

Supporting Planning
Statement

In respect of proposals for
the redevelopment of land
to the rear of 71 Bridge
Street, Pinner for
residential use.

On behalf of

ZEDHomes

May 2007

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1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 We are instructed by ZEDHomes to progress this planning application seeking consent for residential redevelopment at land to the rear of 71 Bridge Street, Pinner, Middlesex.
- 1.2 The proposals involve a mix of flats over 5 floors in a form of design which includes a lower ground level. A total of 30 flats are proposed. The application proposal incorporates various ZEDHomes sustainability principles, as detailed in Section 5 of this supporting statement.
- 1.3 Further details of the application proposals are contained in Section 2 of this supporting Planning Statement and the Design and Access Statement prepared by Kenneth W Reed + Associates.
- 1.4 Section 3 of this Statement sets the context of the application site, and identifies the site characteristics and those of the surrounding area, as well the relevant planning history.
- 1.5 Section 4 highlights the relevant planning policy framework, having regard to national planning policy, strategic guidance for London and the provisions of the adopted Local Development Plan.
- 1.6 Section 5 reviews the material planning considerations relevant to the determination of the application.
- 1.7 Our summary and conclusions are set out in Section 6.
- 1.8 This planning application is also accompanied by the following supporting documents:
- Design and Access Statement (Kenneth W Reed + Associates)
 - Archaeological Assessment (Museum of London Archaeology Services)
 - Environmental Noise Assessment (W.A. Hines & Partners)
 - Site Investigation Report (Harrison Environmental Consulting)

- Transport Report (MVA Consultancy)

2 SUMMARY OF APPLICATION PROPOSALS

- 2.1 This planning application seeks consent for a residential scheme comprising a mix of flats over four storeys (plus a half basement level) on land to the rear of 71 Bridge Street, Pinner. Plan PP1 in Appendix 1 identifies the site location.
- 2.2 Further details of the application scheme can be found in the Design and Access Statement and the drawings submitted with this planning application, prepared by Kenneth W Reed + Associates.
- 2.3 A building of 4 floors above ground level is considered appropriate in terms of height for this site. As can be seen from the application drawings, there is a lower ground level and garden.
- 2.4 The schedule of proposed residential accommodation is as follows:

Floor	1 Bed Flats	2 Bed Flats	Floor Total
Lower Ground Level	5	-	5
Ground	5	-	5
First	6	1	7
Second	6	1	7
Third	3	3	6
TOTAL	25	5	30

- 2.5 Private and shared amenity space is provided within the scheme by communal gardens as shown on the application drawings.

- 2.6 The proposal involves the provision of sustainable heating via a bio-mass boiler and fuel store. The application drawings show the most appropriate location for the bio-mass boiler equipment in a dedicated lower ground area.
- 2.7 All building elevations are shown on the application drawings. The building exterior comprises mainly rendered construction, on a grey brick base plinth. The main body of the building has a white render finish, with the two secondary 'wings' picked out in a dark grey self-coloured render (with further dark blue inset panels as indicated on the drawings). The main entrance to the development is clad in natural timber (cedar) vertical boarding to enhance the overall design and further introduce a break in overall scale and massing.
- 2.8 One parking space is proposed in the south east corner of the application site, which is a designated disabled space, designed to disabled parking standards.
- 2.9 This application dedicates between 27.5% to 30% to affordable housing, conforming with Harrow Council's requirements.
- 2.10 As detailed in the Design and Access Statement, amenity space is provided by the garden area in the open courtyard and by balconies.
- 2.11 Pedestrian and vehicular access is from Bridge Street via the access road between 65 Bridge Street and the Post Office.
- 2.12 The design of the site ensures that there is space for delivery vehicles to turn in the site, so as to service the development (as illustrated on application drawings).
- 2.13 It is considered that the application proposal, which seeks to bring forward a sensitively designed residential scheme, contributes towards meeting sustainability objectives. The redevelopment of this site will not only avoid

development on greenfield land, and will make a positive contribution to meeting local housing needs, including the need for affordable housing.

2.14 The proposed redevelopment incorporates a number of ZEDHomes sustainable development principles which aim to transform the site from its present condition into a high quality, environmentally sustainable development with residential properties designed to 4-star standards as assessed under the Code for Sustainable Homes.

2.15 These include, and are detailed further in Section 5, and also Appendix 7:

- a bio-mass boiler which will provide heating and supply hot water for all of the flats;
- all kitchens having fully integrated 4-compartment recycling bins so waste is separated at the source;
- natural materials used for the internal finishes to further complement the interiors of the apartments;
- super insulation of 300mm thickness to all external walls;
- glazing is minimised to the northern elevations and where required will be triple glazing to ensure excellent energy conservation; and
- photovoltaic panels will be installed on the roof to generate electricity from sun light.

3 SITE CONTEXT AND PLANNING HISTORY

The Site

- 3.1 The application site is located to the rear of 71 Bridge Street, and can be seen on the site location plan PP1 at Appendix 1. The site is small, and covers an area of just over 0.12ha (1,180 square metres).
- 3.2 The site is currently vacant, and has been so since circa September 2005. Prior to it becoming vacant, the site was used for car repairs and spray painting.
- 3.3 A number of disused garages of timber construction remain on the site in a state of some disrepair. The overall appearance of the site is untidy and unkempt, making no material contribution to the district centre of Pinner.
- 3.4 The photographs contained within the environmental noise assessment report identify the site (September 2005).
- 3.5 Access to the application site is via a private access road which runs parallel to that serving the Post Office, off Bridge Street. This accessway is approximately 3.16 – 3.35m wide. It has served the historic uses of the site adequately.
- 3.6 The site does not lie within a conservation area, nor are there any listed buildings on or in the vicinity of the site which would be affected by the development proposals.

The Surrounding Area

- 3.7 The adopted Harrow Unitary Development Plan (2004) Proposals Map highlights the site's location relative to the wider area. An extract of the Proposals Map is contained at Appendix 2. As can be seen, the site lies within the defined town centre boundary, and within an Archaeological Priority Area.
- 3.8 The application site lies to the rear of Bridge Street (south-western side), which comprises a mixture of retail, services, offices and residential uses, typical of a town centre location.
- 3.9 Directly adjacent to the site, on the north-western side is a Post Office with sorting office and a rear yard for storage / deliveries which runs alongside the application site boundary.
- 3.10 Numbers 57 to 65 Bridge Street are situated to the northeast, the rear of these buildings and their service yards abutting a track that runs alongside the application site. These buildings are primarily retail at ground level with retail, offices and some residential use above.
- 3.11 To the east of the site are offices and commercial uses and car parking, and directly south are train lines associated with the London Underground Metropolitan service and Chiltern mainline trains.
- 3.12 The site is well positioned in terms of public transport accessibility. Regular bus services operate from Bridge Street, linking Pinner to Harrow, Wembley, Stanmore, Kenton, Edgware and further afield.
- 3.13 In terms of train services, Pinner Station lies approximately 500m to the south east of the site, providing regular underground and mainline services.
- 3.14 In summary, the site is located within an identified town centre, accessible by a range of transport modes. The area comprises a variety and mix of different types of use, typical of a Greater London centre.

Planning History

- 3.15 Planning permission was granted in March 1973 for the erection of a single storey extension to provide canteen and toilet accommodation, presumably in association with one of the units on site at that time. It is unclear as to whether this planning permission was ever implemented, as it would appear that no toilet facility has been introduced on the site.
- 3.16 In terms of other relevant planning history, the site to the east of the application site, currently in office use has planning permission for a change of use from office (B1) to community centre (D2) (P/1541/03/DFU - copy at Appendix 4).
- 3.17 As can be seen from this decision notice, conditions are attached to the permission in order to ensure that the proposed development does not give rise to noise nuisance to neighbouring residents. Condition 2 requires that amplified sound shall not be audible at the boundaries of residential properties in the vicinity of the site, and condition 5 restricts the hours of operation on site to no later than 4pm Monday to Friday and 6pm on Saturdays.
- 3.18 The application site was the subject of a previous application by ZEDHomes, submitted in August 2006 for 'demolition of existing buildings and redevelopment for 34 flats' (P/2443/06/CFU/DC3). However, the application was withdrawn as there were a number of concerns raised by the Council, which were likely to lead to a recommendation for refusal. These concerns have, subsequently, been discussed with planning officers and this planning application has been prepared with those issues in mind. This Planning Statement attempts to address those concerns to present a scheme which we hope will now be far more aligned with the objectives of the Council.

3.19 The issues raised in the draft Report to Committee, which was withdrawn, included:

- poor siting, layout and excessive site coverage by buildings;
- excessive height and poorly positioned balconies would result in unacceptable overlooking and loss of privacy to residents;
- proposed building, by way of poor design and excessive height, would have an adverse impact on the character and appearance of the town centre, overall streetscene and neighbouring Conservation Areas;
- proposed building, by way of poor access, design and layout, and its locality, would fail to meet the key principles of Secured By Design and Safer Places, and would create opportunities for crime;
- the proposed development, by reason of its locality to sources of noise disturbance, would have an adverse effect on the amenity of future residents;
- the proposed development has insufficient provision of affordable housing units;
- the proposed development has insufficient space for turning of commercial and service vehicles;
- the proposed development, by way of insufficient visibility between drivers of vehicles exiting the site and pedestrians walking along the footway of Bridge Street, would be prejudicial to the safety of pedestrians;
- the proposed development would prejudice the implementation of Service Road Proposal 5;
- the proposed development, by way of poor internal layout and inadequate room size, would fail to meet requirements of Life Time Homes Standards and Wheelchair Homes Standards; and

- the proposed development, by reason of failing to clearly demonstrate the site is no longer suitable for employment use and failing to demonstrate that a mixed-use development for the site had been investigated, would result in the loss of employment land.

3.20 Positive comments contained in the Committee Report included:

- the proposed development makes a positive contribution towards meeting housing stock requirements.

3.21 In response to the comments, the scheme hereby submitted for consideration has been revised so as to increase the level of amenity space, enhance the overall design and layout, (including reducing the building height, providing sufficient turning space for service vehicles, improving the security and safety of the development, addressing overlooking issues), increasing the provision of affordable housing to meet current standards, and meeting Life Time Homes Standards and wheelchair homes standards.

4 PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK

4.1 The relevant planning policy framework for this application comprises national planning policy guidance, strategic guidance within the adopted London Plan and the provisions of the adopted Development Plan for the Borough.

A) National Planning Policy

PPS1: Delivering Sustainable Development

4.2 PPS1 published in January 2005 sets out the Government's overarching aims for the planning system and how it should operate in order to secure the delivery of sustainable development.

4.3 Planning should facilitate and promote sustainable development by:

- *Ensuring high quality development through good and inclusive design, and the efficient use of resources*
- *Ensuring that development supports existing communities and contributes to the creation of safe, sustainable, liveable and mixed communities with good access to jobs and key services for all members of the community.* (Paragraph 5)

4.4 PPS1 also sets out the key principles which should be applied when making development control decisions, including:

- iv) *Planning policies should promote high quality inclusive design in the layout of new developments and individual buildings in terms of function and impact, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development. Design which fails to take the opportunities available for*

improving the character and quality of an area should not be accepted.

(Paragraph 13)

- 4.5 The general approach to delivering sustainable development includes the following criterion:

Promote the more efficient use of land through higher density, mixed use development and the use of suitably located previously developed land and buildings. Planning should seek actively to bring vacant and under used previously developed land back into beneficial use to achieve the targets the Government has set for development on previously developed land.

(Paragraph 27)

- 4.6 With regards to design, PPS1 confirms that good design is indivisible from good planning (Paragraph 33). Amongst other factors, good design should:

- *be integrated into the existing urban form and the natural and built environments;*
- *optimise the potential of the site; and*
- *provide visually attractive development as a result of good architecture and appropriate landscaping.*

- 4.7 Local planning authorities are warned not to impose architectural styles or particular tastes, nor should they stifle innovation, but they should seek to promote local distinctiveness (Paragraph 38).

PPS3: Housing

- 4.8 PPS3, published in November 2006, sets out the national planning policy framework for delivering the Government's housing objectives.
- 4.9 The Government's strategic housing policy objectives are outlined at Paragraph 9:
- to achieve a wide choice of high quality homes, both affordable and market housing, to address the requirements of the community;
 - to widen the opportunities for home ownership and ensure high quality housing for those who cannot afford market housing, in particular those who are vulnerable or in need;
 - to improve affordability across the housing market, including by increasing the supply of housing; and
 - to create sustainable, inclusive, mixed communities in all areas, both rural and urban.
- 4.10 The document goes on to state that the specific outcomes that the planning system should deliver include: high quality housing and developments that are well designed, safe and built to a high standard. Developments should be located in areas with good access to jobs, key services and infrastructure.
- 4.11 The document also states the planning system should deliver: *'a flexible, responsive supply of land, managed in a way that makes efficient and effective use of land, including re-use of previously developed land, where appropriate.'* (Paragraph 10)
- 4.12 Paragraph 16 lists matters to be considered when assessing design quality. These include the extent to which the proposed development:
- is easily accessible and well-connected to public transport and community facilities and services, and is well laid out so that all the space is used efficiently, is safe, accessible and user-friendly;

- provides, or enables good access to, community and green and open amenity and recreational space (including play space) as well as private outdoor space such as residential gardens, patios and balconies; and
- facilitates the efficient use of resources, during construction and in use, and seeks to adapt to and reduce the impact of, and on, climate change.

4.13 Paragraph 20 speaks of achieving a mix of housing, particularly in terms of tenure and price and a mix of different households.

4.14 Paragraph 36 reconfirms the objective that housing is developed in suitable locations which offer a range of community facilities and with good access to jobs, key services and infrastructure. It also states that the priority for development should be previously developed land, in particular vacant and derelict sites and buildings.

4.15 Paragraph 54 states that Local Planning Authorities should concentrate on sites which are deliverable, which means that they are available, suitable and achievable.

4.16 The document also states that all non-housing sites should be reviewed when preparing development plan documents, and consideration should be given to whether some of this land could be more appropriately used for housing or mixed use development (Paragraph 44).

4.17 PPS3 advocates the efficient use of brownfield land. Paragraph 17 confirms that local planning authorities should develop strategies to bring forward suitable brownfield sites for development. National Government targets stipulate that annually, at least 60% of additional housing should be provided on brownfield land (Paragraph 41).

4.18 In terms of delivery, PPS3 states that Local Planning Authorities should have regard to:

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- achieving high quality housing;
 - ensuring developments achieve a good mix of housing reflecting the accommodation requirements of specific groups, in particular, families and older people;
 - the suitability of a site for housing, including its environmental sustainability;
 - using land effectively and efficiently; and
 - ensuring the proposed development is in line with planning for housing objectives, reflecting the need and demand for housing in, and the spatial vision for, the area and does not undermine wider policy objectives, e.g. addressing housing market renewal issues.

(Paragraph 69)

B) Strategic Planning Policy

The London Plan (February 2004)

- 4.19 The London Plan is produced by the Greater London Authority (GLA) and sets out strategic planning policies and guidance covering all of the London unitary authorities. Section 3 deals with housing.
- 4.20 Housing provision targets have been reassessed following the publication of results from a housing capacity study undertaken in July 2005. Updated housing targets have been set out in a document entitled Alterations to the London Plan, published on 20 December 2006. This is now formally part of the published London Plan.
- 4.21 The London Plan seeks to maximise new housing provision, seeking an output of 30,500 additional homes per year from all sources (Policy 3A.1).
- 4.22 Policy 3A.2 sets out the Borough housing targets 1997-2016. The policy confirms that UDP policies should seek to *exceed* the targets identified, and identify new sources of supply having regard to:
- major development in opportunity areas;

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- change of use of unneeded industrial/employment land to residential or mixed use residential development;
 - redevelopment in town centres; and
 - intensification of housing provision through development at higher densities, particularly where there is good access to public transport.

4.23 The updated figures seek for increased provision of 35,000 homes per year over a ten year period 2007/08 to 2016/17. The ten year target for new residential units for Harrow has been set at 4,000, an annual target rate of 400, representing a significant increase from the adopted London Plan targets of 330 annual completions.

4.24 Paragraph 3.10 of the London Plan confirms that there is considerable housing capacity in London to respond to existing and future housing demand, but more capacity can be achieved through redevelopment and applying high densities.

4.25 Policy 4B.1 confirms that the Mayor and boroughs should seek to ensure that developments maximise the potential of sites, are accessible, useable and permeable for all users, respect local context and character, and are attractive to look at.

4.26 Policy 4B.3 relates to maximising the potential of sites, and states:

The Mayor will, and boroughs should ensure that development proposals achieve the highest possible intensity of use compatible with local context, the design principles in Policy 4B.1 and with public transport capacity.

4.27 The London Plan goes on to state that boroughs should develop residential and commercial density policies in their UDPs in line with this policy and adopt the residential density ranges set out in Table 4B.1. Table 4B.1 specifies that for an area such as Pinner, a density of 165 – 275 units per hectare is desirable.

4.28 Chapter 5 of the London Plan examines the different sub-regions of London. Pinner falls within the West London sub-region. Policy 5D.1 identifies the strategic policies for West London, which include to:

- maximise the number of additional homes, including affordable housing, by exceeding housing provision targets set out in this plan and secure mixed and balanced communities; and
- ensure that new development is sustainable, safe, secure and well designed, improves the environment, and takes account of the sub-region's heritage.

C) London Borough of Harrow

Adopted UDP (July 2004)

4.29 The London Borough of Harrow UDP was adopted in July 2004, representing an up to date local policy framework against which planning applications will be determined.

4.30 As explained in Section 3 of this statement, the site lies within an identified District Centre, being Pinner.

4.31 The site itself is not allocated for any particular use, apart from being one of several service road proposals as identified in the Harrow Unitary Development Plan (2004). As can be seen in Appendix 3, Service Road Proposal 5 is shown as following a path to the rear of Bridge Street, off Chapel Lane through to the Post Office site. Further discussion of this is contained in the analysis in Section 5.

4.32 Strategic Policy SH1 relates to housing provision and need, and confirms that the Council will secure the provision of additional housing, including affordable housing, to meet the needs of prospective occupants through new development and by maintaining the existing stock. In determining applications, the Council will take into account:

- a) the overall housing needs of London;

- b) the potential for the provision of 6,620 additional units in the period 1st January 1997 to 31st December 2016;
- c) the need for effective use of previously developed land and empty property;
- d) the need to meet other sustainability objectives;
- e) the need for the provision of appropriate levels of affordable housing;
- f) the need to protect and safeguard the character and amenity of surrounding residential areas; and
- g) the desirability of reducing the cost of the operation of dwellings through energy efficiency measures.

4.33 Policy SH1 then states that the 'council will aim, through a variety of different sources, to secure an annual average of at least 330 additional housing units in the 10-year period from the date of adoption of the plan'.

4.34 The supporting text to the policy at paragraph 2.86 confirms that the recycling of urban land for housing will continue to be encouraged, and new building will be concentrated on previously developed sites, and maximised by securing the most efficient and effective use of this.

4.35 Chapter 6 of the plan contains detailed policies and guidance relating to housing. Housing completion rates over recent years have been variable as detailed in the table below:

	Gross	Net
1992	365	305
1993	239	212
1994	326	267
1995	212	159
1996	180	135
1997	208	170
1998	341	281

1999	147	100
2000	91	39
2001	501	466
2002	407	353
TOTAL	3,017	2,487

4.36 Over the ten year period, the annual average completion rates are 274 (gross) 226 (net), well below the 330 per annum target as set out in the London Plan for the period to 2016.

4.37 The findings of the Harrow Housing Needs Survey 2000 are summarised at Paragraph 6.9 of the UDP. The Survey identified a total housing need up to 2005 for 15,492 households. Taking supply factors into account, the net unmet housing need is some 12,917 units. It is understood that work is currently being progressed on an updated version of the Housing Needs Survey, due for release later this year.

4.38 Paragraph 6.12 of the UDP states:

The levels of need outlined above have to be considered against the background of potential overall housing capacity. A comparison of the figures shows a serious deficit and the lack of opportunity to meet or satisfy housing need in general and affordable housing in particular.

4.39 There is a significant disparity between projected housing demand and available supply within the Borough. To this end, the Council's housing objectives identified at Paragraph 6.20 are summarised as follows:

- (i) to provide sufficient housing land to meet needs, give priority to the re-use of previously developed land, bring empty homes back into use and promote the conversion of existing buildings within urban areas, in preference to the development of Greenfield sites;

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- (ii) to meet the housing requirements of the whole community including those in need of affordable and special needs housing including key workers;
 - (iii) to provide wider housing opportunity and choice and a better mix in the size, type and location of housing and seek to create mixed communities;
 - (iv) to provide for higher density housing in locations with good public transport accessibility and/or access to town centre facilities and to reduce reliance on the use of the motor car;
 - (v) to promote housing in town centres by, for example, converting space above shops and vacant commercial buildings, and including housing in mixed-use developments;
 - (vi) to secure the effective use of vacant land and buildings;
 - (vii) to improve the existing dwelling stock; and
 - (viii) to restrict the loss of residential accommodation.

4.40 Policy H3 states that the Council will continue to identify sites where housing development will be appropriate, and will initiate action to achieve development where land or buildings suitable for residential development remain vacant or a planning permission for residential development is unimplemented for a long period.

4.41 The supporting text to the policy at Paragraph 6.23 confirms that land for new housing is severely limited in Harrow, and recognising the number of additional dwellings that should be provided, the Council wants to ensure that appropriate vacant sites with or without planning permission, remaining undeveloped for long periods, are fully utilised.

4.42 Policy H4 relates to housing density:

The Council will expect that residential densities in new development should be not less than 150 habitable rooms per hectare.

- 4.43 The above figure is based on an average of 4 habitable rooms per dwelling.
- 4.44 Policy H5 relates to affordable housing. The policy confirms that the Council will seek the maximum reasonable provision of affordable housing on suitable sites of 0.5 hectares or more, or on developments of 15 or more dwellings. The likely minimum percentage of affordable housing to be negotiated on suitable sites should be 30%.
- 4.45 Chapter 7 of the Harrow UDP deals with employment, town centres and shopping.
- 4.46 Policy EM15 relates to land and buildings in business, industrial and warehousing uses outside of designated areas. The policy confirms that the Council will resist the loss of buildings or land within classes B1, B2 and B8 to other uses, unless it can be demonstrated that the site is no longer suitable or required for employment use.
- 4.47 A number of criteria will be applied when considering alternative uses, which can be summarised as:
- a) sufficient availability of other sites within the local area and the remainder of the Borough;
 - b) the loss would not result in unacceptable harm to the local economy;
 - c) the site has been extensively marketed for B1, B2 and B8 use;
 - d) the site has been vacant for a considerable length of time;
 - e) continued use of the site would be detrimental to neighbouring residential uses;
 - f) access to the site by public transport is poor; and
 - g) access for delivery vehicles is poor.

4.48 The site is part of one of several service road proposals as identified in the Harrow Unitary Development Plan (2004). As can be seen in Appendix 3, Service Road Proposal 5 is shown as following a path to the rear of Bridge Street, off Chapel Lane through to the Post Office site. Further discussion of this is contained in the analysis in Section 5.

Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) 2006

4.49 The Council produces an AMR which sets out how development taking place measures up with the adopted UDP policies. The most recent monitoring report was produced in December 2006. The AMR is useful as it provides up to date information with regards to the implementation of UDP planning policies and how certain targets, such as housing completions are being met or otherwise.

4.50 Chapter 4 of the AMR deals with monitoring of the implementation of UDP policies, and is broken down into different sections in accordance with the various chapters of the UDP. Section 4.4 deals with housing and Section 4.5 deals with employment, town centres and shopping.

4.51 With regards to housing, the AMR states that housing development in the last five calendar years has taken place at significantly higher levels than in earlier years, however there is no guarantee that such completion rates will continue to occur over the plan period.

4.52 The AMR considers planning permissions, identified sites, housing developments already under construction, and provisionally identified sites in the 2004 London Housing Capacity Study in order to assess and forecast future performance. Measured against the target of 6,620 net additional units set in the London Plan and Harrow UDP in the twenty-year period from 1997 to 2016, it has been demonstrated that the Council is capable of meeting its housing requirements. However, in 2005/06, 121 affordable housing units were completed, which only represents 73% of Harrow UDP policy H6 target of 165 affordable completions per annum.

- 4.53 The AMR goes on to talk about affordable housing and confirms that in 2005/2006, 121 affordable housing units were completed, representing 73% of the UDP target of achieving 165 affordable completions per annum. The AMR also states that *'it is important that the Council continues to secure more affordable housing in order to meet its present and future housing obligations'* (page 55).
- 4.54 Section 4.5 of the AMR deals with employment, town centres and shopping. The AMR confirms that the total amount of employment land available in Harrow in 2005/06 was 822,329 square metres, comprising B1 - 345,304 square metres; B2 - 292,110 square metres; B8 98,373 square metres and 81,500 square metres in Proposal Sites.

Local Development Framework

- 4.55 The main output of the Local Development Framework, the Core Strategy, is still emerging, and is not expected to be published until at least 2008. A Preliminary Issues and Options Consultation Paper was published in September 2006 for comment. It did not promote any particular stance on residential development or other issues associated with this development, but asked for comment as to the direction Harrow Council should take. Therefore, it has not been considered currently relevant to this application.
- 4.56 An Employment Land Study was commissioned by Harrow and published in November 2006, and was until recently out for consultation. The Council has stated that it will consider the Study along with any comments received as part of developing the Preferred Options for the Harrow Core Strategy. To quote relevant information from the report:

'The results of the survey indicate a healthy stock of employment land and premises and it was apparent that business clusters were well occupied and were providing an active business environment for

a variety of different businesses.'

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Additionally, the report states that:

In LB Harrow, the available developable land currently represents approximately 25% of the built-on employment land stock. By applying standard plot ratios and making comparisons with past trends in floorspace take-up the existing 30 ha of available developable employment land could provide a minimum of 50 years worth of supply in Harrow which is beyond the scope of provision required to cover the next plan period.

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Policy Summary

- 4.57 National planning policy and guidance within PPS1 and PPS3 encourages development which makes the most efficient use of land. Housing policy advocates the re-use of previously developed land in accessible locations for housing in order to promote regeneration, meet local housing needs and minimise Greenfield land take up.
- 4.58 The London Plan seeks to maximise the provision of new housing in the London authorities over the Plan period, and identifies a target (to be exceeded) of some 400 units per annum to 2017. Emphasis is placed on maximising the most efficient use of land by applying high densities.
- 4.59 The adopted local plan confirms that in terms of housing supply and demand, there is a significant deficit in terms of projected demand and current rates of completions. To this end, the Plan encourages the redevelopment of previously developed / vacant land in accessible urban / town centre locations. Residential development should be at the higher end of density in order to maximise the potential of the limited land available within the Borough.

4.60 Additionally, the Employment Land Study describes a healthy stock of employment land and a ready supply of developable employment land, providing more than enough to cover the requirements over the next plan period.

5 MATERIAL PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

- 5.1 The application proposals have been designed having full regard to the provisions of the adopted Development Plan, particularly those policies as set out in the previous Section of this supporting Planning Statement.
- 5.2 Pre-application discussions and ongoing liaison with Council officers has occurred throughout the development of this scheme, feedback has shaped the application scheme. In particular, the Council and consultee responses on the previous application have been taken on board and the scheme significantly amended in response.
- 5.3 The site extends to just over 0.12ha in total area and has been vacant for some time. No proposals for alternative employment uses have been forthcoming and presently the site makes no contribution to the character, appearance, vitality and viability of Pinner town centre, and represents a poor quality environment.
- 5.4 The redevelopment of this brownfield site for residential purposes, to include an element of affordable housing, will make a positive contribution to the town centre through high quality design and materials and landscaping improvements. The scheme proposals would also introduce extra mix and vitality to the centre and create a safe and vibrant environment.

Policy Context

- 5.5 The application proposals must be considered first and foremost against the material national, strategic and local planning policy framework, as summarised in the previous section of this supporting Planning Statement.

- 5.6 National planning guidance on housing advises that local planning authorities should seek to make the most efficient use of land, especially brownfield sites in accessible locations. Policies contained within the adopted Development Plan follow Government advice in this respect and advocate high density residential development in order to contribute towards meeting identified housing targets for the Borough.

Site Suitability for Residential Use

- 5.7 In considering whether the application site is suitable for residential use, regard must be had to the site's location and status, as detailed in the policy framework at all levels:

National Guidance:

- Promote more efficient use of suitably located previously developed land and buildings (PPS1).
- Give priority to re-using previously-developed land in urban areas (PPS3).
- Intensive housing development in and around existing centres and close to public transport nodes (PPS3).
- Development should be located in areas with good access to jobs, key services and infrastructure (PPS3).
- Land for housing should be available, suitable and achievable (PPS3).

Strategic Guidance:

- Change of use of unneeded industrial / employment land to residential (London Plan).
- Intensification of housing where there is good access to public transport (London Plan).
- Comply with Table 4B.1 density guidance.

UDP Policy:

- Site located within identified district centre, not allocated for any particular use.

- Give priority to re-use of previously developed land.
- Higher density housing in locations with good public transport accessibility and/or access to town centre facilities.
- Promote housing in town centres.
- Fully utilise vacant sites, with or without planning permissions.

5.8 The application proposals comply with all of the above, making use of a previously-developed, vacant town centre site with good access to services and facilities, in accordance with policy and guidance at all levels.

5.9 The application site represents an opportunity to provide a residential scheme of suitable scale and design in the heart of Pinner town centre.

5.10 The site has excellent access to public transport facilities, including the train station to the south east and bus services along Bridge Street. The site is, therefore, highly sustainable in terms of accessibility.

5.11 Residents of the proposed accommodation will have easy access to typical town centre services and facilities including shops, residential, banks, restaurants and leisure facilities.

5.12 The proposed residential development is fully compatible with neighbouring land uses including shops, offices and B1 uses, and all can co-exist appropriately.

5.13 The site has been the subject of a desktop archaeological investigation in preparation of this planning application. No constraints of an 'in principle' nature have been identified which would preclude development on the site. The assessment identifies that, whilst there is some potential for deposits on site, these are not such as to preclude redevelopment. The applicant is willing to discuss proposals for monitoring and recording if considered necessary.

- 5.14 A full PPG24 noise assessment report also accompanies this planning application, and confirms that the application site lies within Noise Exposure Category (NEC) A/C. On this basis, the noise assessment report concludes that subject to the incorporation of appropriate mitigation measures, there should be no reason for planning permission to be refused on grounds of noise.
- 5.15 As mentioned previously, the site is part of one of several Service Road Proposals as identified in the Harrow UDP. As can be seen in Appendix 3, Service Road Proposal 5 is shown as following a path to the rear of Bridge Street, off Chapel Lane through to the Post Office site.
- 5.16 However, following a site inspection conducted on 18 December 2006 (report included at Appendix 3), it has been concluded that the UDP proposal for this service road cannot be sustained, and that unloading would be better addressed by using some of the widened footway, given there appears to be no rear rights of access and insufficient space for large HGVs. Also noted was the presence of a number of premises and fenced off areas which intervene between the notional line of the service road and the frontage properties to Bridge Street. This combined with the title information made available indicates that to make a service road of any practical use in reducing on street loading and unloading means acquiring these intervening areas, leading to the conclusion that the UDP proposal cannot be sustained. Therefore, this proposal does not include provision for the service road through this site.
- 5.17 Vehicle movements associated with the site will be limited, and the current access / egress arrangements will be suitable for the proposed development. Only one car parking space is proposed, being a disabled bay, and this reflects the town centre location of the site and its excellent public transport links.

- 5.18 The application site is ideally located to provide a sustainable residential development, and fully accords with the national, strategic and local policy framework. The site's town centre location makes it preferable and more sustainable for residential development than, for example, peripheral, more detached locations and Greenfield sites.
- 5.19 There are no allocated residential sites shown on the UDP Proposals Map in the vicinity of Pinner, or indeed the entire west of the Borough. The nearest allocation for residential use is site PS18 at Headstone and is not within or on the edge of any identified centre. Site PS18 lies some 2.5km to the south east of Pinner centre.
- 5.20 As will be discussed under the following sub-heading, the Borough has the task of meeting its housing targets as set out within the UDP and the London Plan. As there are no specific site allocations for residential use in this part of the Borough, the application site can be considered as a highly suitable, available and viable option for sustainable residential development, making a contribution towards meeting the Borough's housing targets.

Housing Supply and Demand

- 5.21 It has been established that the site in terms of its location, sustainability and physical characteristics is wholly suitable for residential use. We now turn to consider the relationship between housing supply and demand within the Borough, which is a material consideration in determining this planning application.
- 5.22 The London Plan identifies a target of 4,000 new units in Harrow over the ten year period 2007-2017. Given the need for additional housing across most parts of Greater London, local planning authorities are advised that they should seek to *exceed* their identified targets.

- 5.23 Paragraph 4.36 of this planning statement identifies the gross and net housing completions for the Borough over the ten year period 1992-2002. Net average annual completions over this period amount to just 226 units.
- 5.24 Furthermore, net completions per annum since 1992 have been highly variable, and whilst the figures for 2001 and 2002 (466 and 353 respectively) are above the London Plan target, there is of course no guarantee that such completion rates will continue at this level in forthcoming years.
- 5.25 Clearly, the situation with regards to housing and completion rates is not static, and things have moved on since the adoption of the UDP. The Council produces an annual monitoring report (AMR), as referred to in Section 4 of this statement, which sets out how development taking place measures up with the adopted UDP policies. The most recent AMR was produced in December 2006 and is reviewed below.

Annual Monitoring Report – Housing Review

- 5.26 As described previously, Section 4.4 of the AMR is concerned with housing.
- 5.27 Table 12 confirms that the majority of dwellings (59%) completed in 2005/06 were built above 50 dwellings per hectare, while 22% were between 30 and 50 dwellings per hectare, and 19% at less than 30 dwellings per hectare.
- 5.28 The application proposals involve 30 apartments over 5 floors, on a site measuring 0.1180 of a hectare. The scheme density therefore equates to 254 units per hectare. Such density is suitable at such a well located and highly accessible site, and is advocated by The London Plan, which specifies that for an area such as Pinner, a density of 165 – 275 units per hectare is desirable.

- 5.29 The high density proposed meets the requirements of the London Plan, which recognises that more housing capacity can be achieved by maximising development density. As explained in the previous section, Policy 4B.3 of the London Plan requires that development proposals should achieve the highest possible intensity of use compatible with the local context.
- 5.30 The application scheme is designed to make the most efficient use of the site in terms of the level of provision, and at the same time respecting the characteristics and visual appearance of the surrounding area, so as not to appear overly dominant or overbearing in visual terms.
- 5.31 In this regard, the application proposals both maximise the residential development potential of the site, and make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the town centre, replacing a presently vacant and unattractive town centre site.
- 5.32 The AMR states that housing development in the last five calendar years has taken place at significantly higher levels than in earlier years, however there is no guarantee that such completion rates will continue to occur over the plan period.
- 5.33 The AMR considers planning permissions, identified sites, housing developments already under construction, and provisionally identified sites in the 2004 London Housing Capacity Study in order to assess and forecast future performance. Measured against the target of 6,620 net additional units set in the London Plan and Harrow UDP in the twenty-year period from 1997 to 2016, it has been demonstrated that the Council is capable of meeting its housing requirements. However, in 2005/06, 121 affordable housing units were completed, which only represents 73% of Harrow UDP policy H6 target of 165 affordable completions per annum.

- 5.34 The application proposals involving 30 flats, of which, between 27.5% to 30% are affordable, will make a contribution to meeting this shortfall, on a brownfield town centre site with good access to sustainable modes of transport.
- 5.35 The AMR goes on to talk about affordable housing and confirms that in 2005/2006, 121 affordable housing units were completed, representing 73% of the UDP target of achieving 165 affordable completions per annum. The AMR also states that *'it is important that the Council continues to secure more affordable housing in order to meet its present and future housing obligations'* (page 55).
- 5.36 This application dedicates between 27.5% to 30% to affordable housing, in order to contribute to creating more mixed and inclusive communities. The tenure of the units will be agreed with the Council. In response to previous issues raised by the Council, the affordable housing component is now fully compliant with Harrows requirements as set out in Policy H5 of the Harrow UDP.

Employment Land Issues

- 5.37 Section 4.5 of the AMR deals with employment, town centres and shopping. The AMR confirms that the total amount of employment land available in Harrow in 2005/06 was 822,329 square metres, comprising B1 - 345,304 square metres; B2 - 292,110 square metres; B8 98,373 square metres and 81,500 square metres in Proposal Sites. Additionally, the previously mentioned Employment Land Study confirms that there is a minimum of 50 years worth of supply in Harrow, which is beyond the scope of provision required to cover the next plan period.
- 5.38 In light of the overall net employment land in the Borough, given the fact that the application site extends to just 0.12ha (1,180m²), a full assessment of employment land supply has not been considered necessary for this application.

- 5.39 As it is vacant, the site does not presently make any contribution in employment terms within the Borough, nor is it likely to do so in the foreseeable future.
- 5.40 The site has been marketed by local agents Ferrari Dewe & Company since October 2004, a copy of the marketing details are enclosed at Appendix 5. Marketing was carried out by way of a sign erected on site, notices published in a local newspaper and trade magazine, organised mail shots and advertisement on the company's website.
- 5.41 Daylight Signs erected a board on the site advertising it for sale on 22nd October 2004. Advertisements were placed in the local newspaper (Harrow Observer) on 1st November 2004, and in the Estates Gazette on 20th November 2004.
- 5.42 In addition to the above, a property brochure was mailed to approximately 790 firms/individuals, including local developers, local occupiers and applicants on Ferrari Dewe & Company's database. A mail shot was also undertaken targeting City agents as well as local agents in Middlesex and Hertfordshire. Almost one thousand leaflets were distributed in this manner.
- 5.43 Despite the extensive marketing of the site, there has been no serious interest in redevelopment of the site for employment purposes.
- 5.44 The site is relatively small in commercial terms and is therefore limited in its development potential for offices or commercial. It is also limited in its development potential for office or commercial uses by reason of its restricted prominence and, additionally, such a small site would suffer from lack of space for parking provision, which would be required for a successful office or commercial development.

- 5.45 In addition, given the small site area, the site does not provide any room for business expansion, nor is the site suitable for heavy commercial uses. Given that there are residential units above nearby shops on Bridge Street, the site is not suitable for any type of use that would involve operations late at night or 24 hours.
- 5.46 The site is a vacant, brownfield, town centre site currently making no positive contribution towards the vitality and viability of Pinner town centre. National and local policy and advice encourages the redevelopment of such sites for alternative uses, particularly residential.
- 5.47 Redevelopment of this site as residential would not represent a significant loss of employment land, and would have a small, if imperceptible effect on the creation of jobs in the area, especially as there is no shortage of employment land in the Borough. It would however, represent a more positive redevelopment of currently underutilised land and improve the vitality of the area in positive way.

Design and Layout

- 5.48 The Design and Access Statement and drawings submitted with this application detail the proposed building design, which has been formulated having regard to the need to respect the character and appearance of the surrounding area.
- 5.49 The building presents only four storeys above existing ground level and therefore respects the relatively low-lying nature of the surrounding properties.
- 5.50 It is predominantly inward-facing, greatly reducing the scope for overlooking of adjoining properties.
- 5.51 The proposals involve white and coloured render as well as brickwork – all as illustrated – which are combined in order to break down the overall

mass of the development. . Should planning permission be granted, final details and colours of materials would be submitted for the council's approval prior to the commencement of development.

- 5.52 Outlook has previously been raised as an issue. It is our view that the prospect from the proposed residential units would not be unacceptable, rather, considering the open space proposed within the site and the wider views from the higher levels in particular, the outlook from the flats would not be particularly unusual for an urban environment. It must also be remembered that there are unlikely to be many town centre development sites with typically 'scenic' views, given the surrounding urban fabric and associated infrastructure. In summary, we do not consider that quality of outlook considerations outweigh the numerous and substantial positive benefits that the redevelopment of the site would realise.
- 5.53 Boundary fencing is proposed which restricts pedestrian access to the building and its communal areas to residents and visitors only (all as outlined in the Design & Access statement and noted on drawings).
- 5.54 Access to the site is controlled via an audio and visual access control system with electronic lock release, linked to all of the flats.
- 5.55 At 'lower ground' level, the application drawings show a sunken communal garden (with some private space as illustrated) providing amenity space. This is augmented by additional landscaped areas at ground floor level. Landscaping details for the external areas will be submitted to planning officers for approval prior to commencement of development.
- 5.56 Compared to other nearby residential schemes which have been granted planning permission, this application involves very generous amounts of amenity space.
- 5.57 The application scheme has 345 square metres of communal and private amenity space.

5.58 In terms of off site amenity space, the site offers good and easy access to areas of open space as detailed below.

5.59 As can be seen from the Development Plan proposals map extract (Appendix 2), areas of open space exist within easy walking distance of the application site. These include:

- Pinner Memorial Park (to the south);
- Ringwood Close Recreation Ground (to the west); and
- Little Common (to the north).

5.60 All of the above areas are within 5 minutes walking distance of the application site. In addition, Pinner Park (designated Green Belt) is located nearby, to the north east of the application site.

5.61 The application site is also located within the heart of Pinner, thus having the benefit of a range of facilities and services.

5.62 Taking all of the above into consideration, the proposed level of amenity space is considered suitable for a development of this nature.

5.63 In summary, it is considered that the proposed on site amenity space is suitable for a development of this scale and, in addition, there is good accessibility to off site amenity space to cater for occupiers of the proposed units.

Affordable Housing

5.64 The Council's adopted Development Plan requires that for residential schemes involving 15 or more units, 30% of the total provision should be given over to affordable housing. As stated previously, between 27.5% to 30% will be dedicated as affordable housing in order to contribute to creating a more mixed and inclusive community. The tenure of the units

will be agreed with the Council. In response to previous issues raised by the Council, the affordable housing component is now fully compliant with Harrows requirements as set out in Policy H5 of the Harrow UDP.

Parking and Access

- 5.65 The access road to the application site is between 3.16 and 3.35m wide, suitable for private vehicles, making the proposed development adequate from the point of view of general public safety and specifically pedestrian safety. Likely traffic movements associated with a business / commercial use would be far more frequent and more intensive (for example HGV). Such transport movements will not occur with the proposed residential scheme.
- 5.66 There is however, space for bin lorries and delivery vehicles to turn in the site, so as to service the development. There is also space in the proposed plan for the biomass service lorry to deliver biomass fuel, as required approximately every 4-6 months.
- 5.67 One car parking space is proposed for the development, designed to disabled parking standards. The parking accommodation reflects the character and scale of the proposed development, and the site location, having regard to access to public transport. Having only one disabled parking space also means that vehicle movements into and out of the application site will be limited, therefore greatly improving pedestrian safety both within/to the site and around the main vehicular access on Bridge Street itself.

Sustainability

- 5.68 PPS1 states at paragraph 3 that sustainable development is the core principle underpinning planning. The provision of sufficient, good quality homes in suitable locations is a key requirement for planning authorities to secure.

5.69 It is considered that the application proposal, which seeks to bring forward a sensitively designed residential scheme, contributes towards meeting sustainability objectives.

5.70 PPS3 advises further with regards to residential development and advises that:

The priority for development should be previously developed land, in particular vacant and derelict sites and buildings.

5.71 The proposals the subject of this application seek to redevelop a vacant brownfield site for a high density residential scheme and is therefore fully in accordance with national, strategic and local policy and guidance concerning the re-use of land.

5.72 The redevelopment of this site will not only preserve Greenfield land, but importantly, make a positive contribution to meeting local housing needs, including the need for affordable housing.

5.73 Government guidance seeks to ensure that land be used in an efficient way in order to fully realise its potential. The proposals would make more efficient use of the site, creating homes for the local population. The application proposals would result in a more sustainable community, fully integrated with the existing settlement.

5.74 The site is presently visually unattractive, detracting from the vitality and viability of Pinner town centre. The proposed redevelopment will result in an enhanced environment, which will have a positive impact on the character and appearance of the area.

5.75 The proposed redevelopment incorporates a number of ZEDHomes sustainable development principles which aim to transform the site from its present condition into a high quality, environmentally sustainable

development with residential properties designed to 4-star standards as assessed under the Code for Sustainable Homes.

- 5.76 A bio-mass boiler will provide heating and supply hot water for all of the flats. The technology ensures a continuously high degree of efficiency, low fuel consumption and minimum emissions.
- 5.77 All kitchens will be fully integrated with 4-compartment recycling bins so waste is separated at the source.
- 5.78 Natural materials will be used for the internal finishes to further complement the interiors of the apartments.
- 5.79 The northern elevations will be triple glazed to ensure excellent energy conservation.
- 5.80 The energy consumption savings of the development are further enhanced by the proposed use of super insulation of 300mm thickness to all external walls, making an overall thickness for the masonry external walls of approximately 500mm. This will reduce the need for heat in the winter and, in the summer, the units will be 2 – 3 degrees cooler than the outside temperature, thereby avoiding any need for artificial/mechanical ventilation.
- 5.81 Appendix 7 contains further details and explanation of the sustainability features that will be incorporated into the scheme.
- 5.82 The site could not be situated in a more sustainable location with regards to access to local services and facilities. The site is within the heart of Pinner town centre close to shops, offices, restaurants, amenity space and leisure / recreation uses.
- 5.83 The site is accessible by sustainable methods of transport including buses and trains (overland services and London Underground services). The

proposals include provision for the storage of bicycles in accordance with encouraging more sustainable methods of transport than the private car.

- 5.84 In summary, the proposals fully comply with the requirements and sustainability objectives outlined in PPS1 and PPG3 which underpin the planning system. The proposed scheme will result in the provision of good quality residential accommodation, replacing the vacant and unattractive site with a development that will meet local needs and enhance the character and appearance of Pinner town centre.

6 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

- 6.1 The application proposals seek to redevelop land to the rear of 71 Bridge Street, Pinner for a residential scheme comprising 30 units.
- 6.2 The site is currently vacant, and has been for almost three years, but was previously used for car repairs and painting. A number of low key sheds remain on site, in a state of some disrepair and both visually and functionally, they make no material contribution to the town centre.
- 6.3 Planning policy at all levels advocates the re-use and redevelopment of vacant, brownfield sites for alternative uses, especially residential, in areas of high accessibility. The application proposals fully accord with these objectives.
- 6.4 The London Plan identifies a target of 4,000 new units in Harrow over the ten year period 2007-2017. Given the need for additional housing across most parts of Greater London, local planning authorities are advised that they should seek to *exceed* their identified targets. Over the ten year period 1992-2002, net average annual completions over this period amount to just 226 units.
- 6.5 The AMR states that only 73% of the UDP target of achieving 165 affordable completions per annum was achieved in 2005/06. The AMR also states that *'it is important that the Council continues to secure more*

affordable housing in order to meet its present and future housing obligations' (page 55).

- 6.6 The application proposals would make an important contribution towards Harrow's required housing targets and affordable housing targets.
- 6.7 Additionally, having regard to the provisions of national, strategic and local policy and guidance, the application site is well suited, especially in locational terms, for residential development.
- 6.8 The redevelopment of the application site with the proposed scheme would make use of a previously-developed, vacant town centre site with good access to services and facilities, in accordance with policy and guidance at all levels. The scheme proposals would also introduce extra mix and vitality to the centre and create a safe and vibrant environment.
- 6.9 The proposed scheme has been designed so as to maximise the use of the site. At the same time, the design and scale of the proposed building is such so as not to appear overbearing in the wider townscape or represent over-development of the application site.
- 6.10 The scheme proposals would not only provide a sustainable housing development in excess of 4-star standards, but also, the requisite amount of affordable units will be provided in order to contribute to creating more mixed and inclusive communities.
- 6.11 Additionally, the previously mentioned Employment Land Study confirms that there is a minimum of 50 years worth of supply in Harrow, which is beyond the scope of provision required to cover the next plan period.
- 6.12 Having regard to the provisions of this supporting Planning Statement, and the supporting material to this application, we consider there to be strong planning grounds for granting permission for this development.