

Harwood Savin Ltd

Town Planning Consultants

TOWN & COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990 (As Amended)

APPLICATION FOR PLANNING PERMISSION

BY: VAHNEA MAROLDA INVESTMENTS LLP

FOR: EXTENSION OF EXISTING BUILDING TO PROVIDE 6 ADDITIONAL STOREYS OVER EXISTING ROOFTOP, TO PROVIDE FOR UP TO 104 STUDENT RESIDENTIAL UNITS, WITH ACCESS FROM BEDFORD STREET, ASSOCIATED SERVICING AND ANCILLARY ACCOMMODATION. ENTRANCE AND STAIRCORE EXTENSION TO EXISTING BUILDING TO PROVIDE ACCESS FROM BEDFORD STREET.

AT: 18-20 LONDON ROAD,
BOGNOR REGIS, PO21 1PY

PLANNING STATEMENT

FEBRUARY 2022

Report sign off: [CJ Grant], [February 2022]

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This planning statement accompanies the submission of an Application on behalf of Vahnea Marolda Investments LLP for Planning Consent for the following:

“Extension of existing building to provide 6 additional storeys over existing rooftop, to provide for up to 94 student residential units, with access from Bedford Street, associated servicing and ancillary accommodation. Entrance and staircore extension to existing building to provide access from Bedford Street.”

Above the existing Wilko store at 18-20 London Road, Bognor Regis.

- 1.2 This Application comprises the resubmission of a previous scheme, which was approved by the Council on 24 June 2019 (reference BR/270/18/PL). The Applicant has not been in a position to implement that approval, particularly with the Covid situation over the past two years. As there is no mechanism by which he can renew that consent, or extend it, we are now seeking a fresh planning permission for an identical proposal to allow the Applicant additional time to implement the proposals. The scheme is identical in all respects to that approved in June 2019, and no alterations are proposed.
- 1.3 This Planning Statement sets out the context for this submission and provides details of the following:
1. A description of the site and surroundings;
 2. A description of the proposed development;
 3. A summary of current relevant planning policy and guidance;
 4. An assessment of the key planning considerations in the context of presiding policy and guidance;
 5. Concluding comments.
- 1.4 This statement should be read in conjunction with the package of additional technical documents which have been prepared by other technical consultants in support of the application (see list in Section 4.0) and the Statement of Community Involvement which is submitted as part of the application package. These technical documents have been updated to according with current and presiding planning policy and guidance and changes that have taken place to the policy context since 2019, as appropriate.

2.0 SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

1) The Application Site

- 2.1 The Application Site, which extends to approximately 0.12 hectares (outlined in red below), is located on the western side of London Road, within the primary shopping area of Bognor Regis Town Centre. The extent of the Application Site is illustrated in figure 2.1 below.

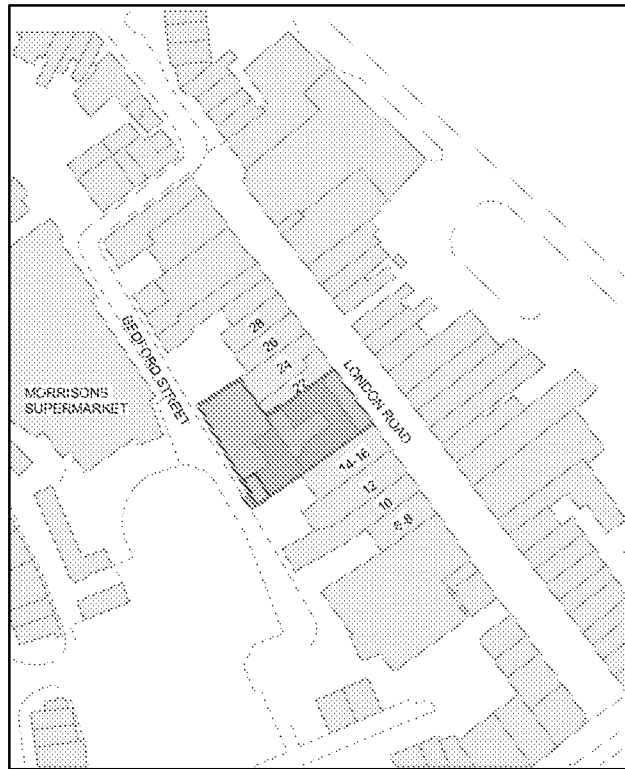


Figure 3.1: Application Site Boundary (Cover Storey Architects)

- 2.2 The Application Site lies above the existing Wilko retail store on London Road. The existing building is not listed and nor does it lie within a conservation area. At ground floor, is the existing operational retail unit, with retail related storage and ancillary offices at first floor. At roof level is a small, unoccupied storage area, which leads to the roof, and provides access for maintenance. The rooftop is currently used for ventilation plant and the service lift over-run.
- 2.3 The existing building has a glazed shopfront onto London Road, but is rendered on the remaining elevations. The existing building comprises a brick structure which is visible in part. The shop façade was refurbished in the 1950s to provide the white painted finish that can be seen on London Road and Bedford Street. The shopfront is branded and some small areas of brickwork on the front elevation have been covered with dark grey large format tiles. A full selection of photographs of the existing site are provided within the Design & Access Statement.
- 2.4 It is understood that the building was occupied by Woolworths from 1928 to 2008 and in July 2009 Wilkinson Hardware Stores (Wilko) took on a 15 year lease. The building is currently occupied by Wilko and it is intended that the retail unit will remain operational during construction.
- 2.5 Pedestrian access to the site is achieved from both London Road and Bedford Street. Vehicle access is restricted in the London Road pedestrianised area during the day. There is no on site parking or loading bay provision. A vehicle drop off point is located to the rear of the property on Bedford Street and scheduled deliveries occur during the night and are managed by the store manager.

- 2.6 The Application Site is well located within the town centre and is highly accessible, being approximately 250 metres from the railway station, 900 metres from the University of Chichester Campus, and 140 metres from the closest bus stop on the junction of London Road and High Street.
- 2.7 The Site lies within Flood Zone 1 as identified on the Environment Agency's Flood Map and is therefore considered to be at low risk of flooding. On this basis a Flood Risk Assessment is not required to support this application.
- 2.8 The Application Site is not subject to any specific land use designations in the adopted Local Plan. However, it does lie within the defined town centre, a primary retail frontage, and within the Bognor Regis Economic Growth Area, as shown on the adopted Local Plan Proposals Map (2018).

2) The Surrounding Area

- 2.9 The Site lies within the main retail area within Bognor Regis town centre. This section of London Road is pedestrianised and is the focus of commercial and mostly retail properties. Bedford Street to the rear is essentially characterised by the rear service areas of these commercial premises and by Morrisons and its associated car park to the west.
- 2.10 Immediately neighbouring uses include Superdrug and Specsavers both of which have first floor offices. There are no residential properties in the immediate vicinity of the site.
- 2.11 London Road is typically low rise of between 2 and 3 storeys but there is a 5 storey multi-storey car park above Morrisons to the west and then the large tower block, Fitzfleet House further to the west.
- 2.12 Photographs of the site and surrounding area are provided within the Design & Access Statement.

3) Site Opportunities and Constraints

- 2.13 The redevelopment of the site presents a number of opportunities and constraints that have been taken into account when designing the application proposals. These are summarised as follows:

Opportunities:

- Highly sustainable location in the town centre;
- Well served by a range of local facilities;
- Well served by public transport;
- In an area of need for additional student accommodation;
- Surrounding land uses and built form allow for additional height to be achieved with minimal impact upon neighbours;
- Potential for increasing footfall in the town centre and improving vitality and viability outside of normal trading hours;
- Excellent views from the roof level across Bognor Regis;

Constraints:

- Very tight site presents challenges during construction particularly in terms of deliveries, vehicle movements and constructor compounds;
- There is a requirement to keep the Wilko store fully operational during construction;
- No operational parking exists and therefore there is a need for careful management for day to day operation of the student accommodation;

- Noise from deliveries to the existing Wilko store will require mitigation and management for residents;
- Local environment is very flat and in close proximity to the sea and therefore prevailing winds are likely.

4) Planning History

2.14 A search of the Council's website identifies a number of relatively small scale planning applications for the over a number of years in addition to the previous consent for the scheme identical to the current proposals. In summary, these include the following:

Reference	Description	Decision	Date
BR/270/18/PL	Part conversion & extension of existing building to provide 6 No. additional storeys over existing rooftop to provide up to 104 No. student residential units with access from Bedford Street, associated servicing & ancillary accommodation, entrance & new internal stairs to existing building to provide access from Bedford Street.	Approved	24/06/2019
BR/127/09	Refurbishment and fitting out works to include new shopfront, roller shutter to goods in area and alterations to existing roof plant area.	Approved	28/08/2009
BR/358/79	Fire reinstatement of shopfront	Approved	06/06/1979
BR/88/73	Alterations to shopfront and sales floor layouts	Approved	12/06/1973
BR/1/60/B	Alterations	Approved	16/03/1961
BR/1/60/A	Amended outline application retail stores and lock-up	Approved	02/03/1960
BR/1/60	Extension of existing store	Approved	01/02/1960

Table 3.1: Planning History, 1960 to date

3.0 THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

1) The Proposed Development

3.1 The submitted application seeks Planning Consent for the following:

“Extension of existing building to provide 6 additional storeys over existing rooftop, to provide for up to 104 student residential units, with access from Bedford Street, associated servicing and ancillary accommodation. Entrance and staircore extension to existing building to provide access from Bedford Street.”

Above the existing Wilko store at 18-20 London Road, Bognor Regis.

3.2 Through the development of the Engineering and Digital Technology Park, the University of Chichester has delivered 500 new science, technology, engineering undergraduate and postgraduate student places per annum in Bognor Regis up to 2020 and continues to invest significantly in the town. All of these students will graduate with strong sector focused employability skills and industry experience and will generate an additional £5m per annum into the local economy. These students will also need accommodation in the local area and the proposed development specifically seeks to address this area of need.

3.3 Many students do not wish to stay in shared houses or private rented sector accommodation and instead prefer the security associated with purpose built student residential accommodation. In addition, students demand a much higher quality of accommodation than has historically been the case. The current proposals seek to deliver this.

3.4 The key features of the proposals are as follows:

- The scheme will provide for up to 104 new student residential bedspaces within 27 cluster flats;
- Access to the flats will be completely separate from the retail unit and will be from Bedford Street, rather than London Road;
- The proposals will not involve any increase in the footprint of the existing building and will provide only a vertical extension above the existing two storey retail unit;
- Located in the town centre, the proposals are highly sustainable in terms of their proximity to local facilities and the transport network and will also assist in increasing footfall in the town centre;
- No parking is provided and the accommodation will be car free. Students will not be allowed to bring their cars to the town and this will be monitored by the warden;
- All flats are accessible to wheelchair users with four specifically designed to meet Part of the Building Regulations;
- The scheme which extends to an additional six storeys above the existing building, has been designed to ensure that it fits with its surroundings, being of a similar height to the neighbouring Morrisons car park;
- Amenity space is provided for occupiers, not only within the cluster flats, but also externally at roof level on the podium. This also helps to maintain good levels of security and deters intruders from accessing the flat roof areas;
- Dedicated and secure cycle parking (60 spaces) and refuse storage is proposed at the podium level, to meet with the Council’s standards;
- The proposals will result in limited change and have very little impact at ground floor level.

2) Proposed Operational Considerations

3.5 In formulating this proposal, particular consideration has been given to the day-to-day operation of the proposals and the overall management of the accommodation. Comments were made at the public consultation at the pre-application stage in respect of the original 2019 scheme regarding the potential for noise and disturbance and anti-social behaviour associated with the increase in students arising from the

proposals. As a result the Applicant is keen to ensure that the student accommodation is a good neighbour and a positive contributor to the town centre environment.

3.6 With this in mind the Applicant has prepared a draft Management Plan setting out a number of objectives and commitments in relation to the daily operation of the accommodation. A copy of this is included with the application submission. Key operational commitments include:

- All students will be required to sign assured shorthold tenancy agreements, which commit them to abiding by the rules of the accommodation, which includes minimum standards of behaviour. If these rules are not complied with the operator can impose sanctions and ultimately terminate the tenancy agreement;
- A local agent (rather than a centralised national agent) will be responsible for the marketing of the accommodation as well as the day-to-day management of individual flats, tenant enquiries and block maintenance management. This will include a 24 hour out of hours service and accredited contractors retained to deal with repairs and maintenance;
- A cleaning contractor will deal with communal areas to ensure that the accommodation is kept clean;
- The accommodation will be car free and tenants will not be able to bring their cars with them unless they can prove that they have a valid on-street permit. This will be controlled through the tenancy agreement and monitored accordingly;
- Termly arrival and departure at the block will be managed and times staggered to ensure that students do not all arrive at the same time to ensure that on-street and parking congestion does not arise.

3.7 The Applicant is willing to once again enter into a condition or legal agreement requiring the maintenance and compliance with the Management Plan as appropriate.

3) Planning Application Submission

3.8 In addition to the submitted forms and drawings, the application submission includes the following supporting documentation:

Document	Consultant
Planning Statement	Harwood Savin
Statement of Community Involvement	
Design & Access Statement	Cover Storey Architects
Solar Study	Cover Storey Architects
Visual Impact Assessment	Cover Storey Architects
Transportation Assessment and Framework	Ridge
Construction Logistics Plan	
Acoustic Assessment	Ion Acoustics
BREEAM Pre-Assessment	Ridge
Energy and Sustainability Statement	Ridge
Drainage Strategy	Campbell Reith
Structural Statement	Campbell Reith

3) Pre-Application Consultation

3.9 The previous application proposals have previously been subject pre-application discussions with officers and public consultation. It has not been considered necessary to repeat this consultation exercise as the proposals have not changed and the proposals are still in accordance with the provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework (2021).

3.10 Pre-application consultation was undertaken with Arun District Council in respect of the original 2019 scheme and a meeting was held on 7 March 2017. Feedback from this meeting was generally positive with officers

supportive of the principle of the proposed development, in light of the predicted future increase in student numbers especially those associated with the University of Chichester.

- 3.11 A briefing meeting was held with the Town Centre Manager on 13 June 2017. The feedback from this was also positive, especially in the context of the emerging Bognor Regis BID Submission which was subsequently approved in July 2017. The proposals for additional student accommodation in the town centre align well with the BID scheme for the town and encouraging more investment in the town centre.
- 3.12 A public exhibition was held in for residents and businesses at the Regis Centre on 7 July 2017. The results of this are summarised in the Statement of Community Involvement (SCI), which forms part of the application submission.
- 3.13 In summary, the feedback received from planning officers, stakeholders and members of the public has been very positive with many attendees expressing support for the economic benefits that will arise from the increase in students in the town centre. Key concerns raised related to the following:
- Students with cars causing congestion and on street parking;
 - Disruption for residents during construction;
 - Fire safety (especially in light of the recent Grenfell Tower fire);
- 3.14 Full details of the consultation are provided within the Statement of Community Involvement.

4) Project Programme

- 3.15 The following provides for an indicative project programme:
- Tender for Contractor: Procurement route currently undecided.
 - Enabling Works: 16 week programme, utilising out-of-hours work.
 - Start on Site: Estimated duration: 12-15 months

4.0 PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

4.1 An objective of this statement is to demonstrate that the proposed development is in accordance with National, Regional and Local planning policies. Compliance with policy is demonstrated within the Section 5.0 of this report.

Background

4.2 Section 54A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) requires that planning applications should be decided in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise

4.3 In this case, relevant planning policy comprises the following:

- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2021);
- National Planning Practice Guidance;
- Arun District Local (2018);
- Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD) and Guidance (SPG) and Design Bulletins as appropriate and relevant to the proposals;
- Bognor Regis Neighbourhood Development Plan (2012).

4.4 Key policies and extracts are outlined in the context of each of the material planning considerations as set out in Section 5.0 of this report.

5.0 KEY PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS & ASSESSMENT

- 5.1 This section of the statement assesses the proposed development against relevant national, strategic and local planning policies.
- 5.2 The key material considerations in the context of the application for Planning Consent are considered to comprise:
- **The principle of the proposed development (including land use considerations)**
 - **Design considerations (including impact upon the neighbouring land uses, landscaping and the phasing of development)**
 - **Access, transportation and parking**
 - **Sustainability and energy efficiency**
 - **Environmental considerations (including ecology, arboriculture, ground condition, flood risk and noise)**
- 5.3 Each of these matters is addressed in turn, below.

1) The Principle of the Proposed Development

Policy Background

- 5.4 The new **National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2021)** continues to support the effective and efficient use of land for sites in the built up area. It upholds the presumption in favour of sustainable development. Paragraph 11 states that for decision-taking this means approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay.
- 5.5 At section 7, it seeks to ensure the vitality of town centres by promoting a suitable mix of uses including housing on suitable sites. Paragraph 86 (f) states that planning policies should: *“recognise that residential development often plays an important role in ensuring the vitality of centres and encourage residential development on appropriate sites.”*
- 5.6 Paragraph 120 acknowledges the importance of promoting and supporting the development of under-used land and buildings, especially where this meets identified housing needs. Part (e) states that planning policies and decisions should: *“support opportunities to use the airspace above existing residential and commercial premises for new homes. In particular, they should allow upward extensions where the development would be consistent with the prevailing height and form of neighbouring properties and the overall street scene, is well-designed (including complying with any local design policies and standards), and can maintain safe access and egress for occupiers.”*
- 5.7 The Site lies within the primary shopping area of Bognor Regis and the **adopted Arun District Local Plan (2018)** seeks to support and retain commercial premises in this area.
- 5.8 Local Plan Policy SD SP1 (Sustainable Development) advocates a positive approach that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained within the NPPF. Development will be focussed towards supporting the main coastal towns of Bognor Regis and Littlehampton as the main service centres. In particular, Policy SD SP1a seeks to enable *‘development that supports Bognor Regis as a holiday centre and University Campus location’*.
- 5.9 Policy EMP SP2 states that as part of the Bognor Regis Economic Growth Area, the Council will particularly encourage the expansion and improvement of the academic and recreational facilities for the University of Chichester.
- 5.10 Policy RET SP1 confirms that Bognor Regis and Littlehampton will be the main focus for major retail, leisure, commercial, office, tourism, cultural, community and residential development in the District and that the Council will positively welcome developments and initiatives aimed at sustainable economic growth and well-being.
- 5.11 It states:

"In each Principal Shopping Area it is clear that different sections of these areas serve a different function. The primary shopping frontages are of most significance in respect of retail uses, whilst other areas serve a complementary function by adding to the services and facilities provided by the shopping centre" (para 2.34)

5.12 Policy AREA21 – Re-Use of Redundant Floorspace states:

"Within the principal shopping areas, proposals for the reuse of vacant floorspace on the upper levels for residential purposes will be permitted provided that:

- o The development has no significant adverse effects for the occupiers of neighbouring properties; and*
- o It reflects the need to minimise noise intrusion. Applications must be accompanied by details of noise insulation measures required.*

A reduction in the car parking standards will normally be acceptable provided that there is no adverse effect on the levels of traffic congestion and road safety."

5.13 Policy SD SP1 – Sustainable Development of the of the **emerging Local Plan (Consultation Draft, 2018)** states that the Council will adopt a positive approach that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development. Policy SD SP1a seeks to ensure that the needs of the community are met through sustainable growth and the provision of suitable services, including:

"... a. promote and enable development that supports the main coastal towns of Bognor Regis and Littlehampton role as the main service, employment, retail and social centres including:

- i. enabling development that supports Bognor Regis as a holiday centre and University Campus location..."*

5.14 Policy RET SP1 states:

"Bognor Regis and Littlehampton will be the main focus for major retail, leisure, commercial, office, tourism, cultural, community and residential development. The Council will positively welcome developments and initiatives aimed at the sustainable economic growth and social wellbeing of the town centres. Such developments will diversify customer choice, aid economic resilience, improve quality both in design and the range of facilities and enhance competitiveness."

5.15 Policy RET DM1 states:

"Retail development

1. Criteria for Town Centre uses

The Council will seek to maintain the existing hierarchy of retail centres within Arun. Town Centre uses which accords with this hierarchy will be permitted provided that:

- a) The proposal is of a high standard of design, materials and layout and has due regard to the character of the site and its surroundings, however this does not limit the potential for outstanding or innovative design to enhance the character of the area;*
- b) It is easily accessible by public transport;*
- c) It includes provision for access by cycle and on foot;*
- d) It includes appropriate provision to enable access for people with disabilities; and*
- e) The design incorporates crime prevention measures.*

Applications for A3 Uses will need to be accompanied by details of the provisions for the extraction of fumes and cooking odours and the provision of areas for the collection of waste."

5.16 The Application Site lies above a property that falls within a primary shopping frontage, but as it does not relate to the ground or second floor levels, and the extension is set back on the roof, part 2 of Policy RET DM1 is not considered to be relevant.

5.17 The **Bognor Regis Neighbourhood Development Plan (2015)** Policy 1 – Delivery of the Vision, states:

"Development Proposals concerned with extensions and alterations of Designated and Non-designated Heritage Assets and Major Developments should demonstrate how proposed changes will support the delivery of relevant Neighbourhood Development Plan Objectives and our Vision for Bognor Regis. Proposals must identify the significance of any affected heritage asset and assess any harm and benefit. These should be included within the design and access statement if one is required."

- 5.18 Although the proposal would not strictly reuse existing floorspace it is relevant to note Policy 4 – Reducing Underuse of Property in the Town Centre, of the Bognor Regis Neighbourhood Development Plan which states that:

"Development Proposals concerned with the reuse of empty and or/underused property above shops and commercial premises located along designated primary and secondary retail frontages will be supported. Applicants should where appropriate apply for improved access, extensions, sub-division of plots and energy efficiency measures to increase the suitability and marketability of town centre properties and lands for local employment and residential uses."

Commentary

- 5.19 Taking account of the above policy position, the principle of the proposed development in land use terms is considered to be acceptable for the following reasons:

- The scheme aims to make good use of land within the town centre which is sustainably located in terms of local facilities and services, including public transport;
- As the proposal is to utilise an existing roof area for a purpose that could potentially support existing town centre uses, it is considered that the proposal is supported by the NPPF;
- The proposals actively contribute towards the role of Bognor Regis as a University Campus location in providing additional purpose built high quality accommodation for students, which in turn will help to free up accommodation in the private rented sector for non-student rentals;
- The introduction of up to 104 new bedspaces will help to improve the vitality and viability of the area. Activity levels associated with the building will take place over longer hours than compared to traditional retail activities. New students will also bring increased expenditure into the town and help to generate increased levels of economic activity, with significant potential for increased spending in local shops and services;
- The additional activity arising from the proposed development is unlikely to have any significant or detrimental impact upon neighbouring land uses by virtue of the fact that the site is already in a busy town centre location;
- The proposals support and promote the need for new investment and a diversification to provide a wider range of facilities in the Town and encourage economic investment in accordance with the aims and objectives of the Local Plan.
- In terms of Policy RET DM1, the proposals are considered to be fully compliant.

- 5.20 On balance, it is considered that the principle of the proposed development is acceptable.

2) Design considerations

Policy Background

- 5.21 Planning Policies and Central Government Advice support the efficient and effective use of land. Section 12 of the **NPPF (2021)** deals with 'Achieving Well Designed Places'. Paragraph 126 States:

"The creation of high quality buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities. Being clear about design expectations, and how these will be tested, is essential for achieving this. So too is effective engagement between applicants, communities, local planning authorities and other interests throughout the process."

5.22 Whilst Paragraph 130 requires that planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments:

- “a) will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;*
- b) are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;*
- c) are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities);*
- d) establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit;*
- e) optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development (including green and other public space) and support local facilities and transport networks; and*
- f) create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users⁴; and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience.”*

5.23 **Adopted Local Plan (2018)** Policy D SP1 states:

“All development proposals must make efficient use of land and reflect the characteristics of the site and local area in their layout, landscaping, density, mix, scale, massing, character, materials, finish and architectural details. Development proposals should have been derived from: a thorough site analysis and context appraisal; adherence to objectives informing sustainable design (inclusivity, adaptability, security, attractiveness and usability, health and wellbeing and climate change mitigation); and the influence these objectives have on the form of the development. All development proposals must reflect the efficient use of land, layout, landscape and its setting, density, mix, scale, massing, character, materials, finish, architectural details and nearby habitats of the site and local area.

With large major developments (as defined in the GDPO 1995 as amended) or allocated sites in the Development Plan, in addition to a Design and Access Statement, a context appraisal, context plan and analysis of the site will also be required.”

5.24 Policy D DM1 sets out the Council’s emerging requirements in respect of aspects of form and design quality – namely character, appearance/attractiveness, innovation, adaptability, crime prevention, trees and woodland, solar gain, public realm, layout – movement and legibility, public art, density, scale and aspects of form and design quality. Each of these matters are assessed in the commentary on the design of the proposals below.

5.25 **Bognor Regis Neighbourhood Development Plan (2015)** Policy 8a, deals with design and states:

“Development Proposals for sites marked as Key Priority Sites (8c to 8j) and other forthcoming Major Developments shall demonstrate ‘excellence in design, especially design that will help establish a strong sense of place and create attractive and comfortable places to live, work and visit.’ (NPPF, S58)

Development Proposals that fail to take the opportunities available for enhancing the local character and quality of the area and the way it functions will not be (permitted) supported. A central part of achieving excellence in design is responding to and integrating with local surroundings landscape and context as well as the built environment through:

- Using good quality materials that complement the existing palette of materials used within the area;*
- Using planting (typical of the south coast) commonly found on the south coast for highway boundaries wherever possible and in keeping with the existing streetscape;*

- Ensuring safe access for pedestrians, cyclists and motorists
- Providing adequate refuse and recycling storage incorporated into the scheme to minimise visual impact innovative design that is sustainable in its design, construction and operation;
- Promoting high quality spaces and light;
- Adopting the principles of sustainable urban drainage, where appropriate.”

Commentary

- 5.26 The application submission is accompanied by a Design & Access Statement prepared by Cover Storey Architects, which sets out a detailed design justification for the proposals.
- 5.27 In formulating the proposals, detailed consideration has been given to the adopted and emerging planning policy and guidance.
- 5.28 In the context of emerging Policy D DM1 of the Local Plan, the proposals are justified on the grounds of the following:

Character Make the best possible use of the available land by reflecting or improving upon the character of the site and the surrounding area, in terms of its scale, massing, aspect, siting, layout, density, building materials (colour, texture), landscaping, and design features.	The footprint of the proposal has been designed to most effectively use the structure of the existing building, with a focus upon the load bearing perimeter walls. The design splits the proposal into two forms, a south-west 6-storey block with reduced accommodation and roof maintenance access on the top floor, and a single storey block on the north-east side of the existing roof. The design separates the new use from the street level London Road retail frontage through the creation of a new access to the non-retail upper floors from Bedford Street to the rear of the site. Bedford Street currently serves as the functional secondary entrance to a number of retail properties and does not share the same visual characteristics as the shopfronts facing onto London Road. The introduction of a new vertical core in this location, to serve the student accommodation is considered appropriate. This will provide access for residents, staff and emergency services. The 104 flats will be grouped in 25 clusters of between two and six bedrooms, with all flats being self contained, with bedrooms, bathrooms or en-suites and combined kitchen and living areas. They have been designed to meet the accommodation specification of the University of Chichester. A full schedule of accommodation is provided on page 6 of the Design & Access Statement.
Appearance/attractiveness Demonstrate a high standard of architectural principles, use of building materials, craftsmanship and hard and soft landscaping to reflect the local area.	The nature of the site encourages the use of lightweight/off-site manufacture to reduce additional loads onto the structure below. This has been reflected in the proposals for finishes and appearance. Taking into consideration the context of the town, it is appropriate to propose finishes similar to those historically found in the surroundings as to not appear out of place. The material palette chosen for the proposed development consists of: • White render finish, similar to the white masonry paint and lime render found in properties across the town;

	• Buff mixed brick slip cladding, which relates to the predominant masonry appearance of the buildings neighbouring the rear of the plot, shades of which vary from cement greys through to buff and red variations; • Aluminum window units; • A biodiverse/green roof. Due to the height of the proposal exceeding 18m, great care has been undertaken when proposing materials as to provide sufficiently high fire resistance. Insulations such as fire retardant and non-combustible mineral wool are proposed throughout the proposal along with a close working relationship with building control throughout the development of the design to ensure long-term fire safety inherent with the construction, and design methodology. A fire strategy is provided as part of the application submission.
Impact Have minimal impact to users and occupiers of nearby property and land. for example, by avoiding significant loss of sunlight, privacy and outlook and unacceptable noise and disturbance.	A Visual Impact Assessment has been undertaken by Cover Storey Architects and is submitted as part of the application package. A total of 15 views were assessed with the following impacts – Negligible – 6, Minor – 1, Moderate/Minor – 8. Areas which are considered to have a higher receptor sensitivity such as along the Esplanade, within Hotham Park and in areas of important buildings are not affected by the proposal. The proposal will have most impact on the Bedford Street car park and street scene comprising of delivery entrances and fire escapes. It is considered that the massing is appropriate in size with reference to the surrounding context and open space, and that the proposal will in fact bring beneficial change to the existing unappealing street scene. Areas with minor to moderate impact are residential streets which vary between 150 metres and 1,000 metres from the site. The resulting change to the views are in most cases negligible due to the orientation of the housing. In some cases where the streets are perpendicular to the coast, the topmost portion of massing may be seen above the existing skyline. In many cases, the impact is reduced where these views are aligned with Fitzleet House which masks a portion of the proposed massing. As noted above, a Sun Path Study has also been undertaken by Cover Storey Architects to identify how the proposed massing would affect adjacent properties and public space at the summer and winter solstices. This forms part of the application submission package. Particular attention has been given to the impact of the proposals and any additional overshadowing onto London Road. The assessment concludes that no further over-shadowing will occur on the London Road retail street during either the

	summer months or the latter months of the year following the completion of the proposed development. An acoustic assessment has been undertaken in support of the application, Full details are provided later in this section, however, this report concludes that the proposals will not result in acceptable levels of noise and disturbance arising from the development for neighbouring occupiers. With regard to overlooking, there are no nearby residential properties that would be affected by the proposals. Furthermore, as the majority of activity arising from the proposals will be at roof level, any impact from the day-to-day operation of the accommodation upon neighbours is likely to be negligible. Consideration has been given to light pollution arising from the proposals, and particular care has been taken to minimise overshadowing onto London Road. Hence the bulk of the building and the majority of the accommodation is located on the south-western part of the site. External lighting will be minimised and switched off between the hours of 2300 and 0700 (with the exception of security lighting).
Innovation Raise standards of design by embracing appropriate innovative design, new technologies and construction techniques, where a development proposal has the potential to do so.	The proposals have been designed to achieve a BREEAM level of 'very good'. The scheme incorporates a range of sustainable technologies as explained later in this section. The building construction has been designed to use lightweight and sustainable materials, including a steel frame and lightweight steel partitions with concrete cores. Highly insulated external walls and windows will reduce energy usage, as will rockwool insulation.
Adaptability Acknowledge diversity and difference. Buildings and places should be flexible to future adaptation, including the changing needs of occupants (for example ageing users, family circumstances), changes in wider work and social trends, and be able to accommodate potential differing uses of public space.	All flats are designed to be accessible to wheelchair users with four flats purpose designed to flexibly meet the requirements of Approved Document Part M of the Building Regulations. These include wheelchair accessible bathrooms and kitchens. The main core also includes a lift access. Whilst the proposal seeks to provide residential use to students and has been designed with this function in mind, however there remains a possibility that within the lifetime of the proposal there may be requirement for a change of use. Consideration has been given in this regard and several possibilities can be suggested. These include: • Staff accommodation for the local holiday centre Butlins. Over the past 5 years Butlins have sought further accommodation through the change of use of existing properties showing an area of demand for rooms. This proposal could alleviate such a demand by providing purpose built accommodation within a walking distance of the

	holiday park. The similar use requirements would not require any alterations to the proposal. Care home, assisted living spaces or affordable housing. With the increase in demand for homes for the elderly it is possible that through minor works and conversion, the proposal could provide new spaces for residents. The design has been developed with wheelchair access in mind, allowing every room to be accessed and providing a number of accessible ensembles and kitchens. The modular room layout could be altered to provide larger spaces for multiple occupants or additional specialist requirements with only minor structural alteration. In addition to change of use, the proposal also takes change of appearance into consideration. The lightweight steel partition system can contain much of the required insulation and waterproofing and allow the replacement of the facade without affecting the core structure. The plant room is located on the roof deck, with an existing separate maintenance access core. This can enable any future upgrades or replacements to plant within the life of the building, furthering its possibility to provide low-energy or sustainable services in the future.
Crime prevention Provide security measures that make places feel safer. This shall be achieved through natural surveillance and human presence by locating buildings and play areas along public routes and spaces, and making a clear division between private and public land to foster a mutual protection through territorial belonging. With respect to crime prevention, regard shall be had in particular to the document 'Secured by Design' and the 'Safer Places - The Planning System and Crime Prevention'.	The design follows all relevant Secure By Design protocols. In addition, a populated building in a central location will add an element of passive surveillance in times when the surrounding area is least inhabited, which in turn can help reduce anti-social behaviour in town centres. The occupation of the roof will act as prevention of unlawful access onto the roofs of the shops along this road. It is known that the close proximity of the existing flat roofs encourages children and teenagers to access the roofs, which is extremely dangerous as well as an act of trespass. Lighting will further aid in reducing concealed locations available for potential crime. Public realm improvement will form part of the wider benefits of this scheme. As the footpath is not generous at the new entrance on Bedford Street, it is proposed that path improvements are to be included with the works to include a suitable handrail barrier or posts to form protection from vehicle collision. Additional measures under consideration include the introduction of a pedestrian crossing or similar at the entrance of the proposal. Measures such as these can bring benefits to both the residents of the proposal and to the general public, specifically the accessible parking spaces immediately adjacent to the site.
Trees and woodland	There are no opportunities for the provision of additional trees or woodland in this instance and therefore this criterion is not relevant to the proposed development.

All new development will be expected to incorporate existing and new tree planting as an integral part of development proposals.	There is however potential to provide for appropriate green roof provision as part of roof top biodiversity proposals.
Solar gain Within the constraints of the site and local context development proposals should, maximise sunlight and passive solar energy. Ideally development should be positioned (within a 15-20 degree margin) broadly south, with streets having an east-west pattern.	Daylight has played a primary role in the development of the proposal, the design seeks to balance sustainable utilisation of the existing plot with the benefits of the site context and location. Due to the nature of the site at present, the proposal is situated in a location unaffected by adjacent properties, allowing the full benefit of natural daylight and passive solar gain. The form of the proposal around an open courtyard acts to provide unobstructed daylight to each of the habitable rooms, with few rooms oriented North. The primary elevations facing North East and South West principally house the single aspect bedrooms, whereas the shared kitchen, living and dining spaces are situated within corner plots to provide dual aspect orientation which can maximise both the quantity and duration of beneficial solar gain throughout the day. The proposed fenestration has been designed to maximise the light to habitable spaces without detriment to the scale of the elevations. Windows are tall to extend the reach of the daylight into the rooms. The concrete staircore provides a generous area of feature glazing which will be absorbed into the dense wall construction to maintain a balanced warmth. Areas of rooftop reserved for plant and maintenance are to further take benefit from daylight through the use of photovoltaic panels.
Public realm Provide or enhance layouts, streets and public spaces so that they are attractive, socially inclusive, safe and secure, adaptable, with appropriate provision for planting, street furniture, and facilities for bicycle storage to create a place with attractive and successful outdoor areas.	The proposals will have limited impact upon the public realm as most of the activity arising from the proposals will be undertaken at upper levels, with the exception of additional pedestrian activity on Bedford Street. To ensure a safe pedestrian environment, some limited public realm improvements will be made in the vicinity of the access to the student accommodation (as mentioned above). Facilities such as secure bicycle and bin storage will be provided at the roof level.
Layout - movement Utilise existing networks or improve access via delivery of a variety of integrated networks, to and from residential areas, commercial zones, open spaces, facilities and public transport. Development schemes should carefully consider walking and cycling as an integral part of the overall design concept.	The proposals will positively promote walking and cycling and will be car free. Safe and secure cycle parking will be provided at roof level with the lift capable of accommodating a bicycle. New residents of the block will be provided with information about local public transport and cycle routes, as well as pedestrian routes around the town;

Layout - legibility Deliver or contribute to the ease of navigation within a new or existing development scheme through use of focal points (landmarks, gateways, vistas, corner buildings, active edges, existing topography), and/or a variety of detail within the public realm (sculpture, planting, street furniture, building materials, building detail, signage).	Opportunities for enhancing legibility in this instance are very limited and will be a matter for discussion with the Council at the application stage if applicable;
Public art Public Art should be incorporated into schemes where there is capacity to do so. Public art can encompass a wide variety of elements to include art as part of the design of buildings and developments, landscape and planting, street furniture, signage and lighting in the public realm which is accessible to all. This can also result in physical, permanent artworks and sculptures.	In this instance, there are very limited opportunities for the provision of public art due to the generally private location of the development site. Any requirement for the provision of public art would be a matter for further discussion with the Council at the application stage.
Density The density of new housing will make efficient use of land while providing a mix of dwelling types and maintaining character and local distinctiveness. Higher densities will be more appropriate in the most accessible locations. Proposals should take into account the density of the site and its surroundings. The density of large sites should be varied to guard against uniformity.	Typical density calculations are not applicable in this instance. The proposal seeks a form of development that is considered appropriate in a town centre location and should be subject to other design tests to assess its appropriateness.
Scale The scale of development should keep within the general confines of the overall character of a locality unless it can be demonstrated that the contrary would bring a substantial visual improvement.	The elevation design principally aims to represent the rhythm and texture of the street scene through the variety of panels and material. Simple forms create movement through the subtle changes in depth and step down in height from the south west vertical core. The height of the proposal reflects the neighbouring plot of Morrisons as well as the large open car park to the south west. Care has been taken to ensure the height remains appropriately balanced with the context of the site at street level and to prevent over-shadowing of the high streets. The proposal and its relationship with the surrounding context is expanded upon in the supporting Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment.
Aspects of form and design quality Development should also comply with the Arun District Council Design Guide.	On the basis of the information contained above and within the Design & Access Statement, it is considered that the proposals fully comply with the Council's design policies.

5.29 In terms of the overall design of the building, the case officer previously concluded that:

“The development will increase the height of the building. The main bulk of the height is set back from the London Road roof edge such that it is unlikely the additional height will be visible from the pedestrianised area. The full height will be noticeable from Bedford Street but although the bulk is greater, the total height will be marginally higher than the highest part of the Morrisons Car Park and much lower than the tallest building in the town centre (Fitzfleet House) which is around 50m high.

Views of the extensions from these viewpoints to the west of the site will take in the rears of commercial premises which front London Road. Such views will be taken across Morrisons car park and will take in the multi-storey car park. This area to the west of London Road is not considered to be particularly attractive and although the extension will be large it is unlikely to harm the townscape from these directions. Long distance views from Station Road/High Street to the north/south will be limited and from these directions, the building should blend in with the town centre roofscape.

Notwithstanding the character of Bedford Street, the applicant has made changes to the scheme to ensure that the extension is not read as an oppressive vertical elevation and to ensure that there is transition between the rear of Wilko's and the new build above. The revised design comprises three distinct elements which come together to make a whole: the existing street level; a remodelled first floor; and new upper storeys. The design uses the remodelled first floor which is viewed in landscape to act as a transition from the existing to the new vertical extensions above. The design uses a shadow gap between the two elements to express the difference between existing and new. New windows on upper elevations are recessed or protruding.

The materials have been influenced by the context in which the site sits and materials are chosen which are similar to those found in the surroundings as to not appear out of place. White render is similar to the white masonry paint and render found in properties across the town whilst the mixed brick slip cladding relates to the predominant masonry appearance of the buildings neighbouring the rear of the plot, shades of which vary from cement greys through to buff and red variations. The render has a long guarantee such that the appearance of the building will not deteriorate due to age.

The development demonstrates a high standard of architectural principles and uses materials which reflect the surrounding area. The density of the scheme is considered to be appropriate given the sustainable location and the constraints on development such as structural load and need to minimise overshadowing. There will be an impact on the character of the townscape in this location however, it is considered that this will be a positive change to the local townscape and will create a new focal point for the Bedford Street/Morrisons Car Park area adding to the sense of place in this location.”

- 5.30 The design of the scheme has not changed and is therefore still considered acceptable.

3) Conservation and Heritage Considerations

Policy Background

- 5.31 The **NPPF (2021)** at Chapter 16, places considerable emphasis upon ‘conserving and enhancing the historic environment’. Particular reference is made to the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation. It also states that any proposal that results in harm or loss to heritage assets should include a clear and convincing justification for the harm or loss. Any harm should be outweighed against the benefit of the proposal, including bringing sites back into beneficial use. There is a desirability for new development to make a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.
- 5.32 **Adopted Local Plan (2018)** Policy HER SP1 Historic Environment, seeks to give the highest level of protection to designated heritage assets. The policy states that non-designated heritage assets and their settings will also need to be conserved and enhanced in an appropriate manner. Development likely to prejudice these objectives will be refused.
- 5.33 Policy HER DM1 Listed Buildings, relates more specifically to listed buildings themselves, but does state that proposals will be required to “e. Protect, and where possible enhance the setting of the building.”
- 5.34 Policy HER DM2 Locally Listed Buildings or Structures of Character seeks to protect these elements.

Commentary

- 5.35 The proposals are located some distance from the nearest conservation areas – Bognor Regis Station, Steyne and Hotham Park, and therefore it is concluded that the proposals will not have any material or adverse impact upon any conservation area.
- 5.36 The impact upon a listed building is not just by works to the building itself, but also relates to that arising from proposals that affect its setting.
- 5.37 The proposal is neither listed nor situated within the curtilage of a listed building, The nearest listed/important buildings include:
- 1) Bognor Regis Railway Station (Grade II)
 - 2) The Picturedrome Cinema of Canada Grove (Grade II)
 - 3) Sussex Hotel, High Street (Grade II)
 - 4) Sudley Road (Grade II) 5 - 61-65 High Street (Grade II).
- 5.38 Further investigation of the visual impact can be found in the Visual Impact Assessment.
- 5.39 Relevant locally listed buildings include:
- 1) 12 London Road
 - 2) 24 London Road
 - 3) 31 London Road
 - 4) 33-34 London Road
- 5.40 The proposal has been designed, in terms of materials and massing, to be sensitive to its proximity to London Road. It is intended that the proposal is not visually read to be on the same street scene as the existing two to three storey retail units along London Road, hence the main elements of the building face out over Bedford Street.
- 5.41 The Council's Conservation Officer considered the previous application and concluded that the proposals would have less than substantial harm in accordance with Paragraph 202 of the NPPF and that the proposals would therefore need to weighed-up against the public benefit arising from the scheme. Accordingly, he raised no objection to the scheme.
- 5.42 Likewise, the case officer assessed the benefits arising against the less than substantial harm to heritage assets and concluded that the previous scheme complies with the NPPF and Local Plan policies.
- 5.43 The design of the scheme has not changed since the consideration of the previous application. On balance, and taking account of the information included within the Visual Impact Assessment, it is concluded that the proposals will not have any unacceptable or detrimental impact upon designated or non-designated heritage assets or the setting of these. It is therefore considered that the proposal complies with the NPPF and the policies of the adopted Local Plan.

4) Access, Transportation and Parking

Policy Background

- 5.44 Paragraph 104 of the **NPPF (2021)** advocates a presumption in favour of sustainable development. Transport issues should be considered from the earliest stages of plan-making and development proposals, so that:
- *“Potential impacts of development on transport networks can be addressed;*
 - *Opportunities from existing or proposed transport infrastructure, and changing transport technology and usage, are realised – for example in relation to the scale, location or density of development that can be accommodated;*
 - *Opportunities to promote walking, cycling and public transport use are identified and pursued;*

- *The environmental impacts of traffic and transport infrastructure can be identified, assessed and taken into account – including appropriate opportunities for mitigation and for net gains in environmental quality; and*
 - *Patterns of movement, streets, parking and other transport considerations are integral to the design of schemes, and contribute to making high quality places.”*
- 5.45 Paragraph 105 sets out that: The planning system should actively manage patterns of growth in support of these objectives. Significant development should be focused on locations which are or can be made sustainable, through limiting the need to travel and offering a genuine choice of transport modes. This can help to reduce congestion and emissions, and improve air quality and public health. However, opportunities to maximise sustainable transport solutions will vary between urban and rural areas, and this should be taken into account in both plan-making and decision-making.
- 5.46 Paragraph 110 states that all decisions should take account of whether: the opportunities for sustainable transport modes have been taken up depending on the nature and location of the site, whether safe and suitable access to the site can be achieved for all people, and whether any significant impacts on the transport or highway network can be mitigated to an acceptable degree. It clarifies that development should only be prevented or refused on transport grounds where the residual cumulative impacts of development are severe (Paragraph 111).
- 5.47 Paragraph 112 states that applications for development should:
- a) give priority first to pedestrian and cycle movements, both within the scheme and with neighbouring areas; and second – so far as possible – to facilitating access to high quality public transport, with layouts that maximise the catchment area for bus or other public transport services, and appropriate facilities that encourage public transport use;*
 - b) address the needs of people with disabilities and reduced mobility in relation to all modes of transport;*
 - c) create places that are safe, secure and attractive – which minimise the scope for conflicts between pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles, avoid unnecessary street clutter, and respond to local character and design standards;*
 - d) allow for the efficient delivery of goods, and access by service and emergency vehicles; and*
 - e) be designed to enable charging of plug-in and other ultra-low emission vehicles in safe, accessible and convenient locations.*
- 5.48 The **Adopted Local Plan (2018)** sets out the Council’s vision for the future of Arun. The vision for Bognor Regis is to provide a new role for the town in the 21st Century (paragraph 4.41).
- 5.49 This will include new housing and employment development, including well integrated new communities which bring tangible benefits for the town as a whole.
- 5.50 Policy T SP1 Transport and Development notes amongst other things that that the Council will support proposals that are designed to reduce the need to travel by car and gives priority to pedestrians and cyclists.
- 5.51 Policy T DM1 Sustainable Travel and Public Rights of Way, states that:
- “New development must ensure ease of movement, prioritising safe pedestrian and cycle access to the green infrastructure network and access to public transport and community transport services where a need has been identified. Access to alternative modes of transport including public transport services, the public right of way and cycle networks, must be available and accessible to all members of the community.*
- Proposals for all new development must:*
- a. Be located within easy access of established public transport service(s), existing pedestrian and cycle networks, the committed and aspirational cycle networks and the green infrastructure network which links the development with key destinations including places of work, education, leisure and town centres;*

- b. *Where applicable, contribute to the extension of public transport services to serve the development and community transport services to ensure that a wide range of transport services are available to all residents;*
- c. *Make provision for cycling and pedestrian facilities to meet the County Council Parking Standards, including cycle storage, convenient and secure cycle parking in association with retail and educational uses and sufficient secure parking and changing/showering facilities at places of work;*
- d. *Contribute towards the provision of a joined up cycle network and Public Rights of Way network, taking into account the aspirational cycle network, which provides convenient, accessible, safe, comfortable and attractive routes for pedestrians and cyclists and; where appropriate, horse riders, both within the development and in the form of links between the development and;*
 - i. *places of work, education, leisure and food retail;*
 - ii. *the South Downs National Park,*
 - iii. *along the coast particularly between Bognor Regis and Littlehampton,*
 - iv. *along the coast to Chichester,*
 - v. *Bognor Regis to Arundel, and*
 - vi. *Littlehampton to Goring.”*

5.52 The **Arun District Design Guide (January 2021)** has been prepared as a Supplementary Planning Document to provide further guidance on design policies contained within Arun’s Local Plan. While the Guide is a material consideration in Arun District Council’s decision-making, the design solutions specified within are guidance only, and alternative approaches may be acceptable, when sufficiently justified and after the local authority’s approval.

5.53 This Design Guide provides direction on how good design is to be achieved throughout Arun, in order that the future urban form and townscape are developed in a holistic manner that makes the best of the opportunities that the District has to offer.

5.54 Transport Assessments, Statements and Travel Plans should ensure that they cover the Strategic Road Network where appropriate, incorporating appropriate traffic modelling and analysis. A Movement Strategy should set out the movement network and hierarchy, explaining how this connects to existing routes and encourages healthy, sustainable and pleasant travel.

5.55 The use of electric vehicles is an important measure in reducing emissions and is steadily growing. All new development, including conversions, should therefore make appropriate provision for electric and plug-in hybrid vehicle parking and charging as per the Arun District Council Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Standards Study (2017) and Parking Standards SPG (2020), which sets out a gradual increase in the number of electric parking spaces as a percentage of total provision from 20% in 2018, 30% in 2023, 50% in 2028 to 100% in 2033.

5.56 The Council’s **Parking Standards SPD (January 2020)** has also been taken into consideration in the context of this proposal.

5.57 Policy 6 – Key Gateways and Promotion of Sustainable Travel, of the **Bognor Regis Neighbourhood Development Plan (2015)**, states:

“Development proposals will be expected to maintain and extend, where possible, emerging networks of: rights of way, cycle routes and pedestrian facilities in the town. Major developments must demonstrate, through a Transport Assessment and a Travel Plan, no severe cumulative transport impact, and exploitation of opportunities to improve pedestrian and cycle movement and vehicle parking provision. Priorities for investment in street improvements are the designated Key Gateways on the key priorities map.”

5.58 Policy 8b – Car Parking, states:

“Development Proposals of sites marked up as key priority sites (8c to 8j) and other major developments should demonstrate through a Transport Assessment and Travel Plan they do not impact on existing capacity of public highways to accommodate parking. This process should have regard for the seasonality of parking needs in a resort town such as Bognor Regis.”

Commentary

- 5.59 Ridge have undertaken a Transportation Statement in support of the planning application submission. This is also accompanied by a Framework Construction Logistics Plan.
- 5.60 The development site is located in a city centre area and hence is in close proximity to cycle routes, local and regional bus services, train station and local amenities. There will therefore be no significant generation of car trips and the trips generated will promote sustainable transport.
- 5.61 It is intended that the proposal will be car free and students occupying the development will not be permitted to bring their cars to the town. The scheme provides for 60 secured cycle parking spaces at second floor roof level (ground floor of the proposed student residential development). These are accessed via the lift from Bedford Street.
- 5.62 Refuse storage is proposed at second floor roof level within a ventilated bin store. It is proposed that students will take refuse to that store, and refuse will be removed from the site by the waste contractor who will use the proposed service lift for the removal of bins to street level at the time of collection. Due to a lack of street level space, it is not intended for any on street refuse bin storage to be provided.
- 5.63 Traffic Collision data has been obtained from Sussex Police for the last five years up to December 2020. The data presented does not suggest there are any existing issues with the highway network immediately local to the site that result in road traffic accidents. Notably, only three slight injury accidents occurred in the vicinity of the site on Bedford Street and London Road. These were caused by driver or pedestrian error rather than as a result of highway design issues.
- 5.64 Due to the location of the site in a city centre area construction traffic will have significant impact and hence a Construction Logistic Plan in close coordination with WSCC will be required prior to the start of construction.
- 5.65 Following a discussion with WSCC Planning Services on 29th June 2017 it was concluded that due to the sustainable location and proposed usage of the development for student flats a standalone Travel Plan for the site would not be necessary. The new development will be incorporated into the existing Travel Plan for the University of Chichester and in particular promote the existing measures already in place for the University, or a new standalone Travel Plan for the Site will be prepared based on the agreed principles of the University of Chichester Plan.
- 5.66 The Transport Statement concludes that the development is suitably located within close proximity to good public transport infrastructure and is in suitable walking and cycling distance to a number of core local amenities, as outlined within the Tra02 BREEAM UK New Construction non-domestic buildings technical manual 2016. It is therefore anticipated that the trips generated by the proposed development will not have any severe effect on the operation or safety of the highway network.
- 5.67 The construction phase of works can be safely undertaken without a significant impact upon the operation or safety of the local highway network based upon the Framework Construction Management Plan to be submitted with the planning application and the subsequent Full Construction Management Plan, secured by planning condition, to be submitted for approval by the appointed contractor.
- 5.68 Based upon the analysis within this report the proposed development complies with national and local policy guidance for development. The development proposal complies with the core aim of the West Sussex Transport Plan 2011-2026 to achieve efficient, less congested transport networks, whilst strengthening the economy of the area.
- 5.69 The case officer noted in his report on the previous application that:

“West Sussex Highways have assessed the proposal and raise no objections. They state the proposals is not be anticipated to generate any significant increase in vehicle movements which would warrant an objection in highway capacity terms. In respect of parking, they note that the Transport Statement states that tenancy leases will contain a stipulation that residents will not be car users and this should

deter residents from owning a car. This is repeated in the submitted Management Plan and a condition will be imposed to enforce this plan. This will also apply should the use in future become a HMO. Due to the sustainable location, students will not need to own a car to get between the site and the University or to access shops, local services and other facilities. Highways consider the nil parking provision would not adversely affect highway safety

The Management Plan states that tenants move/out days will be staggered during summer months such that the impact on existing local pay & display parking facilities will be minimised. The application includes a large internal cycle store such that students can cycle to and from nearby facilities whilst remaining confident of the security of their bicycle.

It is considered the proposal complies with the NPPF and the relevant policies of the development plan."

- 5.70 On balance it is considered that this is an appropriate use for the site, which lies in an accessible location. The proposed development will have no adverse traffic impact and there are no transportation reasons as to why the proposals should not be granted consent.

5) Sustainability and Energy Efficiency

Policy Background

- 5.71 The **NPPF (2021)** not only strongly advocates the sustainable location of development, but also the sustainable use of materials in the construction of new proposals.

- 5.72 Policy ECC SP1 Adapting to Climate Change of the **Adopted Local Plan (2018)** states that:

"The Council will support development which is located and appropriately designed to adapt to impacts arising from climate change such as the increased probability of tidal and fluvial flooding; water stress; health impacts as a result of extreme temperatures and a decline in the quality of habitats and richness of biodiversity.

In order to achieve this, development must be designed to take account of the following issues:

- a. Location (in relation to flood risk and vulnerability to coastal erosion);*
- b. Water efficiency;*
- c. Shade, cooling, ventilation, solar gain;*
- d. Connectivity to the green infrastructure network;*
- e. Layout and massing;*
- f. Resilience of buildings and building materials to extreme weather events; and*
- g. Capacity of drainage systems and incorporation of Sustainable urban Drainage Systems (SuDS)."*

- 5.73 In terms of energy and sustainability, Policy ECC SP2 Energy and Climate Change Mitigation states:

"All new residential and commercial development (including conversions, extensions and changes of use) will be expected to be energy efficient and to demonstrate how they will:

- a. Achieve energy efficiency measures that reflect the current standards applicable at the time of submission;*
- b. Use design and layout to promote energy efficiency; and*
- c. Incorporate decentralised, renewable and low carbon energy supply systems, for example small-scale renewable energy systems such as solar panels.*

All major developments must produce 10% of the total predicted energy requirements from renewable or low carbon energy generation on site, unless it can be demonstrated that this is unviable. Energy efficiency measures will be taken into consideration when the total predicted energy requirements are calculated. The Council will consider 'allowable solutions' where it is clearly demonstrated that the provision of on site renewable or low carbon energy generation is unviable or not feasible.

Where planning permission is required to retrofit energy efficiency measures into existing development, schemes will be permitted, subject to the Design and Built Heritage policies.

In assessing the achievement of these standards the Council will consider:

- Site constraints;
- Technical viability;
- Financial viability; and
- Delivery of additional benefits."

- 5.74 With regard to renewable energy, Policy ECC DM1 Renewable Energy, relates specifically to the provision of renewable energy developments.
- 5.75 The **Arun District Design Guide (January 2021)** encourages sustainable development and managed future growth to ensure that change across the District is appropriate to meet the needs of the local area.
- 5.76 It is a requirement in the Guide that design must demonstrate that each step of the energy hierarchy is followed.
- 5.77 The Guide also sets out a checklist for items relating to Energy & Carbon that should be considered for new developments, as set out below:
- 1) Set targets for energy and carbon reductions beyond the relevant Part L Building Regulations.
 - 2) Demonstrates consideration of embodied carbon (emissions from the manufacture, transport and construction of building materials, together with end of life emissions);
 - 3) Incorporates passive solar design measures such as avoiding single aspects, including south facing windows on habitable rooms, minimising norther facing glazing, using roof lights and sunpipes and providing shading to south facing windows through tree cover;
 - 4) Uses heat recovery systems wherever mechanical ventilation is installed (MVHR);
 - 5) Considers the ventilation strategy alongside proposed air tightness levels, to ensure buildings are not left susceptible to mould growth. This may include hydrothermal modelling.
- 5.78 The **Neighbourhood Development Plan** Policy 4 states with regard to the re-use of floors above retail premises that:

"Applicants should where appropriate apply for improved access, extensions, sub-division of plats and energy efficiency measures to increase the suitability and marketability of town centre properties and lads for local employment and residential uses."

Commentary

BREEAM

- 5.79 A BREEAM Pre-Assessment was undertaken in December 2017 and a copy of the assessment report, prepared by Ridge, is included within the application package. The proposals will contain a variety of sustainable technologies and the proposals target a BREEAM rating of 'Excellent'. Following the reasonable assumptions for the project a score of 74.9% is currently anticipated for the new development, which exceeds the requirement of 70% for BREEAM 'Excellent' and provides a sensible safety margin to make allowances for changes during the evolution of the project.

Energy and Sustainability

- 5.80 A Sustainability and Energy Efficiency Report has been prepared by Ridge in respect of the proposed development, and is also included within the application submission pack. This report demonstrates how the

key energy performance targets outlined in the core principles of the adopted Local Plan are addressed in the scheme, namely:

- Development of an energy strategy in line with the principles outlined in the Energy Hierarchy; and
 - Demonstrate that 10% of the building energy requirements for the scheme will be met from renewable or low carbon sources.
- 5.81 A sequential approach has been adopted in line with the Energy Hierarchy - assessing in turn the feasibility of reducing the energy demand of the building, using energy more efficiently, applying LZC technologies and using the remaining fossil fuels cleanly.
- 5.82 A number of passive design measures have been implemented including optimising the thermal performance of the building envelope beyond the minimum U value and air infiltration standards set out in Part L of the Building Regulations, providing a sensible glazing façade ratio and utilising solar control glazing to reduce the risk of overheating.
- 5.83 Energy efficient building servicing systems are proposed for the development to reduce the energy loads of the development on occupation. Key measures that are proposed for the scheme to reduce regulated energy usage are high efficiency condensing boiler technology, factory applied insulation on domestic hot water stores, heat recovery ventilation systems, high efficiency lighting installations with occupancy and photocell controls where appropriate and an intelligent automatic controls system to optimise system performance. Additionally, in line with BREEAM guidance on the control of unregulated loads it is proposed for key energy efficiency measures to be incorporated into the design of the lift systems and for plug in and white goods to be sourced in accordance with the energy performance requirements set out in BREEAM issue ENE08.
- 5.84 A feasibility assessment has been undertaken evaluating the applicability of a number renewable and clean technologies to the Vahnea Student Residences. The technologies identified as being potentially appropriate for the site were ASHPs, PV and CHP.
- 5.85 An analysis process was then undertaken assessing the energy performance of a number of servicing options incorporating these technologies using an approved SBEM interface. Two potential building servicing strategies for the scheme were found to meet the energy targets for the scheme. These strategies are summarised below:
- Servicing Strategy Option A - Direct Electric Heating System and CHP Domestic Hot Water System (Gas Fired Boilers will be required in conjunction with the CHP engine, with the CHP meeting the base load)
 - Servicing Strategy Option B - CHP Domestic Heating and Domestic Hot Water System (Gas Fired Boilers will be required in conjunction with the CHP engine, with the CHP meeting the base load).
- 5.86 It is proposed that one of these design solutions will be implemented to:
- Meet the energy performance requirements of Part L2A of the Building Regulations;
 - Achieve the 5 no. mandatory Ene01 credits for BREEAM 'Excellent'; and
 - Meet the 10% renewable target set out in the Arun Local Plan 2011-2031.

5.87 The case officer previously concluded that the

5) Other Environmental Considerations

- 5.88 Environmental considerations associated with the proposed development are limited for the following reasons:
- The site lies within Flood Zone 1 and therefore the Environment Agency recommends that there is not requirement to undertake a Flood Risk Assessment in respect of the proposals;
 - The site does not include any amenity of open space or ground floor yard areas and there are no ecological habitats or trees. Hence no ecological or arboricultural assessments have been undertaken;
 - The proposal does not require any ground level excavation and therefore a ground condition assessment is not required.

- 5.89 This section therefore provides a summary in respect of the noise climate and proposed lighting associated with the proposed development.

Policy Background

- 5.90 Sections of the **NPPF (2021)** relating to noise are stated below:

“174. Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:....

e) preventing new and existing development from contributing to, being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by, unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution or land instability.”

“185. Planning policies and decisions should also ensure that new development is appropriate for its location taking into account the likely effects (including cumulative effects) of pollution on health, living conditions and the natural environment, as well as the potential sensitivity of the site or the wider area to impacts that could arise from the development. In doing so they should:

a) mitigate and reduce to a minimum potential adverse impacts resulting from noise from new development – and avoid noise giving rise to significant adverse impacts on health and the quality of life...”

- 5.91 The NPPF includes the principle of the “agent of change”. This is of particular relevance to this scheme as it specifically places the onus on the new developments to provide suitable mitigation such that the operation of existing business is not affected. Paragraph 187 states:

“Planning policies and decisions should ensure that new development can be integrated effectively with existing businesses and community facilities (such as places of worship, pubs, music venues and sports clubs). Existing businesses and facilities should not have unreasonable restrictions placed on them as a result of development permitted after they were established. Where the operation of an existing business or community facility could have a significant adverse effect on new development (including changes of use) in its vicinity, the applicant (or ‘agent of change’) should be required to provide suitable mitigation before the development has been completed.”

- 5.92 The **adopted Local Plan (2018)** seeks to improve the quality of the environment through high quality development proposals. In terms of noise, Policy QE DM1 states that residential development, that is likely to experience noise from road, rail and air sources, should be supported by a noise exposure category assessment and be designed to ensure that residents are not adversely affected by noise, as well as planning for likely levels of noise exposure in the future.

- 5.93 In terms of light pollution, Policy QE DM2 states that proposals that include outdoor lighting must include a lighting scheme which demonstrates the following:

“a. No adverse impact on neighbouring uses or the wider landscape, particularly with regard the South Downs International Dark Sky Reserve designation;

b. Light levels being the minimum required for security and working purposes;

c. Minimising the potential glare and spillage; and

d. The degree to which outdoor lighting can be powered by on-site renewable sources.”

- 5.94 It is noted that the times of illumination may also be controlled.

Commentary

Noise

- 5.95 An Acoustic Assessment has been undertaken by Ion Acoustics and is submitted as part of the application package. This assessment considered the potential impact of existing noise on the proposed student residential units. Noise levels at the site were measured over the period 12th – 13th January 2018. The key issue for consideration is the introduction of a residential use into an area that is generally commercial in character.

- 5.96 The assessment concludes that noise levels in the surrounding area are generally low. However, the main noise-generating sources are the plant noise from both Wilko and Morrisons and the Wilko loading bay on Bedford Street where there is typically one delivery during the course of the night, which will have an impact upon the quality of sleep of the residents on that side of the proposed building. The highest night-time maximum noise level was generated by this delivery. As there is no alternative location for the loading bay, it will be necessary to ensure that there is a robust mitigation to control noise from the loading bay on Bedford Street. The required acoustic performance for windows and ventilators has been given for rooms affected by delivery noise.
- 5.97 The assessment and calculations presented within this report indicate that, with suitable consideration of building envelope sound insulation and ventilation, internal noise levels can be controlled to comply with the recommended standards set to prevent sleep disturbance.
- 5.98 The case officer's report previously concluded that the proposal was in accordance with presiding policy.

Lighting

- 5.99 It is noted that the proposed development is in an urban town centre location where the impact of lighting is less. However, to specifically address lighting considerations, including light spillage, care has been taken to reduce any over shadowing of London Road and to minimise any effect on the street scene. The proposal seeks to provide the majority of the accommodation on the South West side overlooking an open street level car park and to provide only single storey accommodation in the direction of London Road.
- 5.100 For external lighting we intend to minimise light pollution by automatically controlling the lights and using an appropriate average luminous efficacy. It is anticipated that the building will have external lighting but that this will be developed in line with the requirements of this issue (specific lighting levels and auto switch off between 23.00 and 7.00 other than safety or security lighting). Please note that specific examples will be provided in due course to confirm how the external lighting complies with the ILP Guidance Notes for the Reduction of Obtrusive Light 2011.
- 5.101 Beneficial lighting will also be co-ordinated with the Council and Town Centre manager to enhance the public realm.
- 5.102 It is suggested that full details of lighting including hours of usage may be controlled via and appropriately worded planning condition.
- 5.103 The case officer noted in his report that there was no objection from Environmental Health regarding light pollution and that a condition would be imposed to secure the details of the final lighting design. On that basis the proposals accorded with presiding policy.

8) Summary

- 5.104 A number of material planning considerations arise from the proposed construction of new student accommodation at 18-20 London Road, Bognor Regis. It is acknowledged that there are a number of constraints to the development of the site. Each of these issues has been considered and appropriate technical assessments have been undertaken. The resultant proposals forming the subject of the current application have been designed to take account of a range of potential effects and impacts on the environment. The resultant scheme demonstrates that the development of the site can be achieved in accordance with presiding policy and guidance and without any detrimental impact upon the environment of the site or the surrounding area.

6.0 CONCLUSIONS

- 6.1 This Application comprises the resubmission of a scheme which was supported by officers and approved by the Council in June 2019. No changes are proposed to the design of that consented proposal. The supporting information to accompany this application submission has been updated to demonstrate that the scheme still fully accords with current planning policy and guidance.
- 6.2 The proposals for the construction of new student residential accommodation above the existing Wilko store on London Road, Bognor Regis offer a sustainable and well-design scheme. The development will make a substantial contribution to the provision of much needed high quality student accommodation in the town as well as generating a positive economic benefit to the town centre.
- 6.3 The proposals were originally formulated following a process of pre-application public consultation with planning officers, stakeholders and the local community and have been designed to meet the University of Chichester's accommodation standards, should the University wish to take the accommodation on at any later date.
- 6.4 The planning statement sets out the full details of the proposed development have has assessed it against adopted and emerging planning policy and guidance. The scheme seeks to deliver;
- A well-designed and sustainable scheme which will make a positive contribution to the town centre, not only economically, but also visually;
 - The massing of the proposed building is such that it fits in with the character of the surrounding area, and whilst the proposed building will be seen from various points around the town, it is not visually intrusive and sits comfortably against the context of the neighbouring Morrisons car park;
 - The proposed palette of materials aims to deliver a building which respects the setting of the site as well as being functional and representative of its use;
 - In terms of traffic generation, the development will be car free and students will not be allowed to bring their cars to the site;
 - The proposals will utilise sustainable building technologies to target a BREEAM rating of 'Excellent';
 - The site is at a low risk of flooding and suitable measures can be incorporated in order to limit run-off to an appropriate level;
 - The site is not subject to any known environmental constraints that would directly affect the proposed development.
- 6.5 Based on the above assessment, it is considered that there is a strong justification for the grant of planning consent for the proposed student residential accommodation at 18-20 London Road, Bognor Regis.

