

Development Management Committee of East Herts Council

Thursday 25th June

The Committee resolved to grant permission subject to 57 conditions and the completion of a Legal Agreement.

Conditions will include :

- submission of samples of building materials
- full details of hard and soft landscaping
- a delivery and servicing plan
- hours of operation of restaurants and bars
- details of marketing of the use of a new civic space

The proposed development consists of three main blocks of development.

- commercial units at ground floor level
- 98 residential units on the upper floors (comprising 32 x 1 bed units and 66 x 2 bed units)
- a hotel building located on the corner of Bircherley Street and Railway Street would accommodate an 86 bed hotel on the upper floors and a restaurant at ground floor level
- refurbishment of the existing car park with a new façades fronting onto Bircherley Green and the river walk. The car park will retain a total of 188 car parking spaces. The proposal allocates 40 of the total spaces for the residential units, plus 5 spaces for a car club, 143 ‘Pay and Display’ spaces are provided for general use and will be operational 24 hours a day (No parking spaces will be specifically allocated for hotel guests)
- 112 secure cycle parking spaces for residents are to be at ground floor level. In relation to cycle spaces available for members of the public 78 spaces could be provided within racks positioned around the site.

No affordable housing is proposed.

No “developer contributions” currently offered

Based on current estimates the profitability the scheme is such that it is unable to afford any financial contributions for the delivery of services and infrastructure. (Contributions had been requested by Hertfordshire County Council, East Herts Council and the NHS). The developer has agreed for a review mechanism to be included within the Legal Agreement. This would enable further viability testing to take place to understand if the viability of the

site has changed. Therefore, there is “potential that some financial contributions may be possible”.

The provision of a **Health Facility** is shown on the approved plans. It was reported to the Development Management Committee that Chase had repeatedly confirmed (to the Clinical Commissioning Group Assistant Director - Premises) *“their interest in securing the NHS as a long term tenant of a significant proportion of the available commercial floorspace.”* An update from the Managing Director of Chase New Homes reported receipt of revised plans for *“surgery layout which will be worked up with additional input from Wallace House Surgery to finalise these designs in order to proceed with the schedule of works.”* A process of securing approval from the CCG and NHS England will be required.

The Committee were told that a clause would be included in the Legal Agreement (relating to the planning permission) to continue discussions with the NHS, although this clause “could only be limited in how it can deal with these matters”.