

## Planning Statement

58B Normandy Street, Alton,  
GU34 1DE

*Prepared For*  
**Mr Raj Jeyasingam**

**3679**  
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CHARTERED TOWN PLANNERS

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## CONTENTS

1	INTRODUCTION	1
	The Application Site and Surrounding Area	3
	Relevant Planning History	3
2	PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT	4
3	PLANNING POLICY COMPLIANCE	6
	Principle of development	6
	Impact upon scale and character of existing building and local area	7
	Impact on conservation area and nearby listed buildings	8
	Standard of accommodation to be provided	10
	Impact on the amenity of neighbouring properties	11
	Highway implications	14
	Ecological implications	15
	Sustainability	16
	Affordable housing	16
	Infrastructure	16
4	CONCLUSIONS	18



## 1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This statement is written in support of the resubmission of a planning application (LPA Ref 32440/007) relating to a proposal for the existing building previously used as a two-screen cinema to be converted and extended into 6 Flats (Class C3).
- 1.2 As per the previous application the application is for the conversion and alteration of the existing building to provide 6 residential flats (four one-bedroom units and two two-bedroom units). The proposed works include:

### Ground Floor:

Internal works to provide three one-bedroom units (flats 1, 2 and 3) each comprised of; one bedroom, kitchen/living room/dining room and a bathroom.

Bin and cycle storage to serve the proposed development.

The installation of ground floor windows in the south-west, south-east and north-east elevations.

### First Floor:

Internal works to provide two two-bedroom units and one one-bedroom unit (flats 4, 5 and part 6) each comprised of; one or two bedrooms, kitchen/living room/dining room, bathroom and en-suite.

The construction of a first floor extension on the south-west side elevation.

The installation of first floor windows in the south-west, south-east and north-east elevations.

The installation of rooflights above flat 3.

### Second Floor:

Internal works to provide the kitchen/living room/dining room and WC for flat 6.



The installation of second floor windows in the south-west, south-east and north-east elevations.

The construction of a second floor extension on the south-east elevation over the existing roof terrace.

1.3 Section 2 of this Statement sets out the Development Plan and provides the justification for the principle of the residential development. Section 3 considers the development plan as the starting point for consideration and then other material considerations of weight to justify the proposal. Section 4 concludes the Planning Statement.

1.4 Accompanying this statement and to be read alongside this are the following documents:

Application and CIL forms

Drawings

Design and Access Statement

Heritage Statement

Parking Technical Note

Internal Daylight Assessment

Marketing Report and a statement from Mr Raj Jeyasingam

Asbestos Survey

Bat Assessment

Environmental Noise Survey and Noise Impact Assessment



## THE APPLICATION SITE AND SURROUNDING AREA

- 1.5 The application site and the surrounding area is detailed in the appended Design and Assess Statement and no need therefore to reiterate here.

## RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

- 1.6 32440/007 - Existing building previously used as a two-screen cinema to be converted and extended into 6 Flats (Class C3). 6<sup>th</sup> October 2023 Permission Refused. Reasons for refusal were as follows:

1. The proposed development, by virtue of the proposed windows in the north-east elevation of the building, would result in a significant level of overlooking and loss of privacy for the neighbouring occupants of 62 Normandy Street. The proposed development is contrary to policies CP27 and CP29 of the East Hampshire District Local Plan: Joint Core Strategy (2014) and the provisions of the NPPF.
2. The proposed development would fail to provide adequate natural light and outlook to all habitable rooms within the development and furthermore, due to the lack of sound attenuation, would result in a poor and oppressive form of accommodation. As such, the proposal is contrary to Policies CP27 and CP29 of the East Hampshire District Local Plan: Joint Core Strategy (2014) and the provisions of the NPPF.
3. The proposal incorporates inadequate car parking provision to serve the proposed development, resulting in displacement parking to surrounding roads, contrary to Policy TR5 of the Alton Neighbourhood Plan (2021) and Policy CP31 of the East Hampshire District Local Plan: Joint Core Strategy (2014).

- 1.7 32440/004 - Partial demolition to the rear of The Palace Cinema, Alton, and erection of 4 x 2 bedroom flats and associated parking. 15/10/2014 Permission Granted and implemented.



## 2 PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

- 2.1 Section 70 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that planning applications should be determined in accordance with the development plan unless other material considerations indicate otherwise. In the case of this application, the development plan of relevance consists of the Joint Core Strategy (Part 1 Local Plan), Housing and Employment Allocations (Part 2 Local Plan), the saved policies of the Local Plan second review and Alton Neighbourhood Plan.
- 2.2 The main material consideration is the National Planning Policy Framework December 2023(NPPF) which sets out the Government's up to date strategy and guidance for plan making and decision taking.
- 2.3 Those policies of relevance are found in the Joint Core Strategy, the Local Plan review and the Neighbourhood Plan only as set out below:

### [East Hampshire District Local Plan: Joint Core Strategy \(2014\)](#)

CP1 - Presumption in favour of sustainable development

CP2 - Spatial Strategy

CP8 - Town and village facilities and services

CP10 - Spatial strategy for housing

CP11 - Housing tenure, type and mix

CP13 - Affordable housing on residential development sites

CP16 - Protection and provision of social infrastructure

CP21 - Biodiversity

CP24 - Sustainable construction



CP27 - Pollution

CP29 - Design

CP30 - Historic Environment

CP31 - Transport

CP32 – Infrastructure

#### [East Hampshire District Local Plan: Second Review \(2006\)](#)

HE5 - Alterations to a Building in a Conservation area

HE6 - Change of Use of a building in a conservation area

H3 - Residential Development within Settlement Policy Boundaries

HE12 - Development affecting the setting of a Listed Building

#### [Alton Neighbourhood Plan \(2016\)](#)

DE2 – Building Design and Town Character

TR5 – Parking Provision and Standards

HO2 – Storage Facilities for Household Waste

TR3 – Cycle Storage and Parking

#### [Other documents of relevance include:](#)

Vehicle Parking Standards SPD July 2018

NPPF and NPPG

Technical housing standards – nationally described space standard (2015)

Town Design Statement

Alton 2020 Town Plan 2005



### 3 PLANNING POLICY COMPLIANCE

#### PRINCIPLE OF DEVELOPMENT

- 3.1 As detailed by officers in their assessment of application 32440/007 for a similar development, Paragraph 11 of the NPPF states that decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development. This is mirrored in Policy CP1 of the Joint Core Strategy (JCS) to development within the Settlement Policy Boundary (SPB) such as this.
- 3.2 Policy CP2 identifies a sustainable hierarchy of SPBs and sets out five levels of sustainable settlements (rated level '1-5', with '1' being market towns and the most sustainable locations for new development and '5' being rural villages and the least sustainable locations due to their often limited services). The site falls within the Alton SPB and policy CP2 classifies Alton as a 'Level 1' 'Market Town.
- 3.3 Policy CP10 states that sites will be identified through the Local Plan: Allocations, SDNP Local Plan or Neighbourhood Plans and settlement policy boundaries adjusted accordingly. Housing should be accommodated through development and redevelopment opportunities within existing settlement policy boundaries in the first instance. The proposal in this regard is policy compliant.
- 3.4 Saved policy H3 states that within settlement policy boundaries, planning permission will be granted for residential development provided that it would comprise:
- a. the re-use or redevelopment of previously-developed land or buildings;
  - b. the re-use of vacant or under-used land or buildings;
  - c. the conversion, sub-division or change of use of buildings; or
- 3.5 The proposal is again in full compliance with Policy H3.
- 3.6 In respect of the loss of the community/cultural/leisure facility this was again fully assessed under application 32440/007. Within it accepted that a "period of marketing of 13 months meets the requirements of Policy CP16 of the JCS and it is considered that





in this case the level of marketing submitted and the evidence submitted as a whole sufficiently demonstrates that the site is no longer viable as a cultural or leisure facility and would not be economically viable for any other commercial or community use. acceptable, subject to all other material planning considerations as discussed below.”

- 3.7 The for-sale board has remained in place since the refusal of this application and the particulars can be found on Curchod & Co’s website. The marketing has remained unsuccessful. The original marketing exercise and justification is appended to this submission for completeness along with previous marketing undertaken by Humbers Leisure. It is pertinent to reiterate that the existing building was unsuccessful in being listed as an Asset of Community Value by the Council, which demonstrates that there is not a high local demand to retain the cinema.
- 3.8 Thereby, it was considered, and remains the case, that the principle of residential development on the site is acceptable, subject to all other material planning considerations as discussed below.

#### 5 YEAR HOUSING LAND SUPPLY

- 3.9 The Council following the publishing of the latest NPPF in December 2023 have acknowledge that they can only demonstrate a supply of 3.76 years. This is equivalent to a shortfall of 111 dwellings. Therefore, East Hampshire District Council currently does not have a four-year housing land supply.

#### IMPACT UPON SCALE AND CHARACTER OF EXISTING BUILDING AND LOCAL AREA

- 3.10 Policy CP29 of the JCS and Policy DE2 of the Alton Neighbourhood Plan seeks to ensure that development proposals are of exemplary standards of design and architecture, with a high-quality external appearance that respect the area's particular characteristics. It requires that developments are sympathetic to their setting in terms of scale, height and massing, and their relationship to adjoining buildings, spaces around buildings, and that developments should make a positive contribution to the overall appearance of the area.



- 3.11 Officers on consideration of application 32440/007 accepted that “The proposed external works would not significantly alter the external appearance of the existing building and would improve the appearance of its principal elevation in particular, which currently appears rundown and does not enhance the character of the site and its surroundings. The proposed extensions on the south-west and south-east elevations would have flat roofs., in keeping with the flat roofs of the existing building. The proposed extensions would be subordinate in scale and largely concealed from public view. Should planning permission be granted, a condition would be imposed requiring the submission to, and approval in writing, of external materials by the LPA, to ensure that the proposed materials are in keeping with those of the existing building. The proposal is in keeping with the Alton Town Design Statement in so much as it respects the general character of its immediate surroundings.”
- 3.12 In light of the above, and limited external changes between proposals, the proposed extensions and alterations would be in keeping with the scale and character of the existing building, and varied character local area, in compliance with Policy DE2 of the Alton Neighbourhood Plan and Policy CP29 of the JCS.

#### IMPACT ON CONSERVATION AREA AND NEARBY LISTED BUILDINGS

- 3.13 The impact of the proposal on the conservation area has already been deemed acceptable on consideration of application 32440/007. Where in the LPA’s Conservation Officer noted:

‘The New Palace Cinema lies within the Alton Town Centre conservation area and has also been identified by the Alton Society as a building of local interest. The Local List has not been formally adopted by EHDC, but has been undertaken with some rigor and therefore is a material consideration when determining planning applications. The conservation area boundary encompasses the buildings in Normandy Street being drawn relatively tightly to the rear, utilising in the main the unmetaled service road as the natural boundary marker. The overriding reason for inclusion within the conservation area is the townscape value of the buildings fronting Normandy Street. As typical with many



commercial centres the rear of the properties in Normandy Street is of mixed quality and overall relatively mediocre. The New Palace Cinema itself opened in 1912 as the Alton Picture Theatre and later became the Alton Picture Palace. Its street frontage takes its cue from the Art Deco Movement, but otherwise its design is functional. The building's contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area lies mostly in the distinct street frontage. Its use as a cinema is also of significance to the conservation area, historically and in the contribution, it makes to the diversity of uses which enrich the town.”

- 3.14 The LPA Conservation officer also supported “the general thrust of the proposal. The most architecturally significant portion (art deco façade) of the Cinema building is to be retained. Whilst the loss of the cinema for the Town is regrettable it is clearly no longer a viable business. However, the proposed use as residential appears to be the optimal viable use for the building which also ensures the front visual element is retained. I do not consider the changes to other sections of building would be detrimental to the building's local interest or the conservation area. Overall, the scale and design of the extension to the building and alteration to the facades will ensure a good quality development that will complement and respect both the retained façade and the wider area.”
- 3.15 The application is accompanied by a revised Heritage Statement to address the changes to fenestration, but in essence these do not impact upon the conclusions of the LPA conservation officer on consideration of application 32440/007.
- 3.16 The proposal would preserve the conservation area and nearby listed buildings, in compliance with the provisions of the NPPF, Sections 66 and 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, Policy CP30 of the JCS, Saved [policies HE5, HE6 and HE12 of the Local Plan: Second Review, and Policy DE2 of the Alton Neighbourhood Plan.



## STANDARD OF ACCOMMODATION TO BE PROVIDED

- 3.17 Paragraph 135 (f) of the NPPF requires development to provide a high level of amenity for all new and existing occupants of land and buildings.
- 3.18 Policy CP29 states that the district's built environment must be of an exemplary standard and highly appealing in terms of visual appearance. All new development will be required to respect the character, identity and context of the district's towns, villages and countryside and must help to create places where people want to live, work and visit.
- 3.19 Paragraph 7.74 of the justification text to policy CP29 states the following:
- 'Future developments must be fit for purpose for many years and meet the changing circumstances and needs of everyone.'
- 3.20 Albeit not adopted for use by the LPA, the DCLG Technical Housing Standards (2015) serve as a useful and practical guidance in terms of internal floor spaces (Gross Internal Areas) to be provided for new dwellings. The Technical Standards require a minimum GIA of 50m<sup>2</sup> for 1 bedroom/2 person dwellings, 61m<sup>2</sup> for a 2 bedroom/3 person dwellings, and the proposed flats would comply with this.
- 3.21 Concerns associated with application 32440/007, insofar as it related to standards of accommodation, were raised in respect of the amount of daylight/sunlight provision within the development and noise from nearby roads and commercial uses.
- 3.22 Accompanying this report is an Internal Daylight Assessment which concludes that the revised scheme using the Target Daylight Factor (DFT) test as prescribed by the BRE guidance and BS EN 17037:2018 is successful. The assessed rooms meet the recommendations using the DFT test. This means the future occupants will enjoy a well-lit environment, with reduced reliance on artificial lighting.
- 3.23 In response to the noise concerns an Environmental Noise Survey and Noise Impact Assessment has also been undertaken and assessed against the suggested relevant guidance including CRTN 1988, BS4142:2014 "Methods for rating and assessing



industrial and commercial sound”, BS8233:2014 ‘Guidance on Sound Insulation and Noise Reduction for Buildings’, WHO ‘Guidelines for community noise, 1999’ and Pro PG 2017 ‘Planning and Noise: New Residential Development’.

- 3.24 The conclusion of this report is that appropriate target internal noise levels have been proposed. These are achievable using conventional mitigation measures.
- 3.25 Preliminary acoustic performance specifications for the external building fabric elements have been recommended such that appropriate internal noise levels should be achieved. A 3D noise modelling will be carried out at detailed design stage in order to determine incident noise levels on all façades, for each level of the development which may result in additional, less onerous specifications being suitable for façades which benefit from screening from key noise sources around the site.
- 3.26 The assessment shows the site, subject to appropriate mitigation measures, is suitable for residential development in terms of noise.
- 3.27 Concerns were previously raised through representations received to application 32440/007 that the proposal provided no external amenity space.
- 3.28 Officers noted that proposals for new residential development should include sufficient external amenity space to serve future occupants and that the proposal includes no external amenity space to serve the six proposed residential units. This remains the case, however Officers previously determined that in this case, the lack of external amenity space for these units was considered on balance acceptable, as the proposed residential units would be one and two bedroom units and the site is located in the town centre of Alton, close to public open spaces.

#### IMPACT ON THE AMENITY OF NEIGHBOURING PROPERTIES

- 3.29 Policy CP27 of the JCS requires that developments would not have an unacceptable impact on the amenity of the occupiers of neighbouring properties through loss of privacy or excessive overshadowing. Policy CP29 criterion (d) requires development to be sympathetic to its setting in terms of scale, height, massing and density, and its relationship to adjoining buildings, spaces around buildings and landscape features.



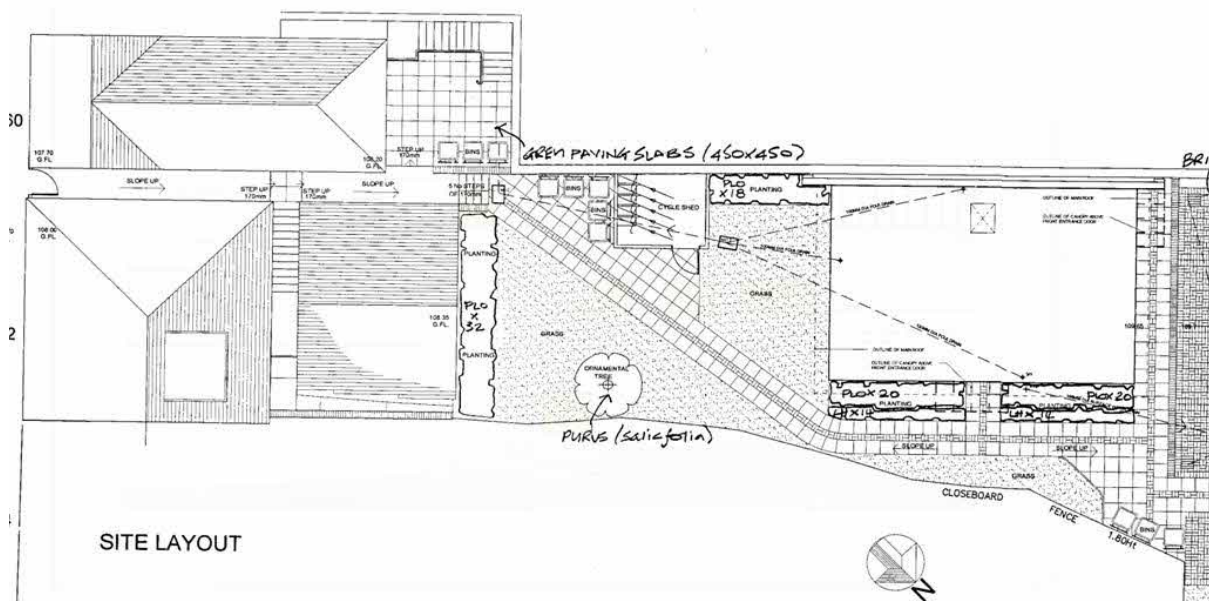
- 3.30 Paragraph 135 (f) of the NPPF requires development to provide a high level of amenity for all new and existing occupants of land and buildings.
- 3.31 In this regard officers have already concluded that there would be no harm to the following properties under the previous application:
- “1-4 Cinema Mews, located adjoined to the north-west of the application site which are recently converted residential units, would not be impacted upon by the proposal as the neighbouring properties would be screened by their own properties and the existing building.”
- “60 Normandy Street, the adjoining neighbouring property to the north-east of the application site, would not be impacted upon by the proposal as the neighbouring property would be screened by their own property and the existing building.”
- “58 Normandy Street, located to the south-west of the application site is commercial use at the front with residential to the rear. The proposal would not impact upon the neighbouring properties due to the little change in the scale and external appearance of the existing building. Due to the amended position of the proposed windows in the south-west elevation, the proposal would not cause a significant level of overshadowing or a loss of privacy for the neighbouring occupants.”
- 3.32 The primary concern previously related to the “the proposed ground floor, first floor and second floor windows in the north-east elevation would face towards the shared external amenity space for the neighbouring flats and would cause a significant level of overlooking and loss of privacy. The proposed windows in this elevation all serve habitable rooms and therefore it would be unreasonable to impose a condition to obscurely glaze the windows. Therefore the proposal would cause an unacceptable effect on the amenities of the neighbouring properties, in terms of overlooking and a loss of privacy.”
- 3.33 In this submission the windows on the north east elevation have either been removed, obscure glazed, reduced in width or increased in height to minimise overlooking from



these windows. It is not to be forgotten that these windows due to the thickness of the existing walls are recessed considerably more than a new build standard window, further restricting views out.

3.34 The level of privacy to be awarded to this “shared external amenity space” is also contested. It is clearly not private as it is overlooked by the dwellings of 62, 60 and the rear raised terrace of 64-66 Normandy Street.

3.35 Furthermore, the space approved was not approved as private garden areas, rather simply amenity grass land with bin and cycle store amongst dwellings like any residential housing estate, with a pedestrian route to the main road and vehicles accessed off the private road to the rear.



(An extract from the approve plan)

3.36 Accepting references are not part of the development plan, rather guidance, introduced this year by Mayor of London relating to Housing Design Standards for housing in London Boroughs, within it expressly encourages shared outside amenity space to be overlooked to enhance natural surveillance. Thereby any residual overlooking from the proposal, albeit extremely limited will not be detrimental and



certainly not demonstrably so when assessed against the need for housing in the District in the planning balance.

### HIGHWAY IMPLICATIONS

- 3.37 Policy CP31 of the JCS and Policy TR5 of the Alton Neighbourhood Plan require that regard is had to any impact on the safety and convenience of the public highway.
- 3.38 Policy TR5 of the Alton Neighbourhood Plan requires 1 off-street parking space to serve one-bedroom dwellings, 2 off-street parking spaces to serve two-bedroom dwellings and 1 visitor parking space per two dwellings. The proposal is a car free development with no resident parking or visitor parking provided on site.
- 3.39 Previously on consideration of application 32440/007 the County Highway Authority was consulted and raised no objection, subject to the Local Planning Authority, as Local Parking Authority, considering the provisions for car and cycle parking.
- 3.40 Accompanying this application unlike application 32440/007 a Parking Transport Note (PTN) has been prepared by Paul Basham Associates. This report seeks to address the concerns raised by the planning officer at East Hampshire District Council (EHCC) as part of the previous application. To support the revised application parking surveys have been completed to assess the parking capacity on the local highway network. The surveys follow the Lambeth Parking methodology and cover onstreet parking locations with a 200m walking distance of the site.
- 3.41 The development site is well located in relation to the local and strategic highways network and the facilities and amenities available within Alton. Where the site is situated in a town centre location, the proposed development is also very well located to benefit from the numerous bus and rail services in the area and therefore the proposed scheme can operate as a sustainable development. With many facilities, amenities and regular public transport services within walking distance, it is more than reasonable that site users would not need a car.
- 3.42 Two overnight parking surveys were undertaken within a 200m radius of the site in November 2023 in accordance with the Lambeth Methodology. The results of the





survey demonstrate that a minimum of 33 on-street parking spaces were available on the Wednesday and 30 parking spaces were available on the Thursday all within 200m of the site.

- 3.43 Alton Town Council's ANDP (2011-2028) (April 2021) recommends that 11 allocated spaces for residents (8) and visitors (3) are provided for the proposed development. The surveys demonstrate that there is sufficient available capacity across the local road network to accommodate the demand for 11 vehicles associated with the development.
- 3.44 Furthermore, to add to this the building was previously used as a cinema with a greater number of visitors albeit with a shorter-term demand for parking and visitors.
- 3.45 Within 250m of the proposed development there are three pay and display car parks that have a combined total of 81 parking spaces. These car parks would be suitable for visitor parking. The proposal is therefore acceptable.
- 3.46 Policy TR3 and Policy HO2 of the Alton Neighbourhood Plan requires adequate off street storage facilities for household waste and cycle storage. The proposal includes sufficient bin and cycle storage to serve all the proposed residential units. This would be in the form of an internal bin-store located within the ground floor lobby area.

#### ECOLOGICAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.47 Policy CP21 of the East Hampshire District Local Plan: Joint Core Strategy requires development to maintain, enhance and protect the District's biodiversity and its surrounding environment.
- 3.48 The County ecologist was consulted in respect of application 32440/007 and raised no objection, subject to a condition being attached to any approval securing the ecological mitigation measures detail in the submitted Bat Assessment Report (AEWC Ltd., August 2022). Such a condition can therefore be proposed to address this.



## SUSTAINABILITY

- 3.49 Policy CP24 promotes sustainable construction and whilst the Government has withdrawn the Code for Sustainable Homes, there remains a requirement to secure 10% of energy demand from decentralised and renewable or low carbon energy sources unless it is proven that this is not feasible or viable.
- 3.50 The Design and Access Statement details that the proposal could include an air source or ground source heat pump, solar panels and sustainable/energy efficient materials. Such details can be secured by condition.

## AFFORDABLE HOUSING

- 3.51 JCS policy CP11 states that to address housing requirements and to help to create sustainable communities new residential development will be required to maximise the delivery of affordable housing.
- 3.52 JCS policy CP13 requires that in new residential development, 40% of all new dwellings should be provided as affordable housing and that affordable housing will normally be provided on-site.
- 3.53 The Council however accept that since the adoption of the Joint Core Strategy in 2014, the Court of Appeal found in favour of the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG), which gave legal effect to the policy set out in the Written Ministerial Statement of the 28th November 2014. This policy sets out that for sites of 10-units or less, and which have a maximum combined gross floor space of 1,000 square metres, affordable housing and tariff style contributions should not be sought.
- 3.54 An affordable contribution is not thereby required.

## INFRASTRUCTURE

- 3.55 JCS policy CP32 states that where the provision or improvement of infrastructure is necessary to meet community or environmental needs associated with new development or to mitigate the impact of development on the environment, the payment of financial contributions will be required through planning obligations



and/or the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) to ensure that all such development makes an appropriate and reasonable contribution to the costs of provision.

- 3.56 The proposal is for 'C3' residential use and would therefore be CIL liable, however as the property has been in use for more than 6 months within the last 3 years a discount is to be applied as a result of the existing floor space.



## 4 CONCLUSIONS

- 4.1 This statement is written in support of the resubmission of a planning application (LPA Ref 32440/007) relating to a proposal for the existing building previously used as a two-screen cinema to be converted and extended into 6 Flats (Class C3).
- 4.2 As per the previous application the application is for the conversion and alteration of the existing building to provide 6 residential flats (four one-bedroom units and two two-bedroom units) and this submission addresses all previous concerns raised in respect of the impact on neighbouring amenity, the amenity afforded to future occupants of the development and parking requirements.
- 4.3 The principle of the development is supported by the Local Plan and based on a 'flat' planning balance the development has been show to be acceptable. Notwithstanding, whilst this is the case, the Council cannot currently demonstrate a deliverable four-year supply of housing. Even if the LPA identify an element of harm the application must therefore be considered in accordance with paragraph 11(d) of the NPPF which states that where relevant policies are considered out of date permission will be granted unless the application of policies in the Framework that protected areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed, or any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole.
- 4.4 Such significantly and demonstrable harm is not present. Overall therefore, the proposed development accords with the NPPF when assessed against the policies in the Framework taken as a whole and the Local Plan.
- 4.5 Planning permission should thereby be granted without delay.