

Planning Statement

North Street Arcade, North Street, Havant, Hants, PO9 1PX

Construction of 30 No. One and Two Bedroom Apartments in a Part 2 ½ / Part 4 Storey Extension Fronting onto Prince George Street together with the Provision of Infill Flexible Use (Classes A1/A2/A3) Town Centre Commercial Units to North Street Frontage Following the Demolition of Existing 1 and 2 Storey Retail Development to Rear



Figure 1

The Development Site Viewed from Prince George Street to the North-East

17th March 2020

1.0 Background & Introduction

1.1 This application seeks a grant of planning permission for the redevelopment of North Street Arcade which is in Havant's Town Centre just to the south of the railway station.

1.2 The site currently comprises a two/three-storey high mixed-use commercial / residential development fronting onto the east side of North Street. The frontage units comprise the currently unoccupied Grastar Restaurant and Dominos Pizza's units. Above these town centre premises are two storeys of residential apartments. A centrally located pedestrian 'undercroft' leads from North Street to an 'arcade' of 7 commercial units to the rear. Units 1-3 and 12 & 13 are currently being marketed by commercial agents Holloway, Iliffe & Mitchell. All of the other units are on very short leases. The applicants own the two ground floor units and the 'undercroft' which front onto North Street, together with the arcade of retail and business units to the east.

1.3 The submission of this application follows both an in-depth pre-application enquiry which was followed by the submission and approval of planning application APP/18/00530 on 13th December 2019. The pre-app and permitted application are reviewed in detail in section 3 of this Planning Statement. It will be seen at paragraphs 3.11 and 3.12 that a variant of the current scheme was submitted to the Case Officer for comment. The Case Officer acknowledged that the proposals, which would have delivered 28 flats (25 x one-bedroom units; 3 x 2 bedroom units) together with secure cycle parking and refuse storage facilities and a new 'living servicing' lay-by "...would in my view, strike the right balance of development on this unique site...".

1.4 The scheme that is now submitted to the LPA for consideration is almost identical to the last iteration of the pre-app proposals. The scheme would involve the demolition of the existing rear units and the construction of a part 2 ½ storey, part 4 storey development which would accommodate 30 apartments in total (i.e. 25 x 1-bedroom flats;) and two (5 x 2-bedroom flats). The existing undercroft from North Street would be "filled in" with the provision of three new town centre commercial units (1 in each "bay") with the former Grastar and Domino's Pizza units being reorganised to provide a further 3 town centre commercial units. The interior of the development would sit around a central courtyard area which would be accessible by foot and bicycle from Prince George Street from the highway to the east. Given that the site is in a highly accessible town centre location the development is proposed to be 'car-free'.

1.5 The application proposal has been the subject of a lengthy pre-application enquiry which has examined a range of different design solutions and residential densities. This statement describes our Client's proposal and places it in context with relevant national and development plan policy, guidance and advice. It will be concluded that our Client's application proposal should receive support and be granted planning permission.

2.0 Application Site and Surroundings

2.1 The site is located on the corner formed by the east side of North Street and the south side of Prince George Street, within the defined Havant Town Centre. The site is approximately 100m to the south of Havant Railway Station and 50m to the east of the Market Parade shopping centre. The site is also within a 4-minute walk of both the covered Meridian Shopping Centre and Havant's Bus Station which are both on Elm Lane. Beyond the Meridian Centre is the town's main pedestrianised shopping thoroughfare, West Street.

2.2 The northern and eastern boundaries of the site run parallel to Prince George Street which curves around the site from its junction with North Street, to the west, and The Pallant, which is to the south. On the opposite side of Prince George Street, to the east, are the rear entrances and gardens of houses which front onto Manor Close. Properties within Manor Close fall within St Faiths Conservation Area.



Figure 2 **Approximate Boundaries of the Development Site**

2.3 As is stated at Section 1 of this statement the application site comprises two distinct elements. Firstly, the three-storey high mixed-use commercial / residential part of the site which has a prominent frontage onto North Street. The two frontage units, comprise the now vacant Grastar Restaurant unit (Unit 1) together with a Domino's Pizza's (Unit 9) which is also empty. These units are located either side of a central pedestrian 'undercroft' leading to 'North Street Arcade'. Our Client's own the ground floor of this frontage block. Above the frontage units and undercroft are two floors of residential flats which are in separate ownership. To the rear of the site are 7, part single/part two storey, small retail units which sit around a central courtyard which also provides pedestrian access through to Prince George Street to the east. Several of the seven retail units are currently empty with the remaining occupied units are on very short term leases.



Figure 3 View of North Street Arcade from West side of North Street



Figure 4 View East Through Undercroft from North Street



Figure 5 View North into Arcade from Footpath Link



Figure 6 View from Prince George Street to the East

2.4 As can be seen from the above photographs many of the existing units are currently vacant. The arcade does not fall within areas designated as either Primary or Secondary Shopping frontage and is 'off the beaten track' to many shoppers. It is apparent that in recent years shoppers have been attracted to the retail offer within the Meridian Centre, West Street and the new Solent Road Retail Park.

3.0 Planning History

3.1 A pre-application enquiry concerning the redevelopment of the rear element of North Street Arcade was submitted to Havant Borough Council on 15th March 2017. The pre-app proposal sought the views of Officers in respect of the demolition of the existing rear units and the construction of a part two, part three storey development which would accommodate 24 one and two bedroom flats. The enquiry explained that the existing undercroft from North Street would be filled in with the provision of three new retail units. The development would sit around a central courtyard area which would be accessible by foot and bicycle via Prince George Street to the east. Given that the site is in a highly accessible town centre location the development was proposed to be 'car-free'.

3.2 The flats would be constructed with elevations of facing brickwork (to match existing adjacent finishes) beneath an artificial slate roof. The frontage onto Prince George Street would appear as a 'mews' style development; the eaves and ridge lines of the proposed development would tie in, and align approximately, with the development at No.8 Prince George Street to the south. The roof would be complemented by dormer windows which would be faced in materials to match the appearance of the roof (see **Image 1** overpage).

3.3 A meeting was held with Principal Planning Officer Lewis Oliver on 27th April 2017. In summary, we were advised that: the principle of development on this site was acceptable; in this very sustainable location, we should look into the possibility of increasing the residential density of the site; the increased density may be achieved by providing a statement building on the corner of North Street and Prince George Street.

3.4 Feedback from a number of consultees was also received which indicated that the County Archaeologist, and HBC's Economic Development Service had no objections to the proposals. The Planning Policy Team were of the view that the development "...is supported by the majority of policies; nevertheless, further clarification is required for Policies DM2, CS9 and DM13 at the full application stage..." With regards to a "car free" development the Council's Traffic Management Team (TMT) noted that whilst parking provision was below the levels stated in the Parking SPD that "...due to the site being located within a high accessibility area, the level of parking is in line with HBC's car parking policies and is considered appropriate & acceptable..." The TMT advised, furthermore, that "...As there is no off street parking being considered for either the residential or commercial development, we would request that mechanisms are put in place to allow the Traffic Management Team to request funds (£3000 per TRO), in order to implement a new TRO or amend any existing TRO should this be required, within a period not exceeding 5 years from the completion of the development." Further comments were forwarded on 9th May 2017 from the Council's Highway Engineer. These commented that "...The problem with no parking is that the site will be serviced from the service area or by stopping on street..." Mr Marshall commented on the need for "living servicing" whilst also acknowledging that "loading and unloading is not illegal" on Prince George Street. He concluded by stating "In general a development with no parking but a controlled service area is better than a small



Image 1 Pre-App Submission – 15/03/2017



Image 2 3/5/6/8 Storey Feasibility following Meeting of 27/04/2017 (Not Previously seen by LPA)

Image 3 Maximum 10 Storey Pre-App Scheme sent to the LPA on 16/05/2017 for Further Consideration

Image 4 3/4 Storey Building forward to the LPA 05/06/2017



parking area which will be used by the residents to jam in as many cars as possible.”

3.5 Following the meeting of 27th April 2017 the Development Team considered the various comments of Officers and Consultees. In particular the design emphasis was placed on comments that the site’s density could be increased given its highly accessible and sustainable location. Additionally, much consideration was given to highways matters and the need for improvements to the convenience of ‘living servicing’, refuse storage and secure cycle storage facilities. An initial feasibility scheme was discussed by the Development Team which proposed a 3/5/6/8 storey building which turned the north-east corner of Prince George Street (see **Image 2** on previous page). This included an extended lay-by length with shared surface and dropped kerb (at the North Street end of Prince George Street) with different surface demarcation for deliveries. Following comments that there should be a ‘landmark’ building close to the North Street / Prince George Street junction it was felt that a more ambitious scale of building be sought – which reflected the scale of a recently permitted 13 storey building at Market Parade. Consequently, the pre-application submission was revised to indicate a building rising to a maximum 10 storeys in height. This was forwarded to Officers on 16th May 2017 (see **Image 3** on previous page).

3.6 A response was received from Officers on 24th May 2017 which made the following comments. Firstly, with regards to siting “...In terms of the discussion at our meeting, I did highlight that there would be room for a more dense scheme, given its highly sustainable location. This could involve increasing the density/height on the junction with North Street and Prince George Street to provide a landmark building, which would then drop down along Prince George Street, in order to consider the impact on the amenities of neighbouring properties and address the neighbouring conservation area...” Secondly, with regards to scale and context Mr Oliver stated “...I do not think that a 10 storey building in this proposed location is appropriate in this location. I am of the view that you could go higher than the originally proposed 2.5 storey pre-application submission, given that the neighbouring property opposite is a 3 storey higher. For a development to go higher than 3 storeys it would need to be a high quality innovative, with high quality materials, which would help it contrast and yet integrate with the surrounding building form and form a landmark building in its own right....”

3.7 Given that the applicant does not control all of the land on the corner of the junction of North Street and Prince George Street it was not possible to site a ‘Landmark’ building on this corner. Consequently, the evolving pre-app development sited its 10 storey element on the Prince George Street frontage.

3.8 Having received these further comments the Development Team sought to address the LPAs stated concerns. A fourth pre-app scheme was forwarded to the Case officer on 5th June 2017 (see **Image 4** on previous page). This indicated a part 3, part 4 storey building constructed with elevations comprising a variety of external finishes and materials. Mr Oliver responded to the revised proposals in an email of 29th June 2017 in which he made the following observations.

“... Turning now to your revised perspective drawings, it is good to see that the size and scale of the proposal has been reduced, for which a scale of this nature could provide a balance between your first proposal and the request from us for a higher density of development in this sustainable location, however the overall impact is considered in more detail below.

With regard to the design, it is noted that it appears to comprises 3 different blocks of development. The first element on the corner of North Street and Prince George Street, does appear to be awkward, by virtue of its juxtaposition with the existing building, it appears to provide no natural progression from the existing building and would appear also appear at odds with the other sectors of the proposal wrapping round the corner. This element of the proposal could, by virtue of its visual prominence, be an opportunity to provide an innovative building, which enhances this corner part of the site. It is felt that at this point given the design concerns and scale of this building it would not be appropriately integrate with the character and appearance of the area.

Moving to the other part of the development, which would have a pent house style of living, with the mansard roof. Our thoughts on these parts of the scheme, is concern as to how it works and integrates with the overall scheme and its impact on the area. At the moment it appears to be 3 different design ethos's, which seem to be at odds with each other. From my understanding of these elements, it is that you are having the varying design elements to address the different characteristics of the area, as it moves round to a less visible/edge of town centre location. On these points we have noted the introduction of balconies, I do have concerns with regard to overlooking on the neighbouring properties at these points, It is my view that on the final sector (lowest part of the building) that the roof terraces could introduces a significant element of overlooking and this needs to be addressed..."

3.9 Following receipt of these comments the Development Team arranged another meeting with Mr Oliver which took place on Tuesday 4th July. A further feasibility drawing was tabled at the meeting. An email dated 10th July 2017 from Mr Oliver clarified the LPAs position. This stated:

"...The four-storey clad element would address the matter of providing more density/units on this highly sustainable site and would be appropriate at that point. As the site moves around the corner it is visually sensitive and the set close to the pavement and where the road begins to narrow. Having understood this point the visuals in the last set of drawings for the 4-storey element with balconies, would result in a significant vertical element at this point, and would not provide an effective transition between the characteristics of the site highlighted above. As such the original 2.5 storey recessive form of development in the original drawings would be appropriate in this context, as it wraps around the corner and its scale would be reflective of the less dense residential properties to the south and east. ... Given the subsequent understanding and context of the site, and the limited developable area in your clients control, we are of the view that a mixture of the first set of drawings 2.5stories and the four-storey clad element on the corner, in the latest set of drawing, as highlighted above would provide an

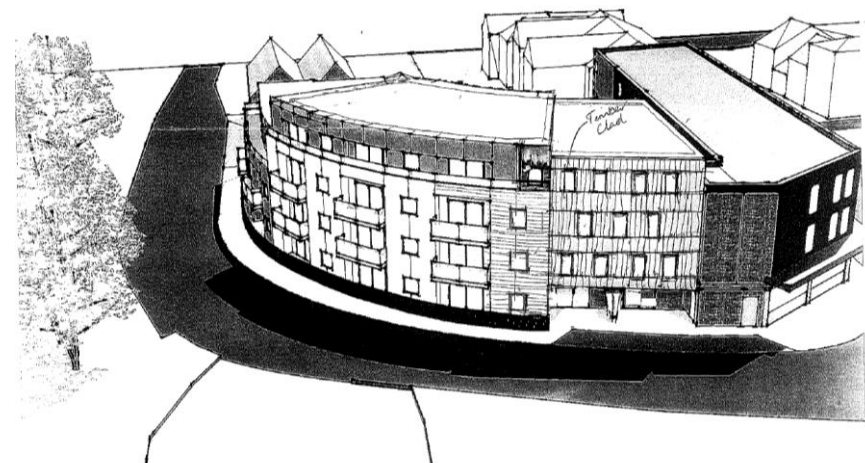
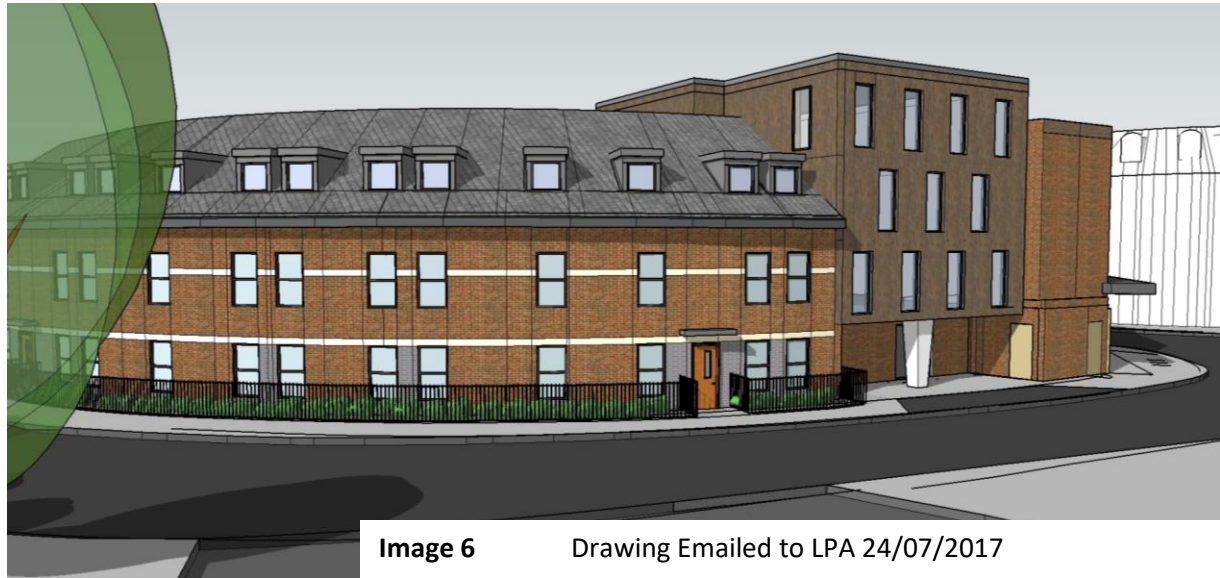


Image 5

Tabled at Meeting of 10/07/2017

appropriate balance for this site. We continue to want to work with you on this site, so that we can achieve a high-quality development, that would improve this existing dilapidated state of the site, and provide an appropriate level of housing that works with the character of this transition area.

3.10 Following receipt of Mr Oliver's email on 10th July 2017 the scheme was revised further. The final feasibility proposal represents a fusion of the original pre-application proposal made in March 2017 and sketch scheme tabled at the meeting of 4th July 2017. A transitional, contemporary styled element would adjoin the rear of the existing 3 storey building that fronts onto North Street; attached to this, turning the corner along the Prince George Street frontage would be a 2 ½ storey building. The proposals would deliver 28 apartments – 25 x one-bedroom units; 3 x 2 bedroom units, together with secure cycle parking and refuse storage facilities. A new 'living servicing' lay-by would also be provided for residents and service vehicles.

**Image 6**

Drawing Emailed to LPA 24/07/2017

3.11 These drawings were forwarded to Mr Oliver on 24th July 2017. A response was received from Mr Oliver the following day which commented "...I am pleased to see the alterations in these plans, which would in my view, strike the right balance of development on this unique site..."

3.12 Unfortunately, contractual issues meant that it was not possible for the applicants to pursue the last of the pre-app schemes. As such, planning application APP/18/00530 was submitted for the consideration of the LPA on 22nd May 2018. This reflected, quite closely, the initial pre-app proposal shown at Image 1.

3.13 Planning permission was granted on 13th December 2019 for the provision of 21 new dwellings – 16 x one-bedroom flats and 5 x two-bedroom flats. The replacement development consisted of a 2 ½ storey high 'Mews' styled building that would turn the corner on Prince George Street. It was proposed that the elevations of the 'mews' styled façade would be finished in a combination of contrasting buff / grey coloured facing bricks, together with grey windows and doors beneath an artificial slate roof with GRP dormers. Spurring west, from the southern end of 2 ½ storey part of the building was shown to be a two-storey high structure incorporating an undercroft access for residents and visitors which would lead to a central courtyard area. The eaves and ridge lines of the proposed development would tie in, and align with, the development at No.8 Prince George Street to the south. CGI images of the permitted scheme are provided over page at Figure 7.



Figure 7 CGIs of Development Granted Planning Permission on 13th December 2019 Under APP/18/00530

4.0 Development Proposal

4.1 A grant of planning permission is sought for the demolition of the rear part of the site and the construction of a new part 2 ½ storey / part 4 storey storey 'horseshoe' of development that would enclose a central courtyard area. The existing 3 bay undercroft would be "filled in" with the provision of new town centre commercial units. Additionally, the former Grastar restaurant would be reconfigured into two units and the former Domino's Pizza unit would be the sixth flexible use unit. As with the grant of planning permission issued under APP/18/00530 it is proposed that all of the six-town centre commercial units would be occupied as flexible use units, falling within use classes A1 (shopping), A2 (financial and professional services) or A3 (café/restaurant). Each of the commercial units would have a floor area of between 43sq.m and 88sq.m. Each of these units would be built with grey, powder coated, aluminium shopfronts facing towards North Street.

4.2 The proposals would result in the provision of 30 new dwellings – 25 x one-bedroom flats and 5 x two-bedroom flats. These flats would be constructed following the demolition of the existing 1-2 storey high arcade development which backs onto Prince George Street. The replacement development would consist of a 4-storey high, flat roofed 'transition' building, finished with a vertical cladding system, located between the existing three storey corner piece and the 2 ½ storey high 'Mews' styled building that would turn the corner on Prince George Street. The 4-storey element would comprise a refuse/recyclable refuse store, secure cycle store and plant room at ground floor with 3 floors of flats above. A doorway from the north side of the building would allow access to this part of the proposed development. This would lead to a lobby which would enable future occupiers to gain access either to the communal central courtyard area or to stairs to the residential apartments on floors 1 to 3. Immediately outside the front entrance to this part of the building would be visitor cycle parking together with a 7.2m-13.5m x 2.0m 'living servicing' lay-by.



4.3 The existing 2 storey curved building, which currently has a very poor aspect onto the Prince George Street, would be replaced by a new high quality, active residential façade. The elevations of the 'mews' styled curved terrace would be finished in a combination of contrasting red / grey coloured facing bricks, together with grey windows and doors beneath an artificial slate roof with GRP dormers. Spurring west, from the southern end of 2 ½ storey part of the building would be a two-storey high flat roofed building – this would incorporate an undercroft access for future occupiers leading through to the central courtyard area. This part of the proposal would be finished with elevations of red facing brick at ground floor level with a vertical cladding

system above. The eaves and ridge lines of this development would tie in, and align approximately, with the development at No.8 Prince George Street to the south.

4.4 The ground floor accommodation within the site would comprise 9 flats (8 x 1 bed; 1 x 2 bed units) together with cycle storage and refuse and recyclable storage facilities. The first floor of the proposed development would accommodate 12 flats (all 1 bed units). A second floor would accommodate a further 7 flats (4 x 1 bed; 3 x 2 bed units). Finally, the fourth floor would comprise 2 further flats; 1 x 1-bedroom unit and 1 x 2-bedroom unit. Two of the flats would be provided with front doors, set within front forecourts (Apartments 4 and 8), allowing access onto Prince George Street. Apartments 1, 2, 3 & 6 would have an individual front door with access into the courtyard across 1.5m deep amenity forecourts. The remaining flats would be accessed via two entrances (and stair cores) from the central courtyard area.

5.0 Relevant Policies

National Planning Policy

5.1 The revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published by the Government on 24th July 2018. This document was revised further on 19th February 2019.

5.2 Paragraph 7 of the Framework states that *“...The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. At a very high level, the objective of sustainable development can be summarised as meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs...”* The document promotes planning principles which include making effective use of land.

5.3 The NPPF states (at para.8) that *“... Achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has three overarching objectives, which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways...”* The economic objective is described as helping to *“...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”*; The social objective requires planning 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...”* The environmental objective relates to the protection and enhancement of *“...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...”*

5.4 Paragraph 10 of the NPPF states *“So that sustainable development is pursued in a positive way, at the heart of the Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development...”*

5.5 Paragraph 38 of the NPPF encourages Local Planning Authorities to *“...approach decisions on proposed development in a positive and creative way. They should use the full range of planning tools available ... and work proactively with applicants to secure developments that will improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area. Decision-makers at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible...”* Additionally, para. 47 opines *“Planning law requires that applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise...”*

5.6 With regards to housing paragraph 59 states that *“To support the Government’s objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes, it is important that a sufficient amount and variety of land can come forward where it is needed, that the needs of groups with specific housing requirements are addressed and that land with permission is developed without unnecessary delay.”* Paragraph 68 states furthermore that *“Small and medium sized sites can make an important contribution to meeting the housing requirement of an area, and are often built-out relatively quickly...”*

5.7 With regards to ensuring the vitality of town centres the NPPF states at paragraph 85 *“Planning policies and decisions should support the role that town centres play at the heart of local communities, by taking a positive approach to their growth, management and adaptation. Planning policies should:*

- a) define a network and hierarchy of town centres and promote their long-term vitality and viability – by allowing them to grow and diversify in a way that can respond to rapid changes in the retail and leisure industries, allows a suitable mix of uses (including housing) and reflects their distinctive characters...;*
- f) recognise that residential development often plays an important role in ensuring the vitality of centres and encourage residential development on appropriate sites...”*

5.8 Section 11 of the NPPF relates to “Making effective use of land”. The Government advocates that *“...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...”* (para. 117). In particular at para.118 the Government advises that:

“Planning policies and decisions should:

- a) encourage multiple benefits from both urban and rural land, including through mixed use schemes...*
- c) give substantial weight to the value of using suitable brownfield land within settlements for homes and other identified needs...*
- d) promote and support the development of under-utilised land and buildings, especially if this would help to meet identified needs for housing where land supply is constrained and available sites could be used more effectively (for example converting space above shops, and building on or above service yards...*
- e) support opportunities to use the airspace above existing residential and commercial premises for new homes. In particular, they should allow upward extensions where the development would be consistent with the prevailing height and form of neighbouring properties and*

the overall street scene, is well designed (including complying with any local design policies and standards), and can maintain safe access and egress for occupiers.”

5.9 Under the heading “Achieving appropriate densities” paragraph 122 of the NPPF states “...*Planning policies and decisions should support development that makes efficient use of land, taking into account: a) the identified need for different types of housing and other forms of development, and the availability of land suitable for accommodating it...d) the desirability of maintaining an area’s prevailing character and setting...; and e) the importance of securing well-designed, attractive and healthy places...*”

5.10 With regards to design the NPPF states at para. 124 ‘...*Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities. Being clear about design expectations, and how these will be tested, is essential for achieving this...*’ Para. 127 requires LPAs, when making decisions, to 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.”*

5.11 Furthermore paragraph 130 advises that “*Permission should be refused for development of poor design that fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area and the way it functions, taking into account any local design standards or style guides in plans or supplementary planning documents...*”

5.12 Section 9 of the NPPF relates to “Promoting sustainable transport”. Paragraphs 102 states that “*Transport issues should be considered from the earliest stages of plan-making and development proposals, so that:*

- a) the potential impacts of development on transport networks can be addressed;*

- b) *opportunities from existing or proposed transport infrastructure, and changing transport technology and usage, are realised – for example in relation to the scale, location or density of development that can be accommodated;*
- c) *opportunities to promote walking, cycling and public transport use are identified and pursued;*
- d) *the environmental impacts of traffic and transport infrastructure can be identified, assessed and taken into account – including appropriate opportunities for avoiding and mitigating any adverse effects, and for net environmental gains; and*
- e) *patterns of movement, streets, parking and other transport considerations are integral to the design of schemes, and contribute to making high quality places.”*

5.13 Paragraph 103 continues *“The planning system should actively manage patterns of growth in support of these objectives. Significant development should be focused on locations which are or can be made sustainable, through limiting the need to travel and offering a genuine choice of transport modes. This can help to reduce congestion and emissions, and improve air quality and public health. However, opportunities to maximise sustainable transport solutions will vary between urban and rural areas, and this should be taken into account in both plan-making and decision-making.”*

5.14 Section 16 of the NPPF relates to *“Conserving and enhancing the historic environment”*. Paragraph 192 advises that *“In determining applications, local planning authorities should take account of:*

- a) *the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;*
- b) *the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and*
- c) *the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.”*

5.15 With regards to the impacts of development upon a conservation area the NPPF advises at paragraph 196 *“Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.”*

Havant Borough Local Development Framework

5.16 The Havant Borough Core Strategy was formerly adopted on 1st March 2011. It is the principal document in the Council's Development Plan and sets out the spatial planning strategy for the area up to 2026. The relevant policies are as follows:

CS6 Regeneration of the Borough

“...Planning permission will be granted for development which positively contributes by type of use and design and by its comprehensive approach to the social, economic and/or physical regeneration of the whole borough; particularly when it is focused in the following places as shown on the Proposals Map:

1. Havant Town Centre, with particular focus on:
 - a. Market Parade.
 - b. Havant Railway Station...”

CS9***Housing***

“Planning permission will be granted for housing proposals that will: -

1. Contribute to achieving a net total of 6,300 new dwellings between 2006 and 2026.
2. Deliver on average 30-40% affordable housing on sites of 15 dwellings (gross) or more and secure a suitable contribution, or on-site provision, equivalent to on average 30-40% on smaller housing developments between 5 and 14 dwellings (gross), unless a lesser requirement has been transparently justified on viability grounds.
3. Ensure mixed communities are created through the planned distribution and avoidance of a concentration of affordable housing.
4. Achieve a suitable density of development for the location, taking into account accessibility to public transport and proximity to employment, shops and services in addition to respecting the surrounding landscape, character and built form.
5. Provide a mix of dwelling types, sizes and tenures which help meet identified local housing need and contribute to the development of mixed and sustainable communities.
6. Provide accommodation for the ageing population in sustainable locations, taking account of the need to provide for a variety of care needs and flexibility to accommodate differing requirements of ageing care.
7. Contribute to achieving 450 extra-care dwellings between 2006 and 2026.
8. Ensure housing development is delivered in a phased manner with an appropriate proportion of previously developed land so as to avoid unnecessary development on greenfield urban extension sites.”

CS16***High Quality Design***

Planning permission will be granted for development that is designed to a high standard, which helps to create places where people want to live, work and relax. All development should demonstrate that its design:

1. Responds to, draws inspiration from and respects local context and:
 - a) Identifies and responds positively to existing features of natural, historic or local character within or close to the proposed development site;
 - b) Integrates with existing local landscape features, promotes wildlife and biodiversity and/or applies characteristics of the local area into the design of a scheme wherever possible to create variety and interest;
 - c) Uses the characteristics of the locality to help inform the design of the new development including heights, massing, existing buildings lines, plot widths and depths, materials and proportions of windows and doors;
 - d) Is well connected to and integrates with the immediate local area and the wider area by linking to existing pedestrian and cycle routes and encouraging people to use public transport where possible; and
 - e) The development does not cause unacceptable harm to the amenity of neighbours through smell, the loss of privacy, outlook, noise and overlooking.
2. Produces a positive relationship between buildings, street and spaces both existing and proposed, where:
 - a) The layout of the development reduces opportunities for crime and antisocial behaviour; contributes to improving community safety; and makes provision for the management and maintenance of the development;
 - b) New streets are not dominated by vehicular traffic;
 - c) The layout of the development is legible, meaning it is easy to orientate oneself and move through.
3. Contributes to the improvement of the public realm close to the development, particularly sites close to town, district and local centres and other priority regeneration areas by using high quality hard and soft landscape material and street furniture; and where development is of a significant scale or prominence makes provision for public art.
4. Is inclusive by considering the needs of those with disabilities, ensuring safe and convenient access for all; and integrating affordable and supported housing with market housing through tenure blind design to minimise social exclusion and promote social integration.
5. Maximises opportunities for mixed use developments, particularly in town and district centres; and encourage higher densities (50+ dwellings per hectare) where appropriate.
6. Mitigates negative environmental impacts through sustainable design and construction methods, resource efficiencies, particularly water and the provision of facilities for waste recycling.

7. Adapts to the changing needs of the users and the changing climate over the lifespan of the building.

CS17 ***Concentration and Distribution of Development within the Urban Areas***

“Development will be permitted that makes the most effective use of land in the borough by granting planning permission that:

1. Concentrates new housing... within the five urban areas of Havant..
2. Prioritises development on previously developed land, including redundant, derelict or underused land and buildings within the urban area.
3. Broadly distributes the new housing and employment development in the five areas of the borough...”

CS20 ***Transport and Access Strategy***

DM2 ***Protection of Existing Community Facilities and Shops***

“Development proposing the change of use or loss of any premises or land currently or last used as community services and facilities, including local shops, will only be permitted where both the following criteria can be met:

1. It has been demonstrated, through an active marketing process that the premises or land are no longer viable for their authorised use or any other use which would provide a beneficial facility to the local community.
2. The facility is no longer required for a community use or that there is an easily accessible existing or new facility for the community it is intended to serve.”

DM12 ***Mitigating the Impacts of Travel***

DM13 ***Car and Cycle Parking on Residential Development***

5.17 The above policies are considered to be in general conformity with the NPPF and are, therefore, relevant to the determination of this application.

Havant Borough Local Plan (Allocations), Adopted 23rd July 2014

Policy AL1 ***Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development***

“...the Council will take a positive approach that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)...”

Policy AL2 ***Urban Area Boundaries and Undeveloped Gaps between Settlements***

“...The urban area boundaries for Emsworth, Havant and Bedhampton, Hayling Island, Leigh Park and Waterlooville are defined on the Policies Map...”

Policy AL3 Town, District and Local Centres

“Planning permission will be granted for development proposals that:

- 1. Provide main town centre uses in the town, district and local centres as defined on the Policies Map, and so contribute to their vitality and viability...”*

Policy DM21 Shopfronts, Signs, Security Shutters and Advertisements

Policy DM24 Recreational Disturbance to Special Protected Areas (SPAs) from Residential Development

5.18 Havant Borough Council has also produced a number of Supplementary Planning Documents. Those relevant to this application are: - Borough Design Guide – Adopted 14th December 2011 (This provides guidance on building design) and; Parking Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) (27th July 2016) - This document sets out guidelines for the number of on-site car parking, short stay and long stay cycle parking spaces per dwelling, according to the number of bedrooms.

6.0 Planning Considerations

6.1 This application seeks the redevelopment of land and buildings at North Street Arcade. The proposed development would involve the demolition of the existing rear units and the construction of a part four, part two and a half storey development which would accommodate 30 one (x 25) and two (x 5) bedroom flats. Additionally, the existing undercroft from North Street would be filled in to create 3 new, flexible use (Classes A1, A2 & A3) town centre commercial units, with the former Grastar Restaurant and Domino’s Pizza being modified to provide a further 3 flexible use (Classes A1, A2 & A3) town centre commercial units. The development would sit around a central courtyard area which would be accessible by foot and bicycle via Prince George Street to the east. Since the site is in a highly accessible town centre location the development is proposed to be ‘car-free’.

6.2 The proposed development, as submitted, has evolved during the past three years. The various stages of the pre-app process are explained in detail in section 3 of this Statement. In short, the pre-app process established that Officers were of the view that:

- the principle of redevelopment for a mixed-use development was acceptable;
- a higher density of residential development was desirable bearing in mind the highly accessible and sustainable location of the site within a town centre;

- given the site's high level of accessibility a car-free development would be appropriate (providing adequate levels of cycle parking and servicing facilities were provide;
- the scale of development at 2.5 storeys on the Prince George Street frontage would respect the character of development within the surrounding area;
- the proposed scale and siting of development would not result in development that would adversely affect the residential amenities of the occupiers of nearby homes.

6.3 Following the pre-app process planning application APP/18/00530 was submitted on 22nd May 2018. This application sought consent for the provision of 21 new dwellings – 16 x one-bedroom flats and 5 x two-bedroom flats. The replacement development consisted of a 2 ½ storey high 'Mews' styled building that would turn the corner on Prince George Street. Additionally, it was proposed to fill in 2 of the bays at the sites frontage onto North Street to provide 2 flexible use town centre units. Planning permission was granted for this development by the LPA on 13th December 2019.

6.4 A change in circumstances relating to the tenancies of the former Grastar Restaurant and Domino's Pizza commercial units has enabled the applicants to once again reconsider their proposals for the redevelopment of this site with the introduction of a 4 storey building close to the sites north-west corner. This would reflect, very closely, the form of development that was presented to the LPA as part of the pre-application enquiry GEN/17/00301. It will be seen from the documentation provided at **Appendix I** that this version of the pre-app showed a part 2 ½ storey / part 4 storey development that followed the curve of Prince George Street. On receipt of this scheme the case officer stated *"I am pleased to see the alterations in these plans, which would in my view, strike the right balance of development on this unique site."*

6.5 The scheme now submitted for the consideration of the LPA differs only very slightly from the pre-app scheme seen at Appendix I. Firstly, it has been possible to increase the number of residential units to 30 by utilising some excess space from the former Domino's Pizza Unit. A rationalisation of the floor layout and addition of a first floor has meant that it is now possible to provide 2 additional 1-bedroom apartment within this part of the site. Secondly, the proposed development would result in the provision of 6 town centre commercial units fronting on to North Street as opposed to 2 new units sitting alongside the two A3 and A5 units. As such, it is considered that the application proposal represents a high quality mixed use development that would reprovide 6 modern, fit for purpose A1/A2/A3 commercial units, which have a frontage onto North Street, together with an increased density of development within a highly sustainable town centre location close to both rail and bus stations.

General Commentary

6.6 It is considered that the site is well placed to provide a relatively high density, car free, mixed use development. The site is in a town centre location close to both a mainline railway station as well as the town's bus station. The site is also within a 5 to 10-minute walk of a wide range of shops, services and areas of public open space.

Principle of Development

6.7 With regards to the principle of development it is considered that the proposal should be assessed in relation to Development Plan policies CS6, CS9, CS16 and CS17 in particular. Policy CS6 states that *“...Planning permission will be granted for development which positively contributes by type of use and design and by its comprehensive approach to the social, economic and/or physical regeneration of the whole borough...”* Whilst not within the identified sites of Market Parade or Havant Railway Station the site is within 50m of both. As such, it is considered that this proposed mixed use development would aid the social, economic and/or physical regeneration of the borough, would be consistent with this policy.

Housing Provision

6.8 With regards to policies CS9 and CS17 the proposals would result in the provision of 30 well designed new dwellings, within the centre of Havant on brownfield land, which would contribute towards the identified need of 6,300 new homes within the Borough by 2026. The delivery of proposed 30 dwellings within the Havant Town Centre is considered to be in compliance with these policies. It is noted that policy CS9 states *“Planning permission will be granted for housing proposals that will ... deliver on average 30-40% affordable housing on sites of 15 dwellings (gross) or more ... unless a lesser requirement has been transparently justified on viability grounds...”* This application is submitted with a financial viability appraisal undertaken by S106 Affordable Housing Limited. This report reviews the costs related to the development and concludes at paragraph 2.10 that *“In summary the appraisal without any affordable housing shows viability deficit of -£541,957 and clearly therefore no surplus is generated by the development to support any affordable housing contribution. For the site to come forward the developer will need to take a commercial decision to accept a level of return below the levels recommended in the Planning Practice Guidance of 15-20% and any requirement to provide affordable housing will threaten deliver of the development.”* Consequently, the development will not be able to fund the provision of affordable housing.

Design

6.9 Policy CS16 requires new development within the Borough to be of a high-quality design; responding to the local context; producing a positive relationship between building; improving the public realm and; providing the opportunity for a mixed-use development in a town centre where higher densities (50+ dwellings per hectare) are considered appropriate. The pre-application process considered and assessed a variety of designs and forms of development on this site. It is considered that the ‘traditional’ 2.5 storey, mews style terrace along its principal Prince George Street frontage, represents a high-quality design solution. The pre-app scheme presented to the LPA in May 2017 (attached at Appendix I) also included the four storey element joining the three storey building fronting on to North Street with the 2 ½ storey mews. Officers therefore considered this to be a design solution that they could support in the context of policy CS16.

6.10 The applicant is aware that the application site is surrounded by a conservation area and that the proposed development would have to respect the setting of this heritage asset. It is our view that the application proposal will significantly enhance views into and out of the conservation area and would, therefore, be compliant with policy CS16.

Highways Matters

6.11 The proposed development is also considered to be in compliance with the other Development Plan policies in relation to sustainability, transportation and travel which are referred to in Section 4 of this Statement. Matters concerning highways and transportation are referred to specifically in the Transport Statement which has been prepared by Paul Basham Associates Limited which accompanies this submission. In summary, this report concludes that:

- *“The development site is within a highly accessible location within Havant Town Centre with excellent connections to both pedestrian and public transport infrastructure. For this reason, the development is proposed to provide no onsite parking. The principle of car-free development in this location has previously been agreed with Havant Borough Council highways as part of pre-application discussions.*
- *A number of public car parks have been identified within close proximity to the site which could be used for parking for visitors to the development, most notably the Prince George Street car park located directly outside the proposed residential element of the scheme. Any increase in parking demand is considered to be minimal and outside of the peak shopping times and will therefore not have an impact on the vitality of the town centre.*
- *The total cycle parking provision of 44 cycle parking spaces (34 long stay spaces and 10 short stay spaces) is considered more than adequate to meet all resident and visitor demand and encourage cycling as a primary mode of travel.*
- *Servicing of the proposed residential scheme would take place from two separate points on the Prince George Street roadside in keeping with the existing refuse arrangements. Servicing for the retail units fronting onto North Street will be carried out from the North Street roadside in keeping with the arrangements for a number of other units of a similar nature and size along this road. A layby will be provided to the north of the residential building on Prince George Street to accommodate ‘Living Servicing’ trips such as pick up/ drop off trips and deliveries. The servicing arrangement remains the same to that previously permitted and therefore this is considered to remain acceptable for these proposals.*
- *The proposed development is considered to provide a high quality mixed use scheme in the centre of Havant. The site is of a highly accessible nature and represents a good opportunity to provide sustainable development within the area, we would therefore encourage Havant Borough Council to look favourably on this application from a highways perspective with particular regard to the approved planning application.”*

Marketing

6.12 The applicants are aware that the development needs to also be considered in relation to policy DM2 (Protection of Existing Community Facilities and Shops) of the Local Plan. This policy requires it to be demonstrated that there is little commercial need or demand for the continued use of, in this instance, ‘local shops’ via the provision of suitable marketing evidence.

6.13 A Marketing Report by Agents Holloway, Illife and Mitchell accompanies this application submission. This report relates to the marketing of empty units 1-3 and 12 & 13 North Street Arcade and makes the following points: -

- "...Through the marketing of 1-3 and 12 & 13 North Street Arcade, as well as North Street Arcade as a whole we feel that levels of interest in this area of Havant for retail and other commercial users is at an extremely low-level and that other locations appear to be more desirable... *Whereas, we feel an alternative use such as a mixed-use site more prominent retail units located to the front would be much more complementary to the surroundings...*" (para.14.1).
- *"We also feel that the impact of how the site looks visually has been significant as new businesses wish to have buildings that portray a certain profile and within Unit 1-3 and Units 12/13 North Street Arcade, as well as North Street Arcade as a whole, it does not meet that profile. With these issues and the limited interest, we feel that North Street Arcade as a whole would be better preserved if it was redeveloped into a mixed-use site. We feel there is no scope at this moment in time to let either units as a retail property..." (Para. 14.2).*

6.14 It is hoped that the LPA will agree that the loss of these rear units will also be partly compensated by the provision of six A1/A2/A3 flexible use town centre units with frontages onto North Street. It is considered that the active marketing of the site has demonstrated that the existing rear retail units are very difficult to let. Whilst some of the units are occupied, the leases are very short term. As such, the applicants do not feel confident that they would ever secure full occupancy of the arcade. This is proving to be financially unsustainable situation and has prompted the need to reconsider a mixed-use redevelopment of the site. Given the foregoing it is considered that the loss of the rear units, which would be partly compensated for by the provision of six frontage units, is justified and that the development is compliant with policy DM2.

Local Context

6.15 The applicants are aware that Outline Planning permission was issued by the LPA in August 2016 for the erection of a 5 to 13 storey building accommodating 130 residential flats as well as 1126sqm of ground floor commercial/retail space (Use Classes A1-A5 and B1(a)) (LPA reference APP/14/01225) on the corner site immediately opposite North Street Arcade to the north-west. Additionally, the Council has recently launched its own proposals for the regeneration of Havant Town Centre. The Council states on its website that:

"Havant Borough Council's immediate focus is land already owned around its offices at the Public Service Plaza. The council will work with Homes England and a development partner to deliver more than 200 homes with parking. This will help to transform this part of the town.

Building on the excellent public transport connections that already exist - a busy train station with two routes to London, and the second busiest bus station in the county – the aspiration to have electric autonomous vehicles linking the town centre direct to the waterfront, will make the borough an attractive and innovate destination..."

6.16 As such, it is apparent that a precedent for sustainable, high density development within this part of Havant Town centre has been established and is currently being advocated by Havant Borough Council. The proposed development would, therefore, reflect the changing local context of this part of Havant town Centre.

Residential Amenity

6.17 The application proposal has been very carefully considered by both the Development team as well as by Officers of the LPA during the course of the pre-application enquiry and consideration of application APP/18/00530. The proposed development seeks permission for a part 2 ½ storey / part 4 storey development which turns the north-east corner of Prince George Street. Some of the pre-application iterations of the proposed development sought Officers views on higher density development. Officers felt that a development in excess of three storeys height, on the eastern side of the site, may have led to a ‘perception’ of overlooking by residents occupying houses in Manor Close. Consequently, the scale of development on this side of the site has been designed to respect the amenities of the occupiers of houses in Manor Close. The proposed 4 storey building would face north – away from the housing to the east in Manor Close. It is also considered that existing landscape features, together with a separation distance of some 35m (between the eastern edge of the site and the rear elevation of the nearest house in Manor Close) would mitigate against any overlooking of adjacent property.

Solent Recreation Mitigation Strategy

6.18 The Solent Recreation Mitigation Strategy, December 2017 recognises that development with a residential character has the potential to have a significant effect on the Special Protection Areas (SPAs) along the Solent Coast – i.e. Langstone and Portsmouth Harbours. The Strategy provides a mechanism to mitigate this harm by providing a raft of measures to remove harmful impacts and enable a development to be implemented in compliance with the Habitats Regulations.

6.19 Given that the site is located within 5.6km of the Portsmouth and Langstone Harbour SPA (Special Protection Area) it will be necessary for the applicant to provide mitigation against the potential disturbance caused to wildlife by future residents and their pets. As such the applicant would be happy to make the requisite financial contribution in accordance with both the Solent Recreational Mitigation Project and the Council’s SPD on the subject.

European Site Avoidance and Mitigation Checklist

6.20 As with the permitted scheme (LPA Reference: APP/18/00530) the applicant is happy to complete a European Site Avoidance and Mitigation Checklist and provide mitigation with regards to Nitrogen and Phosphorous pollution via the Council’s emerging Strategy.

6.0 Conclusions

6.1 The applicants are of the view that this proposed development would result in the provision of a high-quality redevelopment of this existing Town centre on a brownfield site. The scheme now submitted for the consideration of the LPA has been through a very rigorous and extensive pre-application enquiry process. Additionally, having received planning permission for a development comprising 21 new flats and additional A1/A2/A3 floor space at the front of the site, the applicants feel that a precedent has been set allowing for the site to be redeveloped with a mix of residential and commercial uses. The scale, density and form of the proposed development has, to a large extent, been discussed and agreed with Officers in July 2017.

- 6.2 The proposed development would extend and rationalise the existing commercial content of the site with the provision 6 units, with prominent frontages directly onto North Street.
- 6.3 The marketing exercise undertaken by Holloway, Illife and Mitchell demonstrates that there is little demand for the existing arcade of commercial units to the rear which are considered to be in a 'backwater' location.
- 6.4 Additionally, the provision of 30 new one and two-bedroom flats to the rear of the site would improve, significantly, the streetscene of this part of Prince George Street which is located adjacent to the western boundary of the St Faiths Conservation area.
- 6.5 It is noted that policy CS9 of the Council's Core strategy would normally expect between 30 and 40% of the housing element to be provided as affordable units. However, having had the development assessed by appraisal by S106 Affordable Housing Limited it has been demonstrated that the provision of affordable housing would make the scheme financially unviable. Consequently, the application proposal is considered to be compliant with policy CS9.
- 6.6 The Transport Statement by Paul Basham Associates Limited concludes that this would be a highly sustainable and accessible site that would be close to both railway and bus stations as well as a wide range of shops and services within Havant town centre. As such, the development would be justifiably car-free.
- 6.7 It is concluded that, in terms of current planning policy, the proposed development would be an example of 'sustainable development' and would, as such, be compliant with both the NPPF and the Havant Borough Core Strategy and the Havant Borough Local Plan (Allocations) document.
- 6.4 The applicant respectfully requests that Officers and Councillors look favourably on this proposed development and grant planning permission.

17th March 2020

APPENDIX I

Part of Pre-Application Enquiry GEN/17/00301 that Dealt with the Redevelopment of the Site with 28 Flats