Application no: 20130397

Location: Cygnet House, 132 Windmill Street, Gravesend, Kent.

Description: Conversion, extension and refurbishment of existing building to provide a total of 34no. one and two bedroom flats; laying out of 34no. car parking spaces and provision of refuse and cycle storage and amenity/play space; installation of flat mounted photo-voltaic (PV) panels on roof of building.

Applicant: McCullochs

Decision Level: Planning Regulatory Board

Recommendation: Permission, subject to conditions, informatics and s.106 Agreement

Proposal

The development proposed relates to the erection of a five storey side extension to the existing six storey vacant office building and conversion of the whole building to provide a total of 34no. residential apartments (11no. one bed and 23no. two bed). The proposal will involve refurbishing the existing building and providing 34no. car parking spaces to be accessed off Zion Place, as per the existing arrangement. Ancillary works are proposed including erection of railings to enclose and enlarge the green space along Windmill Street, re-grading the land at the south west corner adjacent to Sheppey Place to provide useable amenity space for the new residents and soft landscaping along the Sheppey Place and Windmill Street boundaries. It is also proposed to install photo-voltaic (PV) panels on the existing flat roof of the building.

The applicant is working in partnership with Moat Housing Association who have recently exchanged contracts with the site owner to purchase the site (subject to planning approval) to deliver all the units for affordable rent.

Reason for report to Planning Regulatory Board

Major development proposal; at the request of Cllr Cribbon.

Planning Policies

Gravesham Local Plan First Review 1994

The following saved policies in the adopted Gravesham Local Plan First Review 1994 are relevant to the consideration of this application:

- Policy TC1 – Design of New Development
- Policy TC2 – Listed Buildings
Local Plan Core Strategy

Public consultation ended for the Local Plan Core Strategy – Proposed Submission Version at the end of February 2013. It was submitted for Examination by an Independent Inspector in May 2013, with adoption proposed by the end of 2013 following the public examination in mid-September. A Site Allocations and Development Management Policies Development Plan Document will be prepared following the adoption of the Core Strategy.

As set out in paragraph 216 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), the weight that can be afforded to relevant policies in emerging plans varies according to the stage in the preparation of the emerging plan; the extent to which there are unresolved objections to relevant polices and the degree of consistency of the relevant policies in the emerging plan to the policies in the NPPF. The most relevant policies from the Core Strategy - Proposed Submission Version are as follows:

- Policy CS01: Sustainable Development
- Policy CS02: Scale and Distribution of Development
- Policy CS05: Gravesend Town Centre Opportunity Area
- Policy CS07: Economy, Employment and Skills
- Policy CS11: Transport
- Policy CS14: Housing Type and Size
- Policy CS16: Affordable Housing
- Policy CS18: Climate Change
- Policy CS19: Development and Design Principles
- Policy CS20: Heritage and the Historic Environment

Other Material Considerations

National Planning Policy Guidance

The National Planning Policy Framework is a material consideration. The weight to be given to policies in existing local plans will depend on their consistency with the Framework. In March 2011 the Government statement ‘Planning for Growth’ instructs planning authorities to support enterprise and facilitate housing, economic and other forms of sustainable development.

Supplementary Planning Guidance

The following supplementary planning guidance documents are relevant to the consideration of this application:

- Affordable Housing - Towards a Revised Policy (2003) – raised proportion to 30%
- Proposed Change to Affordable Housing Threshold (2007) – lowered threshold to 15 units
Consultations, Publicity and Representations

Consultations

The following provides the case officers summary of the consultee responses received:

GBC Planning Policy - No objection to the principle of residential development subject to sufficient justification regarding the loss of office accommodation.

GBC Housing Strategy and Development - Discussions have been held with the applicants partnering RSL (Moat) who have consulted the Council with regard to local housing need as they intend to deliver the apartments for affordable rent, and the split between one and two bedroom units is accepted as being appropriate to meet current local demand. The plans confirm all units will meet the HCA residential standards and it is hoped that a number will also meet the Lifetime Homes standard.

GBC Conservation Officer - The proposed refurbishment and re-fenestration of the building will improve its current presentation, although demolition and redevelopment would be preferable. This application provides an opportunity to re-establish the historic boundary along Windmill Street which would contribute to enhancing the conservation area. It is important that good quality high performance materials and cladding are utilised, and the existing mural should be retained in its current location.

GBC Regulatory Services - No objection subject to conditions to protect the amenity of existing and new residents from traffic and vehicle disturbance (i.e. noise and light), sufficient storage for domestic refuse and a watching brief in case contamination is encountered during any ground works. A detailed Code of Construction should also be submitted for approval prior to any works commencing.

GBC Highway Engineer – Having considered the access and parking layout there is no objection raised.

KCC Highways - No objection in principle. Proposed parking levels comply with KCC guidance but would strongly recommend they remain unallocated to maximise their future usage - note this parking standard is not adopted by GBC. An original comment regarding the need for a car parking management plan has been superseded following revision to the scheme to omit the existing layby. Informal advice has also since stated a need to reinstate a section of footway and to tie the footway in to the new section of path that leads into the site.

Kent Police – Initial comments raised concerns that the completely open nature of the site may attract antisocial behaviour, particularly within the undercroft parking areas. However, further comments received to the revised scheme confirm that nearly all initial concerns have been addressed, although it is still recommended that the car park entrance be gated. It is important that suitable access control systems are in place, as well as adequate lighting for the undercroft areas.

Kent Fire and Rescue Service - Confirm that means of access is satisfactory.

Southern Water Services - Confirm the presence of a water main and foul sewer crossing the site which may need to be diverted to accommodate the development, subject to approval by SWS. Should permission be granted, SWS request that a safeguarding condition is imposed seeking approval of measures to protect this infrastructure. A condition seeking approval of the means of providing foul and surface water disposal is also requested, as are a number of informatives concerning matters such as connecting to the existing system.
Mouchel (on behalf of KCC) - Having assessed the implications of the additional population on its community services, a financial contribution to offset this impact has been requested totalling c.£58,000, the majority of which would be ring fenced towards the cost of building a new primary school in the Borough.

Publicity

This application was advertised locally by display of a site notice, publication of a press notice and letters to the surrounding properties.

At the time of writing a total of 16no. representations had been received, although eight of them were in the form of a pro-forma. The main concern raised by local residents, despite generally welcoming the regenerative benefits of developing a currently unused building, relates to the impact that the side extension will have upon the character of the conservation area and the living conditions of nearby residents. Another concern cited by one local resident is the principle of an entirely “affordable” development comprising rented tenure only as she feels that there is a need for some shared ownership apartments, despite being supportive of the scheme generally. Additional concerns received are summarised as follows:

- Increase in noise and traffic from the car park;
- One bedroom apartments will exacerbate existing social and environmental problems in the area, specifically in respect of potential crime and flytipping;
- Unauthorised use of the amenity space, particularly at night when it may attract antisocial behaviour;
- Unauthorised use of the premises by “youngsters”;
- Exterior refurbishment makes no effort to reflect local vernacular of Victorian and Georgian town houses;
- Additional pressure on existing services and the environment.

Following initial discussions between the LPA and the applicant, and having regard to local representations, the scheme has been amended and, subsequently, a second round of neighbour notification letters was sent – allowing a further 21 days for comment. The closing date for further comment post-dates the deadline for publishing this report, so any outstanding responses will be reported in a supplementary report.

Planning Analysis

Main Issues

The principal issues for consideration in determining this application relate to impacts on local townscape (with the added sensitivity due to the site’s location within the upper Windmill Street Conservation Area and opposite a terrace of Grade II Listed Buildings) and on the living conditions of nearby residents, particularly those in Victoria Avenue and Zion Place. The loss of existing employment floorspace is a matter to consider in assessing the principle of residential conversion.

Associated matters relate to reducing opportunities for crime, ensuring satisfactory living conditions for the future residents and maintaining highway safety.

Background

The application site is located to the south of Gravesend Town Centre and comprises a detached
six storey office block, which has remained largely vacant since the Council sold it in 2007. The site occupies a 0.2 hectare parcel of land at the junction of Windmill Street and Zion Place within an area comprising a mix of uses and building styles including the former police station, three storey listed Georgian buildings and Victorian family houses.

In the past five years there have been a handful of planning applications for the site, including residential redevelopment that was refused due to its scale and massing and impact on neighbouring property and a hostel that was refused due to risks of crime and harming the character of the conservation area. An application for conversion to a hotel was successful, but this consent has now expired. Therefore the site does not benefit from any current planning permissions.

**Principle of Development**

In planning policy terms the adopted Local Plan contains no specific policies covering the site, although its location within the Upper Windmill Street Conservation Area and opposite a terrace of Grade II Listed Buildings requires any proposals to make a positive contribution to the area’s character and appearance whilst respecting the setting of the historic buildings. A generic design policy requires further that any proposed extension respects the character of the host property and uses good quality materials sympathetic to the area, whilst also safeguarding the privacy and amenity of adjoining residents. Further policies concerning highway safety and car parking, as well as providing for special housing needs, are enshrined in adopted local policy.

The emerging Core Strategy, to which some weight may now be afforded in making planning decisions, does include more site-specific policy as it includes the application site within the Town Centre Opportunity Area, stating that the Council will (i) support the provision of new residential development where satisfactory living conditions can be achieved and (ii) support the redevelopment of under-used sites where it improves townscape character. Supporting text specific to Cygnet House identifies a preference for redevelopment due to currently being an unsympathetic building in the conservation area, and that it would also support provision of replacement offices. This emerging document does though provide more protection for existing offices than afforded through the current Local Plan.

However, in view of recent Government changes to permitted development rights concerning office conversion and the length of time that Cygnet House has been vacant, coupled with evidence of unsuccessful marketing and the self-evident deteriorating condition of the building, it is considered that converting the building to residential apartments is acceptable in principle.

**Design and Townscape**

The applicant acknowledges that the existing building represents an unsympathetic element within the street scene and accepts that its conversion represents an opportunity for improving its external presentation. The principle of enhancing the external appearance of the building, and associated tidying up of the site, is wholly welcomed and should only serve to enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area and setting of the listed buildings.

The first issue to consider is the impact of the proposed five storey side extension, to which there has been some local objection. The concerns from residents relate to its scale and massing and their view that it is comparable to an extension proposed by an unsuccessful application for residential redevelopment back in 2008. However, in actual fact, the currently proposed extension is significantly smaller than the one previously refused as it (i) is confined to the depth of the existing building, (ii) retains notable separation from the Sheppey Place boundary and (iii) steps down one storey in height from the host building. It will therefore be viewed as a subservient
addition to the building that will comprise an appropriate transition to the five storey office building (Windmill House) to the south. A concern from a local resident regarding the loss of existing views across the site is noted. However, the “breathing space” between the buildings will retain a view between Windmill Street and Victoria Avenue which, in any event, was not identified as a positive view in the 2009 conservation area appraisal and is therefore not sacrosanct.

The proposed extension is therefore regarded as an acceptable addition that will respect the character of the existing building and that will not “overwhelm” the surrounding properties as feared by some local residents. Furthermore it will support the more efficient use of this site as encouraged by planning policy and guidance.

Turning to the treatment of the building, the approach proposed by the applicant is to externally clad the front and rear elevations with a proprietary façade system, intended to enhance the appearance and thermal performance of the building. The outer ‘skin’ of the new cladding will comprise through coloured panels that will exhibit a modern appearance, albeit with the retained brick flank elevations (to be replicated on the extension) to provide a ‘frame’ for the building. Benefits of the proposed panels are that they are durable and impervious to weather conditions, including that they are scratch resistant, to ensure a robust material that is maintenance free. The image below helps to explain the proposed system:

Following some concerns that the front façade lacked articulation (i.e. it was too flat) some subtle but important changes have been made by projecting the end sections of vertical cladding forward of the central cladding as well as emphasising the window reveals and the existing set back of the top storey. The applicant has provided some sketch drawings to indicate how this will look and it appears successful in adding further animation to the prominent front elevation. Whilst retaining the existing brick flank elevations and brick entrance building, the proposed cladding system and use of grey powder coated window frames will provide an unashamedly modern looking building.

On the rear elevation, as a solution to avoid overlooking of the adjacent residential gardens, the applicant is proposing to install an external louvre system. This represents a change to the submitted scheme which comprised projecting triangular “oriel” windows to achieve the same objective. The reason for this change, including that it is a more cost-effective option, includes that it will allow greater levels of natural light into the new apartments and that it will be maintenance free and avoid potential ‘weak spots’ by omitting numerous small sections of flat roof. Whilst the principle of this approach is acceptable, noting that a similar approach was approved when permission for the hotel conversion was granted, it has been accepted by the applicant that the details of the system will be key to its success - although the suggested use of these features to incorporate some subtle colour is welcomed. A particular point highlighted by the Borough Council’s Conservation Officer was that the support arms shown on the submitted plans would compromise their success as being viewed as elegant features on the building, and this is a
specific detail that would require address through condition should planning permission be
granted.

Ancillary works to the existing building include making a feature of the existing single storey brick
closure on the Windmill Street elevation to clearly demarcate the main entrance, including
providing “Cygnet House” lettering – although details of this should be controlled through
condition. Furthermore, the existing mural will be retained in situ (with its setting enhanced through
sensitive downlighting) and the existing ugly ventilation units mounted in upper floor windows to be
removed. The applicant also proposes to install PV panels on the existing flat roof of the building
to support the sustainability objectives of the development (to meet Code Level 3) – the panels
would be flat mounted on the roof, projecting less than 150mm, and so would not be visible
additions to the building when viewed from street level.

In the context of works to the actual building itself, and its subsequent impact on the character of
the area, the application also proposes improvements to the immediate setting of the building,
including the following:

- enlarging and tidying up the green space on Windmill Street as well as enclosing it with
  black painted railings to reinstate an historic boundary;
- removing the redundant lay by on Zion Place and replacing it with enhanced public realm
  and soft landscaping;
- providing a new landscaped space at the corner junction with Sheppey Place;
- making good the existing brick boundary wall along Windmill Street and Sheppey Place,
  including reinstating a section of brick wall along Sheppey Place.

In summary, and in considering the acceptability of the refurbished building and site, it is
necessary to acknowledge guidance in the NPPF which states that planning decisions should not
attempt to impose architectural styles or stifle innovation, albeit that the promotion of local
distinctiveness is proper. In this regard the brick framing of the building is important as it will
reference the local vernacular and the proposal, owing to the deteriorating condition of the
building, will only serve to enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area and
setting of the listed buildings, even if the bold modern approach may not be regarded as traditional
in such an area. The improvements to the setting of the building will also contribute significantly to
the character of the area and the street scene.

Residential Amenity

Existing Residents - In considering any proposals for development a principal consideration is
always the potential impact that it will have upon the amenity of adjoining property, particularly
residential dwellings. The juxtaposition of the application building to existing buildings is such that
the only direct effects are likely to be noticed by the residents of the family houses to the
immediate west of the site in Zion Place and Victoria Avenue, albeit there is a notable separation
distance from the rear elevation to the gardens of some of those properties. In this instance the
building subject of the application already exists and so much of the amenity effects (mainly
overlooking) will already be experienced.

However, the nature of a residential development is different from an office building in respect of
matters such as occupancy, hours of maximum use and profile of vehicle movements. As such,
and in view of the intention to extend the building, it is not acceptable to take the default stance
that the proposed development will not worsen the existing situation. The applicant is therefore
proposing installation of an external louvre system, in place of the originally proposed oriel
windows, as a means of preventing direct views from the building into the adjoining gardens. This
approach would seem to be successful in preventing direct views of the nearby private gardens,
particularly the closest one at 1 Zion Place. Members may recall that a similar solution was
approved when the building was granted consent for conversion into a hotel and, notwithstanding comments on their design and appearance (explored earlier in this report), the proposed system is adequate to protect the amenity of the adjacent residents.

Further mitigation includes the erection of an acoustic fence along the boundary with 1 Zion Place to reduce disturbance from vehicle noise and associated headlights, including planting four trees along that boundary to act as a visual screen. Noise attenuation will also be provided in the ceiling above the undercroft car parking areas to “absorb” vehicle noise. If approved a planning condition will also be imposed to ensure construction impacts are minimised, such as by controlling hours of work, delivery times, lighting and noise.

Future Residents - The proposed accommodation has been designed to meet the HCA design standards which, in terms of unit sizes, are generally more onerous than the Borough Council’s guidelines. The scheme includes a mix of unit sizes including one bedroom flats, two bedroom flats, and two bedroom duplex apartments. The internal room sizes all accord with the Borough Council’s adopted Residential Layout Guidelines and the applicant has confirmed that a proportion of them will be designed to the Lifetime Homes standard, including that all units will have step free access.

Externally the development will provide a usable area of open garden space for the residents that will be overlooked by existing and future residents to provide an increased sense of safety for its users – the arrangement of this space has been enhanced following a revision to the red line boundary. A dedicated cycle storage building will be provided at the main entrance to the building, which will be covered to increase security and encourage its use. Similarly, a detached storage building for domestic waste will be built within the existing car park adjacent to Zion Place to ensure adequate provision in between weekly collections, to overcome concerns such as those cited by a local resident regarding rubbish bags being left on the roadside.

Vehicle Access and Car Parking

The proposed scheme will retain existing vehicular access off Zion Place and the car parking arrangement remains similar to the present arrangement, albeit re-arranged modestly to ensure provision of one space per apartment (34no. parking spaces). Following advice from KCC Highways the applicant has agreed to retain these spaces on a communal basis only, as experience shows that this ensures efficiency of use.

Ancillary highway related works include removal of the redundant lay by on Zion Place - which is welcomed to improve the public realm and remove a potential source of unauthorised parking – and which will require reinstating section of the footway and removing redundant signage. The scheme also proposes a small pathway that will link to the public footway, and so will need to be tied in under approval from the local highway authority.

Affordable Housing

The current requirement for affordable housing in the urban area is that any development proposing 15no. or more residential dwellings should provide 30% of them as affordable units. The reason being to contribute to the creation of mixed and inclusive communities and to help ensure everyone has a suitable place to live. To accord with adopted policy the proposed development should provide 11no. affordable units on site, to be secured through a legal agreement.

In practice though, since the completed development will be owned and managed by Moat Housing Association, all the units will be made available for affordable housing. The proposal is to provide them all for affordable rent, which is a product providing homes for people in housing need
(i.e. on the housing needs register) at a cost at 80% of full market value. The principle of this approach has been ratified by the Borough Council’s Lead Member for Housing.

This approach has, though, raised concern from a local resident who feels that some shared ownership units should be included to avoid an overconcentration of socially rented apartments – the underlying fear seemingly that it may attract problems of antisocial behaviour and general disturbance. However, being controlled by a single company (rather than a buy-to-let scheme potentially owned by numerous individuals) this does provide some assurance in respect of the comprehensive and efficient management of the development. Furthermore a Local Lettings Plan, to be entered into by the Council and Moat, will ensure control over the mix and profile of tenants that may occupy the development – a particular requirement being that at least 50% are economically active. It will also provide an opportunity for re-housing tenants who are currently under-occupying properties in the Borough to avoid them incurring penalties from the recently introduced “bedroom tax”, whilst also making larger properties available for families in housing need – the target being that at least 40% of tenants meet this criteria. The Local Lettings Plan also includes a mechanism aimed to prevent problematic tenants such as background checks and interviews prior to offering tenancy, as well as 12 month starter tenancies that allow prompt eviction in the event they cause problems. Moat has also confirmed that an experienced housing officer would oversee the site with monthly site inspections.

A s.106 Agreement will ensure that the Council retain nomination rights for all the units, so as to ensure that the development is meeting the needs of local people. For information a similar approach was taken on the former Dykes Pit site that is currently under construction, a scheme also proposed for 100% affordable housing.

Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour

The NPPF requires LPA’s to have regard to minimising opportunities for crime, and there is a duty on all local authorities to do all that it reasonably can to prevent crime and disorder in its area. Following concerns raised by Kent Police and local residents alike, in particular regarding unauthorised access to the undercroft parking bays which may create opportunities for antisocial behaviour and crime, the applicant has amended the scheme to include mounting low level railings on the existing brick boundary walls along Sheppey Place and Windmill Street to prevent easy access to and from the site. Similarly the existing timber fencing panels along Sheppey Place, which may be regarded as a “weak spot” in the boundary, will be replaced with a brick wall to match the existing – this will also enhance the street scene as the fencing is in a poor state of repair. An updated response from Kent Police acknowledges that the changes address most of their original concerns, although the reluctance of the applicant to secure the car park entrance remains a point of some concern.

The applicant’s stance is that their active management of the premises, careful selection of residents and high level of security around the remainder of the site will be sufficient to avoid creating an opportunity for antisocial behaviour and crime. Furthermore, once the building is in occupation it would benefit from 24 hour activity and natural surveillance from the new residents, including new windows overlooking an undercroft parking area, which should act as further deterrent. It is ultimately in the owner’s interest to prevent problems associated with crime and antisocial behaviour and so they have also confirmed that the provision of security cameras and/or security gates will be future-proofed by pre-wiring the building to enable quick and efficient retrofitting of further security measures should persistent problems be experienced.

Also, the proposed pedestrian bench will provide a functional item of street furniture and its visible location may deter inappropriate use. Therefore, and contrary to the advice of Kent Police, there is reluctance by officers to request that it is omitted from the scheme.
Finally, as covered above concerning the affordable nature of the apartments, management of the site by a single landlord (i.e. Moat HA), and initial short term tenancy agreements, provides some comfort that the residents will not cause unacceptable disruption within the area.

In summary, whilst the fear of crime is a legitimate planning consideration, in the context of this application it is possible that some of this existing fear is a result of the site having experienced some problems over the past six years since it has been vacant, which should be improved following residential occupation. Furthermore, the security measures proposed have gone a long way to overcoming initial concerns and, subject to a mechanism for reviewing their effectiveness in deterring crime and antisocial behaviour after the first year of occupation, the application is considered to be acceptable in this respect.

Additional Considerations

Ecology - An environmental consultant has confirmed that the site is of low ecological value. However it has been recommended that the existing Rowan tree along the Windmill Street frontage is retained due to being a native species and that opportunities for ecological enhancement are embodied through the soft landscaping proposals for the site, including provision of bird and bat boxes.

Community Infrastructure - The applicant has agreed to pay the financial contribution sought by KCC to offset the anticipated impact of the development on community services that they offer, most notably towards education. This impact has been highlighted by a local resident concerned about the increasing pressure on existing services, which supports the necessity of this contribution to make the development acceptable. This contribution will be secured through a legal agreement.

Public Sewer – The applicant is aware of the presence of a public sewer the crosses the site but confirmed during pre-application discussions that this will not affect the scheme and that it will not require diversion. Following advice from Southern Water Services a planning condition is necessary to require approval of the measures that will be undertaken to protect the public sewer.

Conclusion

Whilst emerging local policy gives added protection to office space, the fact that Cygnet House has remained vacant for the past six years and that recent government legislation now allows office to residential conversion as permitted development, it is the view of officers that the proposed development represents an opportunity to contribute to the Borough’s housing need whilst also enhancing the character and appearance of the area. Although the proposed cladding of the building may represent a bold design approach within the Upper Windmill Street Conservation Area, there can be little doubt that the existing building requires renovation to halt its deteriorating condition and the cladding proposed, coupled with the ancillary works to the site, represent an improvement to the existing situation.

Also, despite enlarging the existing building, the scheme incorporates elements that will ensure that the amenity of adjoining residents will not be adversely affected, with further safeguards to be provided through imposition of planning conditions. Furthermore, mechanisms that are in place through the allocations and management of the building will help to allay some concerns that an all affordable scheme will be a magnet for anti-social behaviour and general disturbance, whilst the active use of the building should act as a further deterrent.

In conclusion, following positive and proactive discussions with the applicant that has addressed a number of the initial concerns of officers and residents alike, the scheme is considered to be
acceptable and it is recommended that a planning permission is granted subject to conditions, informatives and a s.106 Agreement.

Recommendation:

Permission, subject to conditions and informatives (see below) and a s.106 Agreement.

1. The development to which this permission relates must be begun not later than the expiration of three years beginning with the date on which this permission is granted.


2. The development hereby approved shall be carried out in accordance with the following schedule of approved plans:

   Drawing No. 594_02 – Existing Lower Ground and Ground Floor Plans
   Drawing No. 594_03 – Existing First, Second and Third Floor Plans
   Drawing No. 594_04 – Existing Fourth, Fifth and Sixth Floor Plans
   Drawing No. 594_05 – Existing Elevations A and B
   Drawing No. 594_06 – Existing Elevations C and D
   Drawing No. 594_07 – Existing Section A-A
   Drawing No. 594_08/A – Proposed Site Plan
   Drawing No. 594_09/A – Proposed Lower Ground and Ground Floor Plans
   Drawing No. 594_10/A – Proposed First, Second and Third Floor Plans
   Drawing No. 594_11/B – Proposed Fourth, Fifth and Sixth Floor Plans
   Drawing No. 594_12/A – Proposed Elevations A and B
   Drawing No. 594_13/B – Proposed Elevations C and D
   Drawing No. 594_14 – Proposed Section A-A
   Drawing No. 594_15/A – Proposed 3-D Visualisations

   Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interest of proper planning.

3. Prior to the commencement of any development on site, a comprehensive Code of Construction Practice covering all environmental impacts from the construction of this development shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. For the avoidance of doubt this shall include the provision of a wheel wash facility at the site exit. The works shall thereafter be carried out in strict adherence to this approved document.

   Reason: In order to mitigate the impact of construction disturbance upon nearby property and the area generally.

4. Prior to the commencement of any development on site, details and samples of all external facing materials, to include but not limited to the bricks, outer cladding, windows, roof covering for cycle and refuse stores and the “Cygnet House” lettering, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall thereafter be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

   Reason: In order to ensure a satisfactory standard of development that preserves or enhances the character of the Upper Windmill Street Conservation Area and protects the setting of the Grade II Listed Buildings opposite.
5. Prior to the commencement of any development on site, details of the proposed external louvre system for the rear (west) elevation, to include but not limited to design and appearance, means of attachment to the building, materials and colour, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved system shall thereafter be installed prior to first occupation of the building.

Reason: In order to prevent direct overlooking to the adjoining residential gardens and ensure a satisfactory standard of development.

6. Prior to the commencement of any development on site, details of the proposed roof mounted photo-voltaic panels shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall thereafter be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: In order to ensure a satisfactory standard of development upon completion; insufficient details have been provided with the application.

7. Prior to the commencement of any development on site, details of the proposed hard landscaping, to include the proposed surface and boundary treatments, as well as details of the making good of the existing boundary wall on Windmill Street and Sheppey Place, the proposed extension to the Sheppey Place boundary wall and the proposed street furniture, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved works shall be completed prior to first occupation of the building and thereafter retained in good order during the lifetime of the development.

Reason: In order to ensure a satisfactory standard of development upon completion; insufficient details have been provided with the application.

8. Prior to the commencement of any development on site, details of the proposed soft landscaping, to include the re-grading of the communal amenity space, the retention of existing trees and opportunities for biodiversity enhancement, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall thereafter accord with the approved details, and the proposed landscaping scheme shall be fully implemented within one year of first occupation of the building, except for the re-graded amenity space which shall be provided and made available for use prior to first occupation. The soft landscaping shall thereafter be maintained for a period of not less than five years and any trees, shrubs or grassed areas which die, are diseased or vandalised within this period shall be replaced within the next planting season.

Reason: In order to enhance the character and appearance of the area, provide opportunities for enhancing biodiversity and ensuring the timely provision of adequate on-site amenity space for the new residents.

9. Prior to the commencement of any development on site, details of the proposed acoustic fence along the boundary with 1 Zion Place and noise attenuation soffits to be fitted in the ceilings above the undercroft areas shall be submitted to and approved, in writing, by the Local Planning Authority. The approved measures shall be in place prior to first occupation of the building and thereafter retained in good order during the lifetime of the development.

Reason: In order to protect the amenity of nearby residential property.

10. Prior to the commencement of any works hereby approved details of the measures which will be undertaken to protect the public sewer shall be submitted to and approved, in writing, by the Local Planning Authority in consultation with Southern Water Services.
Reason: In order to ensure the protection of existing sewerage infrastructure.

11. Prior to first occupation of the development the car parking spaces indicated on Drawing No. 594_08/A shall be formed, surfaced and suitably demarcated (in accordance with the hard landscaping scheme to be approved pursuant to condition 5). Thereafter the parking spaces shall be kept available for such use and no development, whether or not permitted by the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 as amended (or any provision equivalent to that Class in any statutory instrument revoking and re-enacting that Order), shall be carried out that would preclude their use for car parking.

Reason: In order to ensure adequate and conveniently located car parking to serve the development.

12. Prior to first occupation of the development the applicant/developer shall, through agreement with the local highway authority, carry out the following works in full:
   (i) re-instate the section of footway on Zion Place following removal of the existing lay by facility;
   (ii) remove the 2no. no entry signs on Zion Place that will be redundant following removal of the existing lay by facility;
   (iii) tie in the new section of paving with the existing public footway on Zion Place.

Reason: In order to consolidate the public highway to integrate the new development.

13. Prior to first occupation of the development the approved cycle and refuse stores, as indicated on the approved plans, shall be provided, furnished and made available for use at all times. Thereafter no development, whether or not permitted by the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 as amended (or any provision equivalent to that Class in any statutory instrument revoking and re-enacting that Order), shall be carried out that would preclude the use of these buildings for their intended purpose.

Reason: To ensure adequate provision for weekly refuse storage to avoid amenity disturbance; to encourage sustainable transport by providing convenient and secure cycle storage facilities.

14. At a date 12 months following first occupation of the building the applicant/owner shall undertake a review of the effectiveness of the approved security measures, having regard to any reported incidents of crime, antisocial behaviour or other general disturbance related to the site and, if deemed necessary, make recommendations for additional and/or enhanced on site security measures. A report of this review shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority not later than a date 15 months following first occupation of the building with a view to establishing, following consultation with Kent Police, whether additional and/or enhanced on site security measures are necessary. In the event that additional security measures are required, the applicant shall agree with the Local Planning Authority the details of those security measures and a timetable for provision on site (subject to the requirement for a separate planning permission).

Reason: In order to ensure that appropriate long term measures are in place to prevent opportunities for crime and antisocial behaviour associated with the development.

15. The car parking spaces shall be made available on a communal basis only (i.e. unallocated).
Reason: To ensure the most efficient use of the available on site car parking spaces.

16. Details of any external lighting to the building, car park or grounds shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority before being brought into use and thereafter no additional lighting shall be erected on the site or building, or the approved lighting altered, without the prior written permission of the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In the interest of amenity.

17. The existing mosaic mural located at ground floor level on the northern external elevation of the building shall be retained in situ and exposed at all times.

Reason: In order to ensure the protection and display of this potentially significant piece of public art.

18. At no time shall the green spaces on the Windmill Street elevation, as indicated on the approved plans, be used for leisure or recreation purposes nor shall any domestic paraphernalia be located on them.

Reason: In order to protect the character and appearance of the Upper Windmill Street Conservation Area.

19. Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 as amended (or any order revoking and re-enacting that Order) no satellite dishes shall be erected on the building unless approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In order to ensure a satisfactory standard of development that preserves or enhances the character of the Upper Windmill Street Conservation Area and protects the setting of the Grade II Listed Buildings opposite.

INFORMATIVES

STATEMENT OF POSITIVE AND PROACTIVE APPROACH TO DECISION-TAKING

In accordance with paragraphs 186 and 187 of the National Planning Policy Framework the Local Planning Authority has approached the assessment and determination of this application in a positive and proactive manner and, where appropriate, has worked with the applicant to secure a development that is sustainable and that improves the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area as it is in accordance with the Development Plan for the area.

SOUTHERN WATER SERVICES

A formal application for connection to the public sewerage system and to the water supply is required in order to service this development. To initiate a sewer capacity check to identify the appropriate connection points for the development, please contact Atkins Ltd, Anglo St James House, 39A Southgate Street, Winchester SO23 9EH (tel 01962 858688) or www.southernwater.co.uk.

Detailed design of the proposed drainage system should take into account the possibility of surcharging within the public sewerage system in order to protect the development from potential
flooding.

DEVIATION FROM THE APPROVED PLANS

It is possible that any proposed deviation from the approved plans could be classed as a ‘material’ change requiring a further application/permission. In the event that any change is proposed, applicants are advised to seek advice from the Local Planning Authority as proceeding without the necessary permissions could nullify this permission.

BUILDING REGULATION CONSENT

The granting of planning permission is independent from the granting of Building Regulations consent (which may, or may not, be required). In the event of a change to the scheme granted planning permission being required to satisfy the Building Regulations, applicants are advised to seek advice from the Local Planning Authority as proceeding without the necessary permissions could nullify this permission.

UTILITIES

It should not be automatically assumed that permission will be given for utility services to be placed within the public highway, and early contact should be made with Kent County Council at roadworkswest@kent.gov.uk. This will enable a proper consideration of available options in order that the optimum solution can be determined.

NAMING & NUMBERING

As a result of the changes to this property, it appears that a change has to be made to the national property gazetteer. It is a legal requirement that a property or premises is registered.

The Naming and Numbering Certificate, when issued, will reduce location or delivery problems via Royal Mail or other carriers, and importantly for the Police, Ambulance, and Fire & Rescue services. Registration is also necessary to register to vote, for utility connections, and will avoid duplicate addresses.

The Naming and Numbering service is provided by the Borough Council, and I enclose the schedule of charges, which should be used for your application. Please submit the application and the requisite fee in accordance with the guidance on the form. The on-line form is available at the Planning/House Numbering page of the council’s web-site http://www.local.gravesham.gov.uk/