). The proposed wholescale refurbishment of the building will have a positive impact upon the character and appearance of the area.

ii. Design

20. Paragraph 135 of the Framework states that decisions should ensure that developments:



- a) “will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;
- b) are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;
- c) are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities);
- d) establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit;
- e) optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development (including green and other public space) and support local facilities and transport networks; and
- f) create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users; and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience”.

21. This notion is supported within local policy, at Policy DMHB 11 of the Local Plan Part 2 – Development Management Policies and Policy D4 of the London Plan. The proposed fenestration changes will be a visual and physical improvement upon the existing built fabric, in terms of appearance and energy performance.

22. The addition of obscure-glazed panels will aid the privacy and amenity of future occupiers, whilst still allowing for ample natural light to all habitable rooms. The proposals are therefore in accordance with section 12 of the Framework.

iv. Other Matters

23. Section 14 of the Framework seeks to ensure that development is not at risk from flooding, nor does it increase flood risk elsewhere. The application site falls within Flood Zone 1, as per the Environment Agency Flood Map for Planning, where there is a less than 1 in 1000 annual probability of flooding. It is acknowledged that the site is within a Critical Drainage Area, however, given the nature of the proposals as changes to the fenestration, there would be no increase in built form on the application site and therefore no exacerbation over and above the existing situation. Overall therefore, the development is not considered to incur unacceptable flood risk in accordance with Section 14 of the Framework.

Energy Efficiency

24. At p.11 of the pre-application response, it is stated that “an Energy Assessment incorporating carbon reduction and energy efficiency measures is encouraged as part of the wider scheme in accordance with Policy SI 2 Part C) of the London Plan (2021) and Policy DMEI 2 Part A) of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part 2 (2020)”.



25. The installation of 100mm stone wool insulation and silicone render to all external walls of the building will reduce energy consumption, by retaining heat more effectively. A reduction in energy use will have an associated reduction in harmful emissions. All windows will be double-glazed, with trickle vents to allow for air flow whilst minimising heat loss.

Conclusions

26. It has been demonstrated throughout this Planning Statement that the proposed development is compliant with the Development Plan when read on the whole, and can be accommodated on the application site without unacceptable impacts arising.
27. The National Planning Policy Framework sets out a clear presumption in favour of sustainable development in section 2. The proposed development, for external alterations to the apartment building known as Hawthorne Court, Ryefield Crescent, Pinner, Northwood, HA6 1LS, will serve to improve upon the appearance of the application site whilst improving the environmental performance of the existing built fabric and the residential amenity of the occupiers.
28. If you require any clarification or additional information, please do not hesitate to contact Brian Mullin or Megan Simpson using the details below.

Yours sincerely

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