

## **Planning Statement for Proposed Conversion of Educational Buildings into Apartments, Former Kirklees College, New North Road / Highfields Lane, Huddersfield, HD1 5LS.**

### **Introduction.**

This document has been produced to demonstrate that the proposals contained in the planning application have been developed in accordance with the relevant local and national planning policies. It should be read in conjunction with the accompanying Heritage Statement / Design and Access Statement.

### **Relevant Local Planning Policies.**

The relevant policies that apply to this application are from The Kirklees Local Plan - adopted on 27th February 2019.

The National Planning Policy Framework states that the statutory status of the local development plan should be used as the starting point for decision making: accordingly:

#### **PLP 1**

##### **Presumption in favour of sustainable development.**

The proposals accord with this policy as they:

- Are within close proximity to Huddersfield town centre and have good access to the M62 motorway, to bus routes that pass right outside the site, the train station that has local and national services, retail outlets, Council offices and other local authority facilities such as the library and the sports centre, the University and Technical College. In addition, Huddersfield Royal Infirmary is close by as are GP and dentist practices.
- Will contribute to the economy of the town centre and the area surrounding due to the increase in the number of residents and the economic effect that this will have.
- Will support the health and social and cultural well-being of the residents and surrounding area by providing high quality, well designed homes in a suitable location.
- Will protect and enhance the built and historic by giving a new use to an existing 'heritage asset' - the listed buildings that are at the heart this application. They will also protect and enhance the natural environment by improving the biodiversity opportunities offered by the proposed improvements to the external spaces.

Therefore, the proposals will provide positive economic, social and environmental benefits as identified in this policy.

### **Policy PLP 3**

#### **Location of new development**

The proposals accord with this policy as they:

- Represent the development of a brownfield (previously developed) site for new housing thus helping to deliver the housing and jobs requirements identified in The Local Plan
- Provide access to a range of transport choices and access to local services.

### **Policy PLP 7**

#### **Efficient and effective use of land and buildings**

The proposals accord with this policy as they:

- Efficiently use previously developed land in a sustainable location.
- Represent the re-use and adaptation of vacant, currently un-used property.

### **Policy PLP 11**

#### **Housing Mix and Affordable Housing**

The proposals accord with this policy as they:

- Contain a broad range of apartment sizes and types - suitable for 'different household types'
- Contain six affordable homes\*, ie 20% of the total to be provided.  
(\* Provided either on or 'off site' or in the form of a compensatory commuted sum - this to be developed and agreed with The Council).

### **Policy PLP 20**

#### **Sustainable travel**

Due to their location, the proposals accord with this policy as they:

- Will be served by alternative modes of transport such as public transport, cycling and walking and will be close to local and town centre facilities as described in PLP1 and will facilitate the needs of the following user hierarchy
  - a. pedestrians – the site is within easy walking distance of the town centre and other local facilities.
  - b. cyclists – ample cycle storage will be provided as part of the design.
  - c. public transport – buses run immediately adjacent the site and the train station is a few minutes walk away.
  - d. private vehicles – an appropriate level of parking (as agreed with The Council's Highways Department) will be provided. Electric vehicle charging points will also be provided.

The proposals will also supported by a travel plan which encourages the use of public transport, cycling and walking.

### **Policy PLP 21**

#### **Highway safety and access**

The proposals accord with this policy as they:

- Are accompanied by a supporting Transport Assessment and Transport Statement (and an Air quality Assessment) providing detail as to the impact on highway safety, air quality, noise and light restrictions.
- Provide adequate layout and visibility to allow the development to be accessed safely.
- Take into account access for emergency, service and refuse collection vehicles.
- Have provision for electric vehicle charging points within the site layout.
- Provide on-site safe, secure and convenient cycle parking/storage facilities

### **Policy PLP 24**

#### **Design**

The proposals accord with this policy as:

- They have good design at their core and which has been considered from the outset of the development process.
- The Client/Deign Team have carried out a pre-application consultation process with The Planning Department and in an attempt to ensure compliance with this policy.
- Their form, scale, layout and details respect and enhances the character of the townscape, heritage assets and landscape.

- Provide a high standard of amenity for future occupiers.
- The proposed modifications to the buildings are in keeping with the existing fabric of the buildings.  
In terms of scale, materials and details, they will minimise impact on residential amenity of future and neighbouring occupiers.
- Achieve a high level of sustainability through;  
The re-use and adaptation of existing buildings.  
Design that promotes behavioural change, promoting walkable neighbourhoods and making walking and cycling more attractive.  
The use of innovative construction materials and techniques (as demonstrated by the proposed first floor addition to the retained Link Building).  
Encourage the use of electric and low emission vehicles by providing charging points.  
Incorporate adequate facilities to allow occupiers to separate and store waste for recycling and recovery that are well designed and visually unobtrusive and allow for the convenient collection of waste.  
Providing buildings that are resilient and resistant to flood risk  
The proposals have been designed to minimize the risk of crime by enhanced security, and the promotion of well-defined routes and to meet the needs of a range of different users, including disabled people, older people and families with small children.  
They will also provide open spaces that are accessible, safe and overlooked. The design and landscaping of the central open space will be modified so that it will improve the biodiversity of the site (by the incorporation of a 'bog garden'/rainwater pond) which is also in accordance with Policy PLP 30 - Biodiversity & Geodiversity.  
The proposals will retain valuable trees to maximise visual amenity and which is also in accordance with Policy PLP 33 – Trees.

## **Policy PLP 35**

### **Historic environment**

The proposals accord with this policy as they:

- Conserve those elements which contribute to the significance of the buildings that constitute the heritage asset and which contribute to the distinct identity of the Conservation Area in which they are located and the wider Kirklees area in general (as described in the accompanying Heritage Statement / Design and Access Statement).
- Secure a sustainable future for the heritage asset that the buildings represent and which might otherwise be at risk.
- Accommodate innovative design that does not prejudice the significance of heritage asset.

In addition to the policies and objectives of The Kirklees Local Plan, some nationally prescribed policies are relevant.

### **Relevant National Planning Policies.**

The relevant policies that apply to this application are from The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)- February 2019 – published by The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government.

Clause 10 of the NPPF states that:

*'at the heart of the Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development'*: as demonstrated above, the proposals are, in all aspects, very sustainable.

Clause 10 of the NPPF states that:

*'Early engagement has significant potential to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the planning application system for all parties. Good quality preapplication discussion enables better coordination between public and private resources and improved outcomes for the community'*: As described above The Client/Design Team have engaged with the Planning Department by using the pre application procedure and to resolve as many issues as possible by prior to the submission of the actual planning application.

Section 5 of the NPPF describes factors that are relevant to the Government's objective of delivering a sufficient supply of homes. The proposals will deliver 33 new homes and is therefore completely aligned with this objective.

Clause 118 c) of the NPPF states that:

(Planning policies and decisions should:) *'give substantial weight to the value of using suitable brownfield land within settlements for homes'* the proposals are a very good example of the use of a brownfield site to deliver new homes.

Clause 124 of the NPPF states that:

*'The creation of high quality buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. 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.'* The proposals make use of a high quality listed buildings to create well designed homes and shared external spaces and so accords with this policy. They will also achieve the aims of clause 127, ie:

*'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'.*

*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....'*

Clause 184 of the NPPF states that:

*'Heritage assets range from sites and buildings of local historic value to those of the highest significance, such as World Heritage Sites which are internationally recognised to be of Outstanding Universal Value.*

*These assets are an irreplaceable resource, and should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of existing and future generations'.*

The proposals will safeguard the appearance and integrity of the existing listed buildings and the spaces around them and which might otherwise be lost.

Clause 192 of the NPPF states 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'*

Additionally, Clause 193 states:

*'When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be).'*

The significance of these statements should be taken into account when The Local Authority assess the proposals.

With regard to the proposed removal of the modern glazed link canopy and which currently obscures one side of Building A which is listed, The Local Authority should bear clause 200 in mind, ie:

*'Local planning authorities should look for opportunities for new development within Conservation Areas and World Heritage Sites, and within the setting of heritage assets, to enhance or **better reveal their significance**. Proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to the asset (or which better reveal its significance) should be treated favourably.'*

## **Conclusion.**

The Client and Design Team have engaged with the Planning Department using the pre application procedure and which is encouraged by both local and national policy.

This process identified parts of the proposals that were not quite compliant with local and national policy and accordingly changes were made in order ensure compliance. It also ensured that the correct supporting information was made available to accompany the application.

As a result, by the time that the actual planning application was submitted, the information was (barring one or two very minor issues) completely aligned with the relevant policies.

Since submission of the application, The Client and Design Team have worked with the Planning Department to resolve the remaining minor issues and so that, in all respects, the proposals are compliant with all relevant policies.