

Statement in relation to Canterbury City Council's "Call for Sites" 2020

Site at Parham Road

Goddard Planning
32-33 Watling Street
Canterbury
Kent
CT1 2AN

June 2020
Ref: 4066

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This statement supports our proposals for the transformation of this land from unused open storage land to a mixture of public open space and purpose-built student accommodation.
- 1.2 We attach a document prepared by architects which illustrates these proposals and demonstrates the considerations which led to the scheme.
- 1.3 The site is within the Parham Road Student Village. It has been used for many years as a storage area for plant, equipment and materials during the construction of the various phases of development which together make up the Student Village.
- 1.4 The site is identified at the moment within the current adopted Local Plan as protected open space subject to Policy OS9. It is part of a much wider area of protected open space on either side of the River Stour. However, it is private open space with an historic use for commercial open storage purposes. It will not come forward as open space unless some form of enabling development takes place or the site is purchased by the city council. The latter is improbable.
- 1.5 These proposals therefore represent a pragmatic approach to the future of the site which will deliver important economic, social, community and environmental benefits.

2 THE PROPOSALS

- 2.1 The proposals are illustrated in the attached Guy Holloway document. ~The proposals involve PBSA with around 60 student bedrooms. It provides a detailed analysis of the site, its context, the scale and use of buildings close by and the constraints and opportunities presented by the site.
- 2.2 Policy HD7 of the Local Plan supports the provision of purpose-built student accommodation. The recent appeal decision in relation to the Saint Mary Bredin School site was accompanied by an extensive document by Knight Frank demonstrating the need for purpose-built student accommodation within the city. The inspector concluded that there was a severe need for purpose-built student accommodation and this is supported by Local Plan policies. Those policies aim to provide purpose-built student accommodation in appropriate locations in order to take pressure away from existing residential areas where

family homes are occupied by students as HMOs. The proposals would meet all the relevant criteria (a to j) in Policy HD7.

- 2.3 Roughly half of the site would be landscaped and used as public open space with attractive sitting areas and urban gym equipment. We would also consider the possibility of siting a small refreshment kiosk; or a small café facility could be incorporated in the ground floor of the purpose-built student accommodation. This would provide refreshments both for those occupying student accommodation nearby in the student village and also for those walking or cycling along the adjacent riverside walk. The public open space provided would become an important feature and focus for the student village and an attractive stopping place on the Riverside Walk. It would greatly add to the visual quality of the area and its effective functioning.
- 2.4 In summary, the allocation of this site for a mixture of purpose-built student accommodation (PBSA) and for public amenity space would assist in meeting the unmet need for purpose-built student accommodation, the need for attractive amenity areas along the Riverside Walk and a valuable focus and resource for those living at the Student Village. These benefits would be achieved with a significant visual enhancement of this unattractive and unused parcel of land. Added to this would be significant economic, community and social benefits.
- 2.5 The proposals would meet the several criteria in Policy HD7, help address an unmet demand for PBSA and deliver an attractive area of open space for people using the Riverside Walk or living and visiting the Student Village.