

Address:	Site bounded by Chester Road, Balmore Street and Raydon Street	
Application Number:	2010/5478/P	Officer: Amanda Peck
Ward:	Highgate	
Date Received:	12/10/2010	
Proposal: Erection of 4 storey building to provide 53 residential units (Class C3) and commercial units (482.7sqm) to include retail (Class A1), non-residential institution (Class D1), and associated cycle parking and landscaping following demolition of buildings at 58-86 Chester Road and 41-71 at Balmore Street.		
Drawing Numbers: Transport statement, January 2011 rev PL1; Travel Plan, January 2011 rev PL1; Sustainability statement, January 2011 rev PL1; Energy statement, January 2011 rev PL1; Affordable housing statement, January 2011 rev PL1; Retail impact assessment, October 2010; Code for sustainable homes ecological assessment, October 2010; Planning statement, October 2010; Daylight / Sunlight assessment, October 2010; Code for sustainable homes pre-assessment, October 2010; Breeam retail pre-assessment, October 2010; Arboricultural survey, October 2010; Statement of community involvement, October 2010; Archaeological survey, October 2010; Noise impact assessment, October 2010; Construction Management Plan, October 2010; Contamination report, October 2010; Response to Planning Consultee Comments, January 2011 rev PL1; Design and Access Statement, January 2011 rev PL1; 540 1000 REV PL; -1001 REV PL; -1002 REV PL; -1003 REV PL; -1004 REV PL; -1110 REV PL1; -1110_1 REV PL1; -1100 REV PL1; -1101 REV PL1; -1102 REV PL1; -1103 REV PL1; -1104 REV PL1; -1105 REV PL1; -1111 REV PL1; -1971 REV PL1; -1970 REV PL1; -1500 REV PL1; -1501 REV PL1; -1172 REV PL1; -1171 REV PL1; -1170 REV PL1; -1150 REV PL1; -1151 REV PL1; -1152 REV PL1; 540 540 12200 rev A; -12204 rev A; -12203 rev A; -12202 rev A; -12201 rev A.		
RECOMMENDATION SUMMARY: Grant Planning Permission		
Related Application Date of Application:	12/10/2010	
Application Number:	2010/5488/C	
Proposal: Demolition of existing buildings at 58-86 Chester Road and 41-71 Balmore Street. as shown on drawing numbers 540 1000 REV PL; -1001 REV PL; -1002 REV PL; -1003 REV PL; -1004 REV PL.		
RECOMMENDATION SUMMARY: Grant Conservation Area consent		
Applicant:	Agent:	
Housing and Adult Services London borough of Camden 33-35 Jamestown Road LONDON NW1 7DB	Rick Mather Architects 123 Camden High Street LONDON NW1 7JR	

ANALYSIS INFORMATION

Land Use Details:

	Use Class	Use Description	Floorspace
Existing		<i>C3 Dwelling House</i>	1532 m ²
		<i>A1 Shop</i>	519m ²
		A5 Hot food takeaway	67m ²
		B1 Office	117 m ²
		D1 Non residential institutions	172 m ²
		Launderette	160 m ²
Proposed		<i>C3 Dwelling House</i>	4159m ²
		<i>A1 Shop</i>	482m ²
		A5 Hot food takeaway	0m ²
		B1 Office	0 m ²
		D1 Non residential institutions	40 m ²
		Launderette	0 m ²

Residential Use Details:

	Residential Type	No. of Habitable Rooms per Unit								
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9+
Existing	<i>Flat/Maisonette</i>	8		17						
Proposed	<i>Flat/Maisonette</i>	3	16	29	8	1				

Parking Details:

	Parking Spaces (General)	Parking Spaces (Disabled)
Existing	7	0
Proposed	0	6

OFFICERS' REPORT

Reason for Referral to Committee: The application is being reported to the Committee as it is a Major development which involves the creation of more than 10 new dwellings [Clause 3(i)]

1. SITE

- 1.1 The site is bounded by Chester Road, Balmore Road and Raydon Street, with a four storey building fronting Chester Road and a three storey block fronting Balmore Road. Because of changes in levels on the site the Balmore Street block appears as a two storey block when viewed from the street. The site is within the Dartmouth Park Conservation area and the buildings are identified having a neutral contribution to the character and appearance of this conservation area. The buildings are not listed but the site is close to the Grade II listed Highgate Library on Chester Road. There is a pedestrian right of way through the site from Chester Road to Balmore Road at the boundary of the site with the adjacent existing terraces.
- 1.2 There are 25 existing residential units on site (17 x 2bedroom and 8 x studio units) and of these 20 are Council rented and 5 of the 2 bedroom units are privately leased. There is a off street parking/servicing area located to the rear of the blocks, accessed from Chester Road that houses 7 parking space, servicing entrances to the back of the shops and a small servicing area. This servicing area does not appear to be used all the time by the commercial units because of its small size and the applicant states that some delivery vans park on Chester Road or Croftdown Road and goods are then wheeled across the road.
- 1.3 The block facing Chester Road contains two levels of retail and community space which has been designated as a Neighbourhood Centre within the LDF, comprising 14 commercial units (1035sqm). The site is designated in Policy CS7 (paragraph 6.24) and within the emerging Site Allocation Document as having the potential for a residential led mixed use development which would replace the existing affordable housing and neighbourhood shopping facilities on site, and provide additional housing and community facilities within a higher density scheme. The Site Allocations Document (Site 49, p.141) states that the suggested approach on this site is for a residential-led mixed use development which replaces existing affordable housing and provides additional housing, replacement neighbourhood shopping facilities and accommodation for community uses.

2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 This is the first of four estate regeneration projects being delivered as part of the "Investing in Camden's Homes" 2007 Strategy. This strategy sets out the Council's plans to secure investment capital to help deliver the Government's targets for decent homes. The process of decanting residents from the blocks has begun; of the 20 Council rented units 17 are now vacant and of the 5 leasehold units, 4 are now vacant.

2. THE PROPOSAL

Original

- 2.1 The original proposal was for the demolition of the existing blocks for 57 new residential units housed in three blocks as follows: 4 storeys fronting Chester Road, 4 storeys fronting Balmore Street (plus basement level) and 5 storeys fronting Raydon Street (plus basement level). The proposed mix was: 3 x studios, 16 x 1bed, 29 x 2bed, 8 x 3bed and 1 x 4bed, with 29 private units and 28 affordable units (49% of total number of units and 52% of total floorspace) at a density of 667 habitable rooms per hectare. 482sqm of retail floorspace was proposed in two separate units with a 40sqm unit for the relocation of the existing dentist on site. The existing 'Fresh Gym and Juice Bar' is to be relocated to the nearby Highgate Newtown Community Centre on Bertram Street.

Revision

- 2.2 The scheme has been amended to remove the fifth floor to the Raydon Street block. This consequently reduces the number of residential units and the following is now proposed: 53 units in total; 3 x studios, 15 x 1bed, 26 x 2bed, 8 x 3bed and 1 x 4bed, with 26 private units and 27 affordable units (51% of total number of units and 56% of total floorspace) at a density of 617 habitable rooms per hectare. The design of the buildings at the corner of Raydon Street and Chester Road has been amended and the fenestration to the end of the Balmore Street block, adjacent to the existing terrace has been amended. The six basement wheelchair parking spaces have been removed and three on street spaces are proposed instead. The basement cycle spaces have consequently been relocated and are now on the Chester Road frontage.

3. RELEVANT HISTORY

- 3.1 Various applications for advertisement, ventilation ducts and changes of use to shop units on Chester Road

4. CONSULTATIONS

Two phases of consultation have been carried out:

1. A press notice was in place between 27 October and 17 November 2010 and three site notices were displayed (one on each street frontage) between 4 November and 25 November 2010. Members of the Chester Balmore Working group were consulted on 29 October 2010. Hard copies of the application documents were made available at Highgate Library from 2 November. 290 local residents were sent consultation letters on 27 October 2010.
2. 315 local residents were sent consultation letters on 20 and 21 January 2011 (including those residents who were originally consulted and any additional residents who made comments on the original scheme). This consultation period expired on 11 February 2011.

Statutory Consultees

- 4.1 Thames Water - No objection to the application, recommend informative regarding surface water drainage and the installation of non return valves.

4.2 English Heritage - Our specialist staff have considered the information received and we do not wish to offer any comments on this occasion. This application should be determined in accordance with national and local policy guidance, and on the basis of your specialist conservation advice. It is not necessary for us to be consulted again on this application.

4.3 London Borough of Islington - Do not wish to make comment on this occasion.

Conservation Area Advisory Committee

4.4 Dartmouth Park – Object to the original proposal, no comments received on revised scheme - 1915 OS map and photo from the same era have been submitted showing that there were no buildings on the corner of Raydon Street and Chester Road and the terrace reduced in height at the corner. The existing buildings that replaced the demolished terrace respect the building line of the remaining terrace on Chester Road and the upper floor is set back. The existing building does not reduce in height at the corner but it still respects the historic building line. The open space in front of the library provides a busy focus for the community hub which includes the shops, commercial and community activities and the school and pub. This is a designated neighbourhood shopping centre that serves the wider community. The triangular island in the road is important visually and serves as a ‘safe haven’ for children crossing the roads here. The existing centre has been mismanaged and not maintained properly and this played a part in the decision not to include the buildings in the Conservation Area statement as making a positive contribution to the Conservation Area. Therefore the developer should not use its own failings to justify demolition. The existing residential accommodation is not poorly designed and the buildings were not temporary and are not near the end of their useful life. The proposed buildings show utter disregard to enhance the conservation area or the setting of the listed building. Doubling the housing provision on this small site would result in overdevelopment and the new buildings explode over the open land on the corner. This open land is crucial to sever the views to and from the library. The listed building must also be located within a vibrant community hub and not become an isolated facility. The site is specifically referred to in the LDF Core Strategy at 6.27 and this is not mentioned by the applicants. A plan has been submitted that superimposes the proposal over the existing building layout and the historic Victorian building line to show the extent to which current and historic building lines are being ignored. The proposed building would crowd the library and would obliterate views to and from the library from/to Raydon Street. The Raydon Street block also overpowers the ‘post modernist’ buildings opposite.

Local Groups

4.5 Brookfield Park Residents Association – Object to the original proposal, no comments received on revised scheme - The design of the building is too high and overwhelms and overpowers the surrounding area. The pale finish of the walls are in reality not very practical and will become an easy target for graffiti. Having a variety of local shops forms a focus for the local community, so it is regrettable that the plan only provides for a very small number of shop units. A requirement of the final design should be that it is built to the highest standards of energy efficiency.

4.6 Camden Civic Society – Object to the original proposal, no comments received on

revised scheme - During consultation several designs were discussed and the one that found least favour was the one that was chosen. The community does not understand or is not aware of any overriding economic or aesthetic reasons for this choice. The proposed building is effectively 5 storeys on the corner of Chester Road and Raydon Street and this is excessive as it will tower over the listed library opposite. The proposed design appears dull, solid almost industrial and unimaginative. It will thrust itself upon passers by at this busy junction in a way that the present block does not. There appears to be too much unrelieved wall space that may encourage graffiti. There appears to be a half hearted attempt to meet community retail needs by only replacing some shops. It is essential that there is no trading interruption and replacement facilities are available throughout the demolition and construction phases. Given the need for family accommodation locally the provision for single person accommodation is excessive.

- 4.7 The Highgate Society – Object to the original proposal, no comments received on revised scheme - As a result of attempting to maximize the number of units on the site, some of the flat plants in particular on the lower floors are likely to provide substandard accommodation. The proposed scheme introduces a 6 storey block along Raydon Street and increases the height of the blocks facing Chester Road and Balmore Street. This will impact existing blocks on north side of Raydon Street who will suffer from a loss of daylight, sunlight and views. The block will impact on the listed library building and will neither preserve or enhance the conservation area. The scheme involves the felling of all trees on the site and the trees that are to be planted to replace these are fewer in number and are of smaller species. Residential density levels are too high at 700hrh as opposed to around 450hrh which would be acceptable in an area with PTAL levels of 3/4. Although the brief was that tenure should be blind there are very attractive larger flats on the upper levels and these are likely to be designated private as they will attract higher prices. No information is given on what will happen to the current tenants. There is a very high un-neighbourly wall between the first property on Balmore Street. There will be additional stress on parking provision.
- 4.8 Friends of Highgate Library – Object to the original scheme and the revised scheme - The proposals would be detrimental to the setting of the Grade II listed library and we therefore oppose them. Local views of and from the Library need to be preserved or enhanced and key to this is that the buildings on the corner of Chester Road and Raydon Street need to be set back at least to the extent of the existing buildings. The building was located on the wide intersection where it could best be seen. The proposal reduces this set back significantly and would obstruct views of and from the library. The applicant claims that these views are not protected, but PPS5 refers to the need to “preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to or better reveal the significance of the asset”, and also states “that developments that materially detract from the asset’s significance may also damage its economic viability, now or in the future, thereby threatening its ongoing conservation”. The largest, tallest and bulkiest buildings encroach the most. The buildings in Chester Road should respect the character of the existing traditional buildings in terms of height and materials used. The existing shops, workshops and community facilities should be retained and enhanced to create a ‘community hub’ with the library. The shops in the corner building should include facilities which secure the new square and ensure it is overlooked.

Adjoining Occupiers

	Original	R1
<i>Number of letters sent</i>	290	315
<i>Total number of responses received</i>	25	0
<i>Number of electronic responses</i>	14	0
<i>Number in support</i>	4	0
<i>Number of objections</i>	21	2

4.9 Objections

First round of consultation - 20 residents at 8, 49 Stoneleigh Terrace; 27, 39c (2 responses), 53, 53b, 70-72 (2 responses) and unknown number Chester Road; 54 Twisden Road; 9b, 11a, 12 (2 responses) Winscombe Street; flat 3, 36 Dartmouth Park Road; lower maisonette, 110 Chetwynd Road (2 responses); 26 Brookfield Park; unknown address on Raydon Street object to the applications. One further objection was sent in on behalf of residents at 11, 25, 27, 41b, 53b Chester Road and 30 Sandstone Place for the following reasons:

Second round of consultation on the revised scheme. Two letters of objection had been received at the time of writing the report. One from an unknown address and one sent on behalf of 11, 17, 25, 27, 41B, 53B, Chester Road and 30 Sandstone Place. One notes that the fifth floor (3 flats) has been removed but maintains their objection as no account has been taken of their other objections regarding the lack of need for the retail provision, density, crime and traffic and parking. The second reiterates points made below.

Conservation Area consent application

- The buildings are of high architectural quality. They were designed by leading architects in Camden's Architect's Department, Bill Forrest and Oscar Palacio, who received a Civic Trust Award in 1983 for their work on the next phase of Highgate New Town. They are currently featured in the exhibition at the Building Centre, 'Cook's Camden', which celebrates the achievements of Camden's architects in the 1970s which were regarded as exceptional internationally. They are sensitively designed, being a modern a modern reinterpretation of the Victorian terrace, respecting the line of the street and the scale of the existing buildings. They are rich and colourful, and are in a unique style which has variously been described as 'High-Tec' and 'Post-Modern'. The use of coloured metalwork is particularly inventive. The interiors are especially fine and are planned with great thought. There are internal windows and fitted cupboards and wardrobes carefully detailed in dark-stained timber, typical of Camden's architects. All the living rooms have a glass wall opening onto a large private terrace and the interiors are flooded with light from two skylights over the stairs and bathroom. They are much loved by the residents who have been very reluctant and sad to leave. Claims are made in the planning application that these blocks were built for a short-term life and that they have come to the end of their useful life. There is not one shred of documentary evidence for this and neither is true. They were in fact prototypes for the whole of Highgate New Town Stage 2. The run-down appearance of the exteriors is entirely due to the fact that neither block has been redecorated since completion in 1977 and 1978. (Not 1972-76 as stated in the application). Buildings of this quality in a Conservation Area should be protected.

- The proposed replacement buildings fail to reserved and enhance the site context and the area as a whole. Policies DP22 and DP25 suggest how demolition should be fully justified before considering a replacement. The proposal is so flawed in many respects that there should be a complete rethink of regeneration of the site. The existing block and terrace respects the urban grain and topography continuing the Chester Road building line, creating good public realm spaces, respecting the scale and setting of the library building and the Whittington Estate and has well designed housing layout with good quality lighting and a good commercial parade.

Planning application

- Height - The locks are too high; they will dominate the listed Highgate Library and destroy its setting. The building line and height of the Victorian terraces in Chester Road should be respected. Existing buildings in Highgate New Town do not exceed four storeys, and the impact of these is lessened by the use of the slope of the land and by using a stepped section (e.g. the existing block in Chester Road is four storeys, but presents a height of three storeys to Raydon Street and the Balmore Street block only presents a facade of two storeys to the street). This development is of five storeys, a storey higher than Stoneleigh Terrace opposite and is sheer, apart from the top storey, creating a canyon-like effect. The proposal would change the atmosphere on Chester Road and obstruct the beautiful views of the nearby trees that residents on the southern side of Chester Road have up until this time enjoyed. A four storey structure as existing would compliment the existing environment.
- Design - The replacement scheme would introduce a discordant group of buildings in the context of the high architectural quality of Highgate Newtown. The design conflicts with the principles of Dartmouth Park Conservation Area's 200 years of architectural history (common thread of rhythm of housing design, urban grain and topography). The design fails to respect the listed building. The proposed buildings look like a factory. All the existing buildings in Highgate New Town are a form of terraced housing. With its bulk, form and layout this design disrupts the line of existing terraced housing. All A1, D1 or other use class spaces should not be left as a 'shell and core' for future leases - It is essential that their shopfronts are designed as an integral part of the overall envelope of a scheme. The vast areas of clay facing brickwork in the scheme are especially unsuitable and unpleasant in the setting of the conservation area.
- Overdevelopment - The proposed development is a massive overdevelopment of the site, in conflict with the socially sensitive provision required for the Highgate Newtown neighbourhood. LDF policy CS6 states for the Chester/Balmore redevelopment that there will be "small increase in the number of homes (there are 25 existing homes)". A total of 57 units are shown in the proposed scheme. The accommodation is more than double the present numbers with 197 bed spaces as opposed to 76 and out of these the increase in social housing is a mere 12 additional bed spaces. Overpopulation will raise the level of crime/disturbances and decrease the level of community.
- Retail – Two conflicting views have been given:
 - The proposed loss of retailing, reduced to a minimum few A1 units and one D1 unit is not acceptable showing a complete lack of understanding of the social cohesion such hubs provide and the absence of good social place making. The sub communities within the boundary of the CA have four established distinct neighbourhood parades. It beggars belief that a

reference is made that the community could use the Swains Lane parade as an alternative. The failure of existing shops is because they have been left unmaintained and badly managed by the Council. The planned development will completely change the character of the area, from one of a predominantly public area to a block of flats with a small amount of retail space tucked under one corner.

- A new shop that will get taken over by a supermarket will be hideous. We do not need a large supermarket in this location or any other retail operators. There are sufficient local facilities nearby with 5 supermarkets and small foodstores and newsagents nearby. Retail has proved to be not viable in this location.
- Suggestions that the launderette can be permanently relocated away from the site are most ill conceived.
- Crime – The existing parade has been neglected, solid shutters have been installed and the entire parade has fallen into a downward social and economic spiral of design and neglected appearance which has reduced footfall by the general public. By proposing a high density housing scheme with little retailing this will only introduce further conflict. The proposal for gating a communal area would be highly socially divisive and will actively prevent inclusiveness between residents and the wider community. Youths will be encouraged to hang around the supermarket in an anti social way. The proposed new building will be far too expensive to clean and maintain. Great stretches of bare brickwork are liable to graffiti which harms the conservation area. The existing alleyway is a policy Anti social behaviour priority zone and the proposed will exacerbate this by retaining and enlarging the alleyway.
- Open space - The site and area needs added open space as part of the public realm. Note LDF deficiency statements/ map and Highgate Cemetery is not public open space. The home zone is a silly token. The plan talks of a public 'square' and this is a mere indentation from the street. In fact, the internal garden, instead of being an asset to the community as a public space, is to be gated with three secure entrances only usable by the residents of the new blocks.
- Disabled parking - The proposed route from the disabled bays in the basement, via a lift to ground level, through the gardens to Raydon Street and then into one of two entrances to that building, again by lift to the upper floors to be virtually impossible. This 100m trek passes through at least 6 sets of doors and does not comply with the CPG. Blue badge holders cannot walk more than 50m. Dedicated disabled bays should be provided on the street as close as possible to pedestrian entrances and passenger lifts. There is too little detail and clarity in the plans and drawings to be able to assess all the implications for wheelchair users, in particular the changes in levels in the Chester Road building and footway. This should not be left to conditions to resolve.
- Amenity - The development will permanently block sunlight, daylight and views from surrounding houses/flats
- There is far too much single person accommodation proposed, where family accommodation is needed.
- Traffic - The roads cannot handle the extra delivery trucks to the supermarket. Since no parking provision is being made for the new residents they will all be parking in the surrounding streets which are already at capacity. There is no parking provision for people using the supermarket either. If allowed it will change the whole character of the community feel, will drastically increase noise nuisance,

traffic and parking issues and reduce the overall quality of life.

- Construction - When the buildings are demolished there will be a flurry of mice, cockroaches and other creatures to surrounding houses. The development will ruin another English summer for many families.
- There are a number of factual errors throughout the submitted reports (e.g. the area is in a 20mph zone etc). It is also professional not to annotate the flat size designations on the plans. The presentation Elevational drawings are highly misleading. The proposed replacement scheme appears entirely based on policies in the UDP many of which have been revised in the LDF. .
- This is a permanent waste of tax payers' money when there are so many empty buildings in Camden. Only £1.2 million is coming from the Government, this will be less than 10% of the cost of the development which will be Design and Build, so that the architects will have no direct control over the build. Given the fiasco experienced on the Whittington Estate Capital Works project between 2005 and 2008 and the financial losses incurred by the council, what confidence can anyone have in Camden's ability to oversee this large construction project? How many projects have stayed within budget over the last 20 years
- Consultation - The Council has failed to properly inform residents in the area about the proposed large scale building work. An anonymous person appears to have leafleted local residents. The deadline of 25th November must be extended. You have not told the people who may be affected properly and that is totally unfair. The consultation workshops (some cancelled without notice) were a mockery and generally of poor quality. The selection of architects appears not based on the preferred scheme (the architects of the preferred scheme have just won best housing architect of the year award, while the Council's selected practice won Best Educational building architect of the year award - they are a poor choice for housing design on this site).

4.10 Support

4 Residents (64 Stoneleigh Terrace; 11a and 15b Balmore Street and 5b Bertram Street) support the application for the following reasons:

- The proposed development would enhance the appearance of the conservation area and would be a positive contribution to the local area, especially as the existing building appears to be in a poor condition/ is an eyesore and does not make the most of the prominent corner site.
- The new building would be more environmentally efficient than the existing building.
- Glad that a convenience retail outlet has been retained. A good pleasant supermarket (Waitrose, M&S) would be a great delight.
- The housing element will complement and reinforce the existing character of the neighbourhood.
- Attended some of the consultation events and the proposed design complements the existing mixture of architectural styles.
- Disagree with comments made by some residents that access to the laundrette will be a disaster because every household now owns a washing machine.

5. **POLICIES**

5.1 **LDF Core Strategy and Development Policies**

CS1 – Distribution of growth

CS5 – Managing the impact of growth and development
 CS6 – Providing quality homes
 CS7 – Promoting Camden’s centres and shops
 CS10 – Supporting community facilities and services
 CS11 – Promoting sustainable and efficient travel
 CS13 – Tackling climate change through promoting higher environmental standards
 CS14 – Promoting high quality places and conserving our heritage
 CS15 – Protecting & improving our parks & open spaces & encouraging biodiversity
 CS16 – Making Camden a safer place
 CS18 – Dealing with our waste and encouraging recycling
 CS19 – Delivering and monitoring the Core Strategy
 DP1 – Mixed use development
 DP2 – Making full use of Camden's capacity for housing
 DP3 – Contributions to the supply of affordable housing
 DP4 – Minimising the loss of affordable housing
 DP5 – Homes of different sizes
 DP6 – Lifetime homes and wheelchair homes
 DP10 – Helping and promoting small and independent shops
 DP15 – Community and leisure uses
 DP16 – The transport implications of development
 DP17 – Walking, cycling and public transport
 DP18 – Parking standards and limiting the availability of car parking
 DP19 – Managing the impact of parking
 DP21 – Development connecting to the highway network
 DP22 – Promoting sustainable design and construction
 DP23 – Water
 DP24 – Securing high quality design
 DP25 – Conserving Camden's heritage
 DP26 – Managing the impact of development on occupiers and neighbours
 DP27 – Basements and lightwells
 DP28 – Noise and vibration
 DP29 – Improving access
 DP30 – Shopfronts
 DP31 – Provision of, & improvements to, open space & outdoor sport & recreation facilities
 DP32 – Air quality and Camden’s clear zone

5.2 **Supplementary Planning Guidance**

Camden Planning Guidance 2006

Dartmouth Park Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Statement 2009

6. **ASSESSMENT**

6.1 The principal consideration material to the determination of this application are summarised as follows:

- Demolition and principle of redevelopment
- Density
- Design
- Standard of residential accommodation
- Affordable housing
- Retail provision

- Community use
- Amenity
- Transport
- Energy and resources
- Open space/biodiversity/trees

Demolition and principle of redevelopment

- 6.2 The Dartmouth Park Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy was adopted in January 2009. It states that the existing buildings make a neutral contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area. The view westward along Chester Road to Highgate Ridge is listed as being of note. It also states that the conservation area has a variety and complexity that charts the history of domestic architecture from the late 18th century to the present day. Additionally it states: "Another essential component of the area is the contribution of social housing that includes the Brookfield Estate from the 1920s, the York Rise Estate (1930s), the Highgate Road flats (1950s and '60s) and the Whittington Estate of the 1970s."
- 6.3 The existing buildings were built as part of Highgate New Town development in the 1970s by Camden Council which consisted of 2 phases. Phase 1 was the Whittington Estate dating from 1972-79 and Phase 2 was broken into 3 stages, A (Chester Road) 1976-77, B (Baltimore Street) 1977-78 and C (Raydon Street and Dartmouth Park Hill) 1978-81. Stages 2A and 2B being the application site itself. All are examples of social housing built at a time when Camden Council was particularly active in such works. Numerous examples of such schemes can be found throughout the borough, many of which have been recognised for their architectural and historic interest and have been listed (e.g. Alexandra Road Estate and Dunboyne Road Estate).
- 6.4 The Whittington Estate was considered for listing in 2006 it was not recommended by English Heritage as it was not considered of high enough architectural interest. The blocks on the Chester Baltimore site from Phase 2A and B were not even considered for listing. Whilst both the Whittington Estate and stage 2C are noted as making a positive contribution to the Conservation Area the two buildings proposed to be demolished were only considered to have a neutral impact. Whilst this does not automatically assume that the council would welcome the demolition of the buildings (in the same way that building which have a negative impact) it does imply that the building could be improved or replaced with a high quality design.
- 6.5 Both of the buildings which are proposed to be demolished were designed by William Forrest and Oscar Palacio of Camden's Architect's Department and replaced earlier Victorian terrace houses. They are constructed in a pre fabricated manner from a concrete frame and clad externally with asbestos panels. The assessment as a neutral building underwent scrutiny when the conservation area appraisal was drafted and no comments were received during the consultation stage regarding the quality of the buildings.
- 6.6 The statements in the conservation area appraisal that the buildings were "...designed for a limited life" (paragraph 7.68) and "...designed as short life

accommodation” are not correct. However it is true to say that the buildings have not weathered well and are showing signs of deterioration. The shop units facing into Chester Road are poor quality, mostly featuring unsympathetic roller shutters, signage and awnings. The central courtyard is of poor quality and is mainly used for parking and servicing.

- 6.7 It is acknowledged that the two buildings are of some architectural interest in terms of being an example of a post war municipal housing scheme. However they are not of the same quality as the Whittington Estate which was a more bold and striking design with a rhythmic, tiered elevations and a well detailed concrete structure. The Whittington Estate is comparable with similar development such as the Brunswick Centre and Alexandra Road (both listed) which achieved high density development without the need for a high rise approach (favoured by many other local authorities). In contrast the two buildings on the application site are much more modest in appearance with a far less degree of refinement and detail, the façade consisting of asbestos cladding panels and concrete.
- 6.8 HE6.1 of PPS5 states that the level of detail needed to provide a description of the significance of the heritage asset affected (in this case the demolition of the building) should be proportionate to the importance of the heritage asset. The two buildings make a neutral contribution to the conservation area and therefore its loss can clearly not be considered as substantial harm, therefore HE9.2 does not apply. Given the condition of the building and its limited contribution to the conservation area there is no objection in principle to its demolition subject to a high quality replacement building being proposed which preserves or enhances Dartmouth Park Conservation Area.

Density

- 6.9 The site is bounded by Chester Road, Balmore Street and Raydon Street and has a Public Transport Accessibility Level (PTAL) of 3 (moderate) and a proposed density of 617 habitable rooms per hectare (as stated within the application documents, the officer calculation is 534 HRH). Policy 3A.3 of the London Plan seeks to maximise the potential of sites by *‘ensuring that development proposals achieve the maximum intensity of use compatible with local context, design principles and with public transport capacity’*. The London Density Matrix indicates appropriate densities within different PTAL categories and for a site with a PTAL of 3 in an urban context, densities of between 200-450 HRH are considered acceptable. Whilst the proposed density is higher than recommended in the London Plan it should be noted that the density matrix is a useful starting point to gauge the level of development expected on a site and should be considered as part of the overall assessment of the development along with design, building height, provision of amenity space, flat sizes etc. These are all discussed in further detail below.

Design

- 6.10 The conservation area is divided into a number of sub areas which reflect phases of development in the area. The application site lies within sub area 5 (Highgate New Town) which has an interesting mix of late nineteenth century terrace houses and 20th century developments (such as the Whittington Estate and the 1980s houses of Highgate New Town Phase 3). Immediately to the west lies sub area 6

(Brookfield Estate) which was designed to look like a garden suburb in the 1930s. This is different in character with cottages and mansions blocks interspersed amongst greenery and trees.

- 6.11 Given this context, with three differing types of building in close proximity there is no prevailing style or design which lends an obvious cue for the Chester Balmore site to follow. Provided that it is respectful to its neighbours in terms of height, bulk, massing, materials and overall character there is no reason why a distinctive, modern design should not be successful on this location.
- 6.12 *Overall Plan Form* - The replacement building has been arranged in a perimeter block with frontages onto Balmore Street, Chester Road and Raydon Street. This layout offers the benefit of continuing the built frontages of both Chester Road and Balmore Street but also encloses and addresses Raydon Street, introducing activity and natural surveillance to what is currently a blank frontage.
- 6.13 The buildings are arranged around a central communal area which will be used primarily for accessing some of the properties. This space will be well overlooked and a high level of natural surveillance provided. Although many of the units are accessed through this space the buildings are successful in not appearing introverted. The ground floor units fronting onto Chester Road and Balmore Street are all accessed from the street and the street facades have been designed so as not to “turn their back” to the street.
- 6.14 The overall form and scale is broken into three discernable blocks, this plays an important role in providing relief in the built form and reducing the perception of bulk. In addition legible entrances to the internal private amenity space area and residential entrances are provided. Between the Chester Block and Raydon Block there is a new public square and the existing public right of way is maintained (and widened), which will maintain permeability and allow views into the internal private amenity space.
- 6.15 *Overall Height and Massing* - This has been carefully arranged to address the prevailing scale of the adjoining area. The buildings have been carefully massed so that they respect to the topography of the site. For instance the Chester Block is lower than the Balmore Block (AOD) which reflects the relative street levels of the adjoining streets. Both the Chester and Balmore blocks have been carefully massed and arranged to address their relationship with the adjoining terrace houses, streets and open spaces. The taller Raydon block is seen more contextually with the scale of Stoneleigh Terrace. By respecting to the topography of the site it creates a much more interesting form which will vary depending on the viewing point.
- 6.16 *Basement* - Original plans for a basement to provide car parking have been scaled back considerably as this will now be provided on street. Now there is only a limited excavation proposed which will accommodate cycle storage and a small amount of accommodation. The existing site already digs into the natural slope between Chester Road and Balmore Street so although a small amount of excavation is proposed it will not have a significantly greater impact than the existing. This will also be addressed in the sections below.

- 6.17 *Materials* - The predominant material in the conservation area is brick, both yellow stock bricks on the earlier buildings and red brick in the Brookfield Estate. There are a number of other buildings where the alternative materials have been successfully used (e.g. concrete in Stoneleigh Terrace).
- 6.18 The main material proposed for the whole site is clay facing brickwork. Given the great variety of materials in the buildings surrounding the site it is entirely reasonable to not attempt to exactly match an existing material. The site is of such a scale that it should be distinctive addition which contributes to the pattern of residential development of over 200 years whilst picking up on the local vernacular. Brickwork will provide a link with the surrounding area and also allows the façade to have a texture and grain in keeping with its surroundings.
- 6.19 “Attic” storeys and sections of the façade will be clad in zinc which will contrast with the brick. Combined with this approach will be areas of glazing which break up the mass of the building and articulate the form. The shopfronts are shown are entirely glazed frontages, however it is understood that this is entirely indicative. The design of these can be dealt with by condition.
- 6.20 *Chester Block* - This building consists of a four storey block of flats with a single retail unit at the western end. It has been carefully designed to respect the neighbouring terrace and the views westward along Chester Road. At the eastern end of the block the building is the same depth (and is set back from the edge of the pavement the same distance) as the adjoining terrace houses which creates the impression of a slender form. However the floor plan of the block gets deeper at the western end and comes closer to the pavement edge. Even so it is still set back from the pavement edge and the curve in Chester Road at this point prevents this from appearing inconsistent.
- 6.21 Although the floor level is consistent throughout the block the upward slope of the hill is successfully addressed through the detailing of the parapet and third floor level. At the eastern end the parapet line of the building roughly lines through with the eaves line of the of the terrace houses on Chester Road (it is slightly higher but is appropriate as the road starts to slope upwards at this point). The fourth floor is treated as a set back, subservient clad roof structure. The illusion of the building stepping up the hill is further carefully created through the transition of the balustrade/parapet (from glass to brickwork) and the fourth floor (from a set back clad structure to solid brickwork).
- 6.22 The front façade continues the vertical rhythm of the street and creates the impression of town houses through the planes of the front elevation and vertical proportions and arrangement of the windows. This is considered to sit comfortably within the wider setting. In terms of detailing the façade is relatively plain but subtle interest is added through the different angles of the front plane and the depth of the window reveals which will give a sense of depth and shadow.
- 6.23 *Raydon Block* - This four storey block sits at the corner of Chester Road and Raydon Road. This is considered a significant enhancement over the existing arrangement where this stretch of Raydon Road is not particularly inviting as there

is no interface at street level on Stoneleigh Terrace and the existing buildings on site present blank gable walls to the street.

- 6.24 Again the height of the block is four storeys which is considered acceptable. This balances well with the overall height of the Stoneleigh Terrace and encloses and addresses this section of Raydon Street. It is noted that initially a proposed fifth floor was included on this block but after concerns relating the excessive height and blocking of the view to Highgate Ridge this has been removed, which is considered a significant improvement. In views westward along Chester Road (identified in the conservation area statement as being important this block would just be seen rising slightly above the Chester Block. This is considered an entirely acceptable relationship and reinforces the topography of the site.
- 6.25 Activity and interaction is provided at street level through the introduction of retail units which is welcomed. The upper levels are expressed by a strong brickwork frame. Sections of windows are deeply recessed into the façade which breaks up the expanse of brick and creates a sense of depth and shadow. In more acute views this creates the perception of a finer brick frame with the large recessed section hidden which avoids a monotonous façade.
- 6.26 An important view is the corner of the building when viewed from the west on Chester Road. Presently as the existing building does not wrap round the corner, but presents a blank, flank elevation which creates quite stark and abrupt focal point. The Site Allocation document calls for the need for the site to “positively address” this corner. This part of the scheme has been through a number of revisions and the current proposal is considered to be acceptable. An active frontage is provided to all around the corner at ground floor level through the provision of the retail unit. The upper floors are given vertical emphasis and more slender emphasis and the elements are broken up into manageable components of a more human scale. The splayed corner softens the impact of the building well.
- 6.27 Balmore Block - The main bulk of this building faces onto Balmore Street and the playground opposite. This consists of a simple four storey building constructed in a simple block like form. As the block is partly seen in the context of Stoneleigh Terrace and faces onto a larger area of open space it does not need the level of modulation as the other blocks to try and mitigate the impact of their height and bulk (except where it abuts the terrace houses of Balmore Street). The facade is largely rhythmic with a vertical emphasis given in the fenestration arrangement which reflects the overall pattern of development in the area. In order to ensure design quality conditions will be attached to ensure a suitable appearance.
- 6.28 The relationship with the terrace houses on Balmore Street has been dealt with successfully. Here the transition in height goes from 2.5 storeys for the adjacent terrace houses to 4 storeys of the proposed development. It is noted that the public right of way will create a significant break between the two (more than the width of one of the terrace houses) and the playground opposite separate the site off from the rest of Balmore Street. Additionally the mass of the eastern end of the Balmore Block is broken up through careful modulation. The lower section is designed so that the parapet line follows through to the eaves line of the adjacent terrace houses. The upper levels are slightly splayed and given a different façade

treatment which creates a subservient appearance and avoids presenting an overbearing, sheer flank wall to the terrace houses. This has successfully addressed the transition in scale between the two buildings. Additionally the massing of the eastern end of the Balmore Block successfully creates the impression of a slimmer building in view along Balmore Street.

- 6.29 *Setting of Library* - Given the size of development on the site the setting of the listed Highgate Branch Library needs to be considered. It is clear that the relationship of the site and the library will be changed. Bulk and height will be brought closer to the pavement edge and will be seen in conjunction with many views of the library. It should be noted that the library is already flanked by significantly taller buildings including the mansion blocks on Croftdown Road, Stoneleigh Terrace and the Brookfield Primary School. In this context, and given the substantial visual break between the library and the proposed development, it is not considered that the extra height and bulk will harm the setting of the listed building.
- 6.30 Views are afforded of the front of the library when travelling along Raydon Street. However these views are only possible at the western end of the street. The library is an important building within the conservation area and it should still serve as a focal point and marker in the locality. The line of the new development will reduce views of the library from Raydon Street but only when the viewer is further to the east. When closer to the Chester Road, Raydon Street junction the library will be still be clearly visible and clearly legible as a marker in the surrounding area. It is not considered that the proposed Chester Balmore development will significantly impinge on the setting of the listed library.
- 6.31 In conclusion the proposed development at Chester Balmore is considered to be a high quality, contemporary design which sits comfortably in its context and enhances the character and appearance of Dartmouth Park Conservation Area. This conservation area is formed from a number of a high quality residential developments and this scheme merely continues this evolution at the expense of a building which is of "neutral" interest to the conservation area.
- 6.32 Although the intensity of use on the site is increased this has been achieved with a building which has been carefully designed to respect its surroundings (including the adjacent listed library), therefore it is recommended that the applications for conservation area consent and planning permission are granted.

Standard of residential accommodation

- 6.33 Most of the proposed residential units meet the minimum space standards for residential units outlined in Camden Planning Guidance (2006). Fourteen of the 2 bedroom (4 person) units are slightly undersize for a 4 person unit at 72sqm (as opposed to 75sqm). All of the bedrooms meet the Council's expectation of 11m² for a first or double bedroom and 6.5m² for single bedrooms. The proposed units will all receive adequate natural light and ventilation.
- 6.34 Camden Planning Guidance states that outdoor amenity space can be provided in the form of private garden space, balconies, terraces, roof gardens or communal amenity space. Where practical all new dwellings should have access to some

private outdoor amenity space. Minimum areas for this amenity space are not given, but the space should have level access and receive adequate daylight. The development provides balcony and terrace space for most units, with those at basement/ground floor having private courtyards. The central courtyard area is also provided as a communal garden area for the residents of this development only and provides approx 400sqm as hard and soft landscaping.

- 6.35 Policy DP6 requires all new dwellings be designed to meet Lifetime Homes standards. The applicant has submitted a Lifetime Homes statement that shows the criteria have been met. The drawings do not however, clearly identify the space within the maisonettes for through floor lifts and stair lifts, or details of any necessary ramps to the approach to individual dwellings. A condition is therefore recommended requiring further information to be submitted on these points and requiring all lifetime homes features and facilities to be provided on site.
- 6.36 Policy DP6 also requires 10% of the units to be fully wheelchair accessible and of this 10% social rented housing to be fully fitted out as well. Six wheelchair units are proposed and of these the three social rented units are proposed to be fully fitted out. The wheelchair units are all proposed to be 2 bedroom units, and ideally they should be provided across all unit sizes. Full dimensional plans have not been provided to show that the units meet the minimum space standards, a condition is therefore recommended requiring the wheelchair units to be provided and for the dimensional plans to be submitted.
- 6.37 A noise impact assessment has been submitted showing that the site is within PPG24 noise exposure category B. Within this category noise should be taken into account when determining planning applications and, where appropriate, conditions imposed to ensure an adequate level of protection against noise. The applicant is therefore proposing appropriate sound insulation to the building facades.
- 6.38 Policy DP5 states that residential development should provide an appropriate mix of unit sizes including large and small units and highlights the different dwelling size priorities for social rented, intermediate and market housing. There is a large proportion of 2 bed social rented (11 units) and 1 bed intermediate units (4 units) and a low proportion of 3 and 4 bed social rented units (8 and 1 respectively as opposed to 11 that would be expected in total) and no 2, 3 and 4 bed intermediate units which is not in compliance with the dwelling size priorities table. However there are a large proportion of existing social rented studio and 2 bed social rented units to be re-provided on site. The applicant has provided information in terms of affordability of units and this shows that in this high residential value location larger intermediate units become too expensive. With regard to the family size social rented units the applicant has provided a financial viability assessment and it is not financially viable to provide further family sized units It is therefore considered that an appropriate mix of units are provided.

Affordable housing:

- 6.39 Policy CS6 states that the Council will aim to make full use of Camden's capacity for housing by, among other things, minimising the net loss of affordable housing and having affordable housing targets. Paragraph 6.24 goes on to state that the Chester Balmore regeneration is expected to involve redevelopment and a small

increase in the number of homes. Policy DP3 requires all residential developments that would provide additional residential floorspace of 1,000sqm (gross) to make a contribution to the supply of affordable housing. Policy DP4 states that the Council will resist development that would involve a net loss of affordable housing floorspace, including any affordable housing that takes the form of bedsits or other housing with shared facilities. Paragraph DP4 goes on to state in paragraphs 4.2 and 4.4 that it is likely that the Council's investment in Decent Homes and its estate regeneration programme will involve redevelopment on some housing estates and in each case the affordable housing floorspace will be expected to be re-provided in full. It is acknowledged that this may involve the redistribution of occupiers and affordable housing floorspace from one part of an estate to another. Paragraph 4.5 states that there is a mismatch between the sizes of affordable housing most needed in Camden and the sizes available in the existing stock, therefore Policy DP4 protects floorspace rather than individual homes.

- 6.40 All of the existing Council tenants have been offered the option to return to the completed development in a unit to meet their housing needs. There is therefore a requirement to re-house some residents from the existing blocks within the re-provision of the existing affordable housing floorspace (12 x 2bed units and 8 x studio units or 1152sqm). In line with the sliding scale approach in policy DP3, on the basis of additional floorspace 33% is required to be affordable housing and on the basis of additional unit numbers 27% is required to be affordable. The applicant has proposed 37% affordable housing based on floorspace and 21% based on unit number (on top of the re-provision of the existing affordable housing). The requirements of policies DP3 and DP4 are therefore met.

Retail provision

- 6.41 This site is a designated Neighbourhood Centre. Policy CS7 and the Site Allocations Document expect re-provision of the existing retail floorspace on the site. Policy CS7 states that the Council will seek to retain a strong element of convenience shopping within neighbourhood centres and ensure that any development in them does not harm the function, character or success of that centre.
- 6.42 The applicant has submitted a Retail Impact Assessment which assesses the current occupation and use, rent levels, other commercial space nearby, demand for retail space in this location and makes recommendations for the amount of retail provision in the new development. The report states that there are high levels of vacancy within the existing retail space despite the reasonable to low rents in the parade. There are fourteen existing units (1035sqm) in the following uses:
- Five are vacant (308sqm),
 - Two are in retail use as one combined unit (210sqm)
 - One is in A5 takeaway use (67sqm)
 - Three are in D1 use (FRESH gym and juice bar, dentist, homeopathic health clinic) (172sqm)
 - Three are in other uses (picture framer, dress design, launderette) (277sqm)
- 6.43 The proposal is to provide 482sqm of retail floorspace in two units; one of 49sqm on the ground floor of the Chester Road block and one of 433sqm at basement and ground floor levels in the Raydon Street Block. Another separate unit of 40sqm is

provided in the Raydon Street block for a D1 dentist use. Given the fact that there are high levels of vacancy, the existing retail floorspace is of relatively poor quality and the proposal is to re-provide approximately 70% of the current floorspace within the neighbourhood centre it is considered that the proposed retail and D1 floorspace is acceptable as it is of a higher quality that is more likely to attract potential A1 occupiers.

Community use

- 6.44 There are currently two community uses on the site; one dentist and the FRESH gym and juice bar. Accommodation for the dentist use is to be re-provided on site in a 40sqm ground floor unit fronting Raydon Street, within the Balmore Block. Whilst the existing dentist unit is 51sqm, it is considered that the slightly smaller unit is acceptable.
- 6.45 The FRESH gym and juice bar is a fully equipped gym and juice bar that also offers information and advice on careers training and education and works with young people between 13 and 19 years old (up to 25 for people with learning difficulties). This space is to be re-provided in the nearby Highgate Newtown Community Centre on Bertram Street and have submitted a planning application to extend the community centre to allow for this. A condition is recommended that requires suitable accommodation to be provided for the FRESH gym and juice bar prior to implementation of the development. The condition allows for the size, location, design and fit out of this new accommodation to be agreed with Camden Youth and Connexions Service and with Highgate Newtown Community Association. It also requires planning permission to be in place and funding to be secured for the relocation. The new accommodation will need to be provided before occupation of the Chester Balmore development takes place, and the condition requires temporary accommodation to be provided if there is a time difference between demolition works taking place and the new permanent accommodation being available

Amenity

- 6.46 A daylight/sunlight assessment has been provided to analyse the impact on neighbouring residential properties and it shows that the scheme would not detrimentally affect daylight and sunlight reaching habitable rooms in accordance with BRE recommendations.
- 6.47 In terms of privacy, the Chester block is at least 18.5m away from existing residential units on the other side of the road on Chester Road, the Raydon Street block and part of the Balmore block is at least 13.2m away from existing units on the other side of the road on Raydon Street (Stoneleigh Terrace). Given the fact that the new buildings are on the opposite side of the street to the existing buildings and that the windows on the Raydon Street block have been angled away from Stoneleigh Terrace it is considered that there will not be any unacceptable levels of overlooking.
- 6.48 Basement plant rooms, a boiler room, a switch room and a ground floor electricity sub station are proposed. The exact plant specifications are unknown at this stage. A Noise Impact Assessment has been provided and this states that the proposed plant will be designed to meet the Council's noise standards of 5dBA below

background levels. A condition will be imposed requiring all plant to comply with the Council noise standards.

Transport

- 6.49 The site is bounded by Chester Road, Balmore Street and Raydon Street and has a Public Transport Accessibility Level (PTAL) of 3 (moderate). There is vehicle access to the site and 7 existing off street car parking spaces.
- 6.50 It is proposed to allocate two on street bays for car clubs and 2 for disabled parking. Financial contributions to provide these spaces are to be secured by condition. A new on street loading bay is proposed along Raydon Street to serve the relocated retail units. This appears acceptable in principle subject to detailed design. A parking occupancy survey was undertaken in the area to ascertain if there is room to reallocate these on street bays. Although the parking changes will be subject to further consultation and approvals the results of the survey indicate that there is space for the servicing bay, car club spaces and disabled spaces without impacting on existing parking provision.
- 6.51 The applicant has submitted a Transport Assessment and this is considered acceptable. A draft Travel Plan has been submitted and this will be secured with a condition. The development will be car-free and this will also be secured with a condition.
- 6.52 Given the mix of uses on site, including a small supermarket in the proposed retail unit, an SMP is required to ensure that the servicing arrangements are acceptable. The proposed loading bay will be subject to consultation and approval of the proposed parking changes. A draft CMP has been provided with the application. The CMP will need to be secured via condition and agreed prior to starting demolition works on site.
- 6.53 To comply with policy DP17, 68 cycle parking spaces are required (including 2 spaces for the A1 and D1 uses) and these are shown as being located in an enclosed storage area at basement level fronting Chester Road. Because of the changes in levels the basement level at this point is at pavement level and the cycle storage can therefore be accessed directly from Chester Road. There is also an internal access point to the rear from the lift and stair core in the Balmore Street block. The cycle parking provided is therefore considered acceptable.
- 6.54 In order to mitigate the impact of the increase in trips this development will generate, and to tie the development into the surrounding urban environment, a financial contribution is required to carry out various highway works surrounding the site, including repaving the footways adjacent to the site and any redundant vehicle crossovers; construction of the proposed loading bay; consultation and changes to the TMO and parking arrangements; and any other public realm improvements or improvements to safety of the highway.
- 6.55 The site has a public transport accessibility level of 6b (excellent) and is within a controlled parking zone. The proposed additional five units are therefore recommended to be car-free to ensure compliance with policies T8 and T9 of the UDP. This would need to be secured by Section 106 Agreement.

Energy and resources

- 6.56 The overall approach to energy should be in line with the Mayor's Energy Hierarchy (i) using less energy; ii) supplying energy efficiently; iii) using renewable energy. In line with the first element of the hierarchy and with LDF and CPG requirements, the applicant has submitted a Code for Sustainable Homes pre-assessment and this indicates that the minimum level 4 score can be achieved, as can the minimum 60% of the credits available in the Energy and Water sections and 40% in the Materials section. This will be subject to a condition to secure the submission of a full assessment and post-construction review in order to ensure that these initial scores are carried through into the construction phase.
- 6.57 The applicant has also submitted a BREEAM retail pre assessment and this indicates that a minimum 'very good' rating can be achieved. Because the retail units are being built to shell and core level only the use of a green lease is proposed between the applicant and the future tenants to demonstrate compliance with BREEAM at design and post construction stages. This will be subject to a condition to secure the submission of a full assessment and post construction review in order to ensure that the initial rating is carried through into the construction phase.
- 6.58 With regard to the third element of the hierarchy there is a requirement for a 20% reduction in CO₂ through the use of on-site renewable technologies. The applicant proposes the use of renewable energy in order to provide 11.5% of the predicted energy requirements. Specifically they propose the use of roof top PV cells to achieve a 23.1% reduction in CO₂. It is recommended that the recommendations of the energy report are secured through a condition.
- 6.59 With regard to the second element of the hierarchy the buildings have been developed on Passivhaus principles which include achieving high levels of thermal performance, exceptional air tightness of the building envelope and significantly reduced heating demands. Due to the schemes complexity and size it may not be possible to ultimately achieve Passivhaus certification (of the few developments in the UK to achieve this, most have been single family dwellinghouses). As the development achieves the planning policy requirements in terms of Code for Sustainable Homes, BREEAM and renewable energy a condition is not recommended regarding the achievement of Passivhaus certification, although this aim is welcomed.

Open space/biodiversity/trees

- 6.60 Policy CS15 seeks to ensure that new development conserves and enhances wildlife habitats by greening the environment. Green roofs are proposed on the Chester Road Block and the Balmore Street Block and a brown roof is proposed on the Raydon Street Block. Green walls are also proposed in the form of pre planted ivy panels. The applicants have not specified what form the green and brown roofs will take. Sedum blankets on this site are not considered sufficient to provide the level of biodiversity required. Green/brown roofs should provide a high level of biodiversity and should have a substrate depth of at least 100mm into which vegetation can be planted or meadows sown. This will also aid in the sustainable drainage of the site. The applicants have agreed to such a design approach,

subject to structural and other constraints, and details should be reserved by condition. It is noted that any potential increase in roof height to accommodate a more biodiverse green roof here would be minimal and would not affect the overall bulk and appearance of the block or scheme.

- 6.61 The applicant have submitted an ecological report which recommends that various measures are taken to increase biodiversity on the site including installing bird and bat boxes on the buildings or trees. A condition is recommended to ensure compliance with this ecological report in order to secure these measures. An informative is also recommended regarding lighting details and their impact on bats.
- 6.62 The fourteen trees on site are protected by virtue of being in a conservation area. Because of the changes in levels on the site seven of these trees are either located at basement level or on sloping embankments. The applicant has submitted an arboricultural report and this does not identify any trees that are of category A High Quality, four trees are of category B Moderate Quality and the rest are low quality. The landscape drawings indicate six new street trees to Raydon Street and Chester Road and spaces for approximately twenty seven trees or shrubs. Two of the street trees are located within the redline and four are located just outside or on the redline. The proposed new street trees and associated trees or shrubs are considered acceptable to offset any concerns regarding the loss of all the existing trees. Conditions are recommended regarding the submission of landscaping details in order to ensure that sufficient tree planting is included. A condition is also proposed regarding repaving and highway works around the site and this specifically refers to street trees in case they need to be provided outside of the redline plan.
- 6.63 The site is within an area identified in policy CS15 as being deficient in public open space (greater than 280m from public open space). Policy DP31 requires the provision of 9 sq m of open space per person for residential developments providing 5 or more additional dwellings and this will initially be expected to be provided on site. The CPG states that the Council will take into account any contribution made by private amenity space, private open space and other open land which may in part reduce the use of public open space in the area. Account will also be taken of the previous use of the site. The CPG identifies types of open space that can be provided on site and this includes Amenity Open Space (including civic spaces such as piazzas), formal recreation areas, children's play spaces, allotments and community gardens.
- 6.64 Taking into account the existing number of units on site there is a requirement for 504sqm of open space to be provided on site for the additional units. The applicant is proposing a new public square adjacent to the retail units on Chester Road of approximately 80sqm, a widened public right of way between Chester Road and Balmore Street of approximately 165sqm. Taken along with the potential highway/public realm improvements that will be secured by a condition which could create generous pavement widths to the corner of Raydon Street and Chester Road, and a home zone to Balmore Street, it is considered that sufficient public open space can be provided on the site in the form of amenity open space.

Other issues

- 6.65 Usually developments that include the provision of 5 or more residential units a contribution is sought towards the provision of education infrastructure in accordance with Policy CS19 and Section 34 of Camden Planning Guidance. The CPG allows for exceptions to be made and schemes specifically aimed at providing affordable housing will not incur the normal requirements for education contributions. It is acknowledged that this development does include a number of private units, but given that the main aim of the development is to re-provide and improve the existing affordable housing units it is considered appropriate to not seek this contribution in this instance.
- 6.66 Adequate space is provided for refuse and recycling storage in either in individual private garden areas for the maisonettes on Chester Road, dedicated rooms for the residential units on Balmore Street and Raydon Road and a dedicated room for the retail units on Raydon Road.
- 6.67 The site is not an archaeological priority area so it is not anticipated that there will be any remains here.
- 6.68 The scheme has been designed to prevent and minimise crime opportunities and has applied the basic standards for Secured by Design; in particular gates and railings are proposed at the access points into the private inner courtyard which provides private amenity space and entrances to some units to prevent unauthorised access. The Crime Prevention officer has made recommendations for the basic design approach and a condition is proposed to ensure that design measures are implemented.

7. CONCLUSION

- 7.1 The demolition of these buildings in a conservation area is considered acceptable. The proposed buildings are considered to be of an acceptable height, bulk and design and provide a suitable mix of residential units of different sizes, affordable housing and retail floorspace. The development includes provision for the relocation of the existing D1 use (the fresh gym and juice bar) and provides space on site for a D1 dentist use. There is not considered to be a detrimental impact on the nearby listed building or the character and appearance of the Dartmouth Park Conservation Area. The proposed buildings would not have a negative effect on the residential amenity of existing neighbours. Subject to the recommended planning conditions the proposal is considered to be compliant with policy.
- 7.2 Planning permission is recommended subject to conditions. A final condition will be added to explain that in the event of the Council disposing of its interest in the land prior to implementation and/or occupation of the scheme, certain conditions become heads of terms in a new S.106 legal agreement. These heads of terms will include the following (as covered by conditions 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40 and 41);
- Re-provision of suitable D1 accommodation for the FRESH gym and juice bar
 - Full code for sustainable homes assessment and post construction review
 - Full Breeam retail assessment and post construction review
 - Compliance with the energy statement and sustainability statement

- Local labour and procurement
- Three wheelchair units to be fitted out
- Travel plan
- Car Free development (retail and residential)
- A financial contribution for the provision of 2 car club bays.
- A financial contribution for the provision of 2 disabled bays.
- Servicing Management Plan
- Construction Management plan
- Financial contribution for highway works
- Provision of affordable housing

8. LEGAL COMMENTS

8.1 Members are referred to the note from the Legal Division at the start of the Agenda.

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