

Punch Partnerships (PML) Limited
The Western, 205 High Street,
Rickmansworth, WD3 1BB



Planning, Design & Access Statement

CPC Ltd.

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CPC Ltd.

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1.0 Introduction

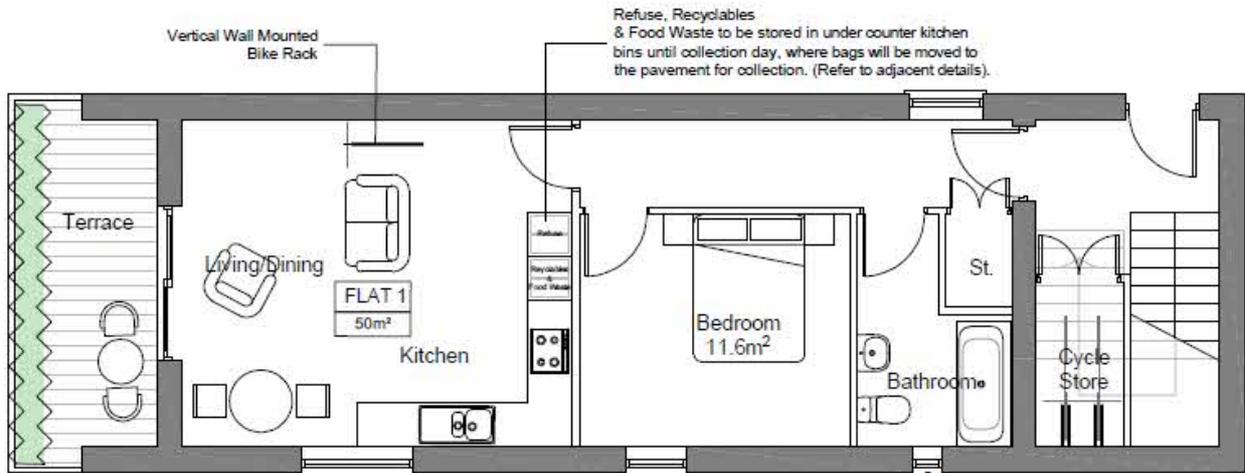
Proposal

- 1.1 CPC Planning Consultants Ltd (“CPC” or “the Agent”) have produced this Planning, Design and Access Statement, on behalf of Punch Partnerships (PML) Limited (“Punch” or the “Applicant”), in support of the planning application at the proposal site (the “Site” or the “Pub”): The Western, 205 High Street, Rickmansworth, WD3 1BB.
- 1.2 The application seeks full planning permission from Three Rivers District Council (the “Council” or the “LPA”) for the following development:
 “Retention of the existing public house, demolition of ancillary outbuilding and erection of three one-bedroom apartments (Use Class C3) utilising existing access off Wensum Way, with hard and soft landscaping, including the reconfiguration of the car park.”
- 1.3 The Western will remain in operation following the implementation of the proposals. The schedule of accommodation is as follows:
 - Apartment 1 1b2p – 50m2 (GIA) – Terrace
 - Apartment 2 1b2p – 50m2 (GIA) – Balcony
 - Apartment 3 1b2p – 50m2 (GIA) – Balcony
- 1.4 The Western Public House will remain in operation following the implementation of the proposals, with the revised car park containing 5 parking spaces including 1 disabled parking space.
- 1.5 The application comprises the following documentation:
 - Completed Application Forms - prepared by CPC
 - Planning, Design and Access Statement – prepared by CPC
 - Covering Letter – prepared by CPC
 - Existing and Proposed Drawing Pack – prepared by PLC Architects
 - Transport Statement – prepared by TPA
 - Heritage Statement – prepared by RP Heritage
 - Energy Statement – prepared by SAPS4U
 - Ecology Statement – prepared by Kingdom Ecology
 - Development Viability Report - prepared by Bespoke Property Consultants
- 1.6 The proposed site plan and proposed elevations are given below for illustration purposes, please refer to drawings 23.3442.102, 23.3442.103, 23.3442.104 and 23.3442.105 for further information.

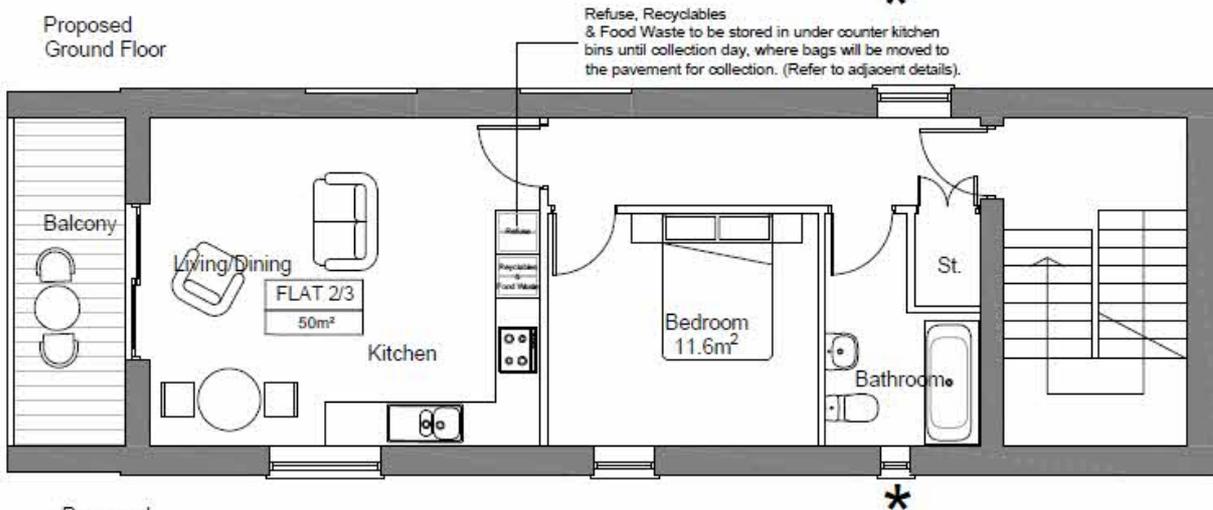
Proposed Site Plan



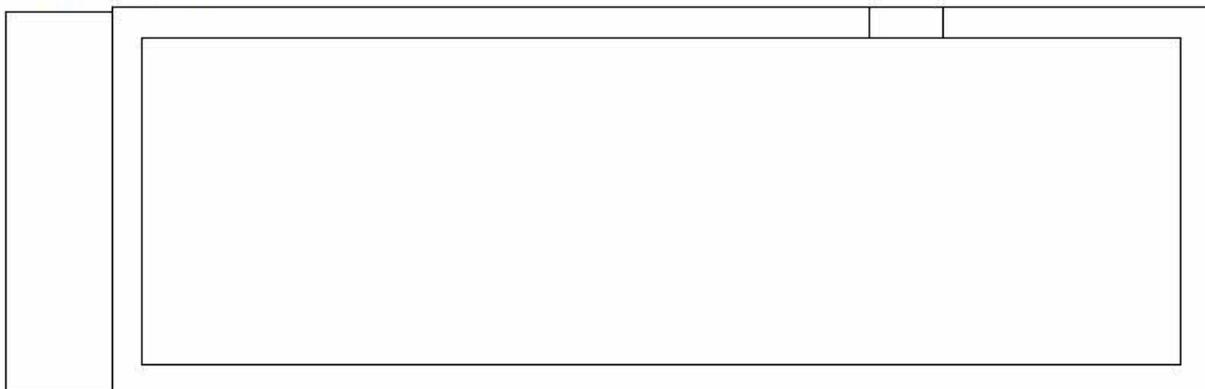
Proposed Plans and Roof Plan



Proposed Ground Floor

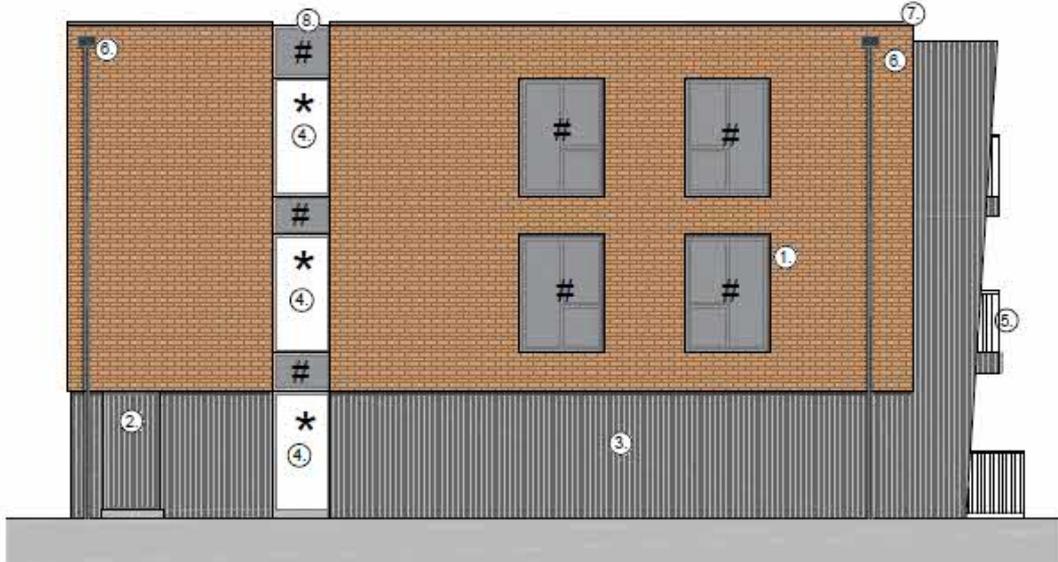


Proposed First/Second Floor



Proposed Roof Plan

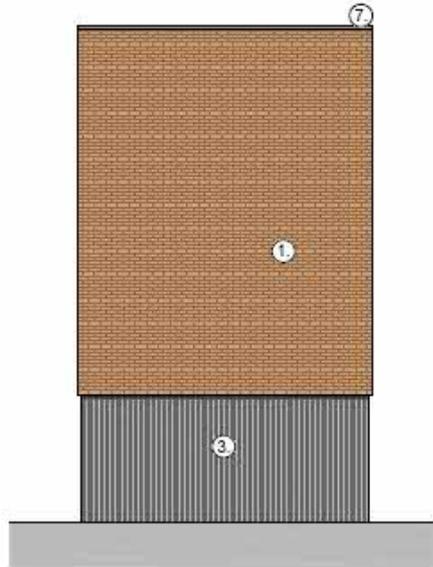
Proposed Elevations



Proposed
North Elevation



Proposed
South Elevation



Proposed
East Elevation



Proposed
West Elevation

Existing and Proposed Street Scene – Wensum Way



Existing Wensum Way Elevation



Proposed Wensum Way Elevation

2.0 Application Site and Surroundings

- 2.1 The Western public house is situated in Rickmansworth, within Three Rivers District Council.
- 2.2 Rickmansworth is defined as a principal town with the largest town centre, promoting a wide range of services and facilities. The site lies within walking distance of a variety of shops, cafes, bars and restaurants.
- 2.3 The pub itself is not a listed building, however, the site is located within the Rickmansworth Conservation Area. The Marks and Spencer store abutting the east of the site is noted within the Heritage Statement as not positively contributing to the Conservation Area.
- 2.4 A typical feature of the Conservation Area is the building line, preserving and enhancing the street scene, characteristically made up of shop fronts and an eclectic mix of Victorian and Edwardian housing fronting the high street.
- 2.5 There is residential development to the north, south and west of the public house, with the M&S store abutting the curtilage of the pub and car park surrounding the development site. To the west of the development site is a three-storey post-1960s flatted development, staggered in form and minimally set back from Wensum Way. To the north and south of the site is an eclectic mix of semi-detached residential development, set back from the street frontage, ranging from Victorian to 1980s development. The east of the site contains shop frontages facing the street with residential dwellings inter-dispersed between.
- 2.6 The site is located within 250 metres of a large open green space with Children's play equipment and within 1.1km of recreational areas, such as Rickmansworth's Aquadrome, Water Ski Club, Tennis Club, Gyms, Scouts Group and Theatre Venue.
- 2.7 The entirety of the Site is located within Flood Zone 1, with no risk of flood risk, according to the Environment Agency's Flood Map for Planning.

3.0 Planning History

3.1 The following applications relate to proposals at the application site:

Ref: 23/0678/RSP - Retrospective: Installation of parcel locker facility with bollards – Approved 28 June 2023.

Ref: 19/0140/ADV – Installation of two fascia signs, one projecting sign, one set of individual letters, poster cases and associated lighting – Approved 26 March 2019.

Ref: 18/2346/FUL – Installation of fire escape door to side elevation – Approved 22 January 2019.

Ref: 18/1976/FUL – Construction of smoking shelter to side – Approved 26 November 2018.

Ref: 18/1892/DIS – Discharge of Condition 5 (Noise Assessment) pursuant to planning permission 18/0902/FUL – Determined – DIS apps 06 November 2018.

Ref: 18/1752/ADV – Advertisement Consent: Installation of 3 internally illuminated fascia signs mounted on cladding, 1 internally illuminated projecting sign, various poster cases to front, side and rear elevations and associated lighting. – Withdrawn 07 November 2018.

Ref: 18/1747/DIS – Discharge of Condition 4 (Bat surveys) pursuant to planning permission 18/0902/FUL - Determined - DIS apps 26 September 2018.

Ref: 18/0902/FUL – Alterations and extension to form new entrance porch to rear, single storey side/rear extension with flat roof to form new kitchen and cellar, new kitchen extract duct, new external fire escape from first floor level with provision of external railings and fixed seating to external drinking area – Approved 06 Aug 2018.

Ref: 10/0816/ADV – Advertisement Consent: New fascia signs to front and side elevation. New hanging sign – Approved 28 June 2010.

4.0 Planning Policy Context

- 4.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004) requires that, in the determination of planning applications, decisions are made in accordance with the Statutory Development Plan of the District, unless material considerations otherwise.
- 4.2 The Site is within the administrative boundary of Three Rivers District Council, where the development plan comprises the Local Plan Core Strategy (adopted 17th October 2011), Site Allocations Local Development Document (adopted November 2014) and the Development Management Policies Local Development Document (adopted July 2013).
- 4.3 The Three River District Council’s emerging Local Plan has not been submitted for examination and its policies could be subject to objection and change. Under these circumstances, only limited weight may be afforded to the emerging plan at this point in time, with particular regard to the advice contained within paragraph 48 of the NPPF.
- 4.4 Supplementary planning documents have also been considered for the proposed development, including the Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document (approved at Executive Committee June 2011), Rickmansworth Conservation Area Appraisal and Character Assessment (August 1993), Cycling Strategy October 2003 and Three Rivers District Council Local Plan: Annual Monitoring Report 2021/2022 Covering the period 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022 (Published December 2022).

National Planning Policy Framework

- 4.5 The revised National Planning Policy Framework (the “NPPF”) was published in 2014 and updated in 2023 It establishes the overarching principles of the planning system which aim to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development.
- 4.6 Paragraph 2 of the NPPF states that: “Applications for planning permission should be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.”
- 4.7 Paragraph 8 of the NPPF stipulates the planning system has three overarching, mutual objectives for achieving sustainable development which are:
 - a) “Economic – helping to build a strong, responsive and competitive economy;
 - b) Social – supporting strong, vibrant and healthy communities and providing sustainable homes and by creating a well-designed environment with accessible services that support communities’ social well-being;

c) Environmental – protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land and helping to improve biodiversity.”

- 4.8 Paragraph 11 states that plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development. For plan-making this means development plans should positively seek opportunities to meet the development needs of the area and be sufficiently flexible to adapt to rapid change and proposals should accord with an up-to-date development plan; and for decision-taking this means development proposals that accord with the development plan should be approved without delay.
- 4.9 When determining applications, paragraph 38 stipulates it is a requirement that Local Planning Authorities should approach decisions in a positive and creative way. Paragraph 38 also states that Planning Authorities should work proactively with applicants to secure developments that improve the economic, social, and environmental conditions of an area.
- 4.10 Paragraph 47 states that planning law requires applications for planning permission to be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. It encourages that decisions on applications should be made as quickly as possible.
- 4.11 Paragraph 48 asserts that local planning authorities may give weight to relevant policies in emerging plans according to:
- a) The stage of preparation of the emerging plan;
 - b) The extent to which there are unresolved objections to relevant policies; and
 - c) The degree of consistency of the relevant policies in the emerging plan to this framework
- 4.12 Paragraph 55 of the NPPF states that planning authorities should consider whether unacceptable impacts of a development can be made acceptable via planning conditions. Planning conditions should be kept to a minimum and only imposed if they meet the test of being necessary, relevant, enforceable, precise and reasonable to the development proposals.
- 4.13 Section 5 on delivering housing sets out the Government’s commitment to boosting the supply of homes to meet local needs, and that land with permission should be developed without unnecessary delay.
- 4.14 Paragraph 64 states where a need for affordable housing is identified, planning policies should specify the type of affordable housing required, and expect it to be met on-site unless:
- a) off-site provision or an appropriate financial contribution in lieu can be robustly justified; and
 - b) the agreed approach contributes to the objective of creating mixed and balanced communities.

- 4.15 Paragraph 65 states provision of affordable housing should not be sought for residential developments that are not major developments, other than in designated rural areas (where policies may set out a lower threshold of 5 units or fewer). To support the re-use of brownfield land, where vacant buildings are being reused or redeveloped, any affordable housing contribution due should be reduced by a proportionate amount
- 4.16 Paragraph 70 states that small and medium-sized sites can make an important contribution to meeting the housing requirement of an area and are often built out relatively quickly.
- 4.17 Paragraph 97 states that to provide the social, recreational and cultural facilities and services the community needs, planning policies and decisions should guard against the unnecessary loss of valued facilities and services, particularly where this would reduce the community's ability to meet its day-to-day needs.
- 4.18 Paragraph 108 states that transport issues should be considered from the earliest stages of plan making and development proposals, so that:
- a) the potential impacts of development on transport networks can be addressed;
 - b) 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;
 - c) opportunities to promote walking, cycling and public transport use are identified and pursued;
 - d) the environmental impacts of traffic and transport infrastructure can be identified, assessed, and taken into account – including appropriate opportunities for avoiding and mitigating any adverse effects, and for net environmental gains; and
 - e) patterns of movement, streets, parking and other transport considerations are integral to the design of schemes and contribute to making high quality places.
- 4.19 Paragraph 115 asserts that development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe.
- 4.20 Paragraph 116 states that within this context, applications for development should 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 the bus or other public transport services, and appropriate facilities that encourage public transport use.

- 4.21 Paragraph 123 states that planning policies and decisions should promote an effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses, while safeguarding and improving the environment and ensuring safe and healthy living conditions. Strategic policies should set out a clear strategy for accommodating objectively assessed needs, in a way that makes as much use as possible of previously developed or ‘brownfield’ land.
- 4.22 Paragraph 124 states that planning policies and decisions should:
- a) encourage multiple benefits from both urban and rural land, including through mixed-use schemes and taking opportunities to achieve net environmental gains – such as developments that would enable new habitat creation or improve public access to the countryside;
 - b) recognise that some undeveloped land can perform many functions, such as for wildlife, recreation, flood risk mitigation, cooling/shading, carbon storage or food production;
 - c) give substantial weight to the value of using suitable brownfield land within settlements for homes and other identified needs, and support appropriate opportunities to remediate despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated or unstable land;
 - d) promote and support the development of under-utilised land and buildings, especially if this would help to meet identified needs for housing where land supply is constrained and available sites could be used more effectively (for example converting space above shops, and building on or above service yards, car parks, lock-ups and railway infrastructure)⁴⁸; and
 - e) 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.
- 4.23 Paragraph 131 states that 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.
- 4.24 Paragraph 135 of the NPPF stipulates 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 wellbeing, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users; and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience.”

4.25 Paragraph 165 states that “inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding should be avoided by directing development away from areas at the highest risk (whether existing or future).”

4.26 Paragraph 191 states that 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:

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;

Identify and protect tranquil areas which have remained relatively undisturbed by noise and are prized for their recreational and amenity value for this reason; and

Limit the impact of light pollution from artificial light on local amenity, intrinsically dark landscapes and nature conservation.

- 4.27 Paragraph 195 states that heritage assets range from sites and buildings of local historic value to those of the highest significance, such as World Heritage Sites which are internationally recognised to be of Outstanding Universal Value. These assets are an irreplaceable resource, and should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of existing and future generations.
- 4.28 Paragraph 200 states that when determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance. As a minimum the relevant historic environment record should have been consulted and the heritage assets assessed using appropriate expertise where necessary. Where a site on which development is proposed includes, or has the potential to include, heritage assets with archaeological interest, local planning authorities should require developers to submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation.
- 4.29 Paragraph 201 highlights that Local planning authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal (including by development affecting the setting of a heritage asset) taking account of the available evidence and any necessary expertise. They should take this into account when considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset, to avoid or minimise any conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal.
- 4.30 Paragraph 203 states that when determining applications, local planning authorities should take account of:
- the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;
 - the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and
 - the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.
- 4.31 Paragraph 205 states when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.

Planning Practice Guidance

- 4.32 Planning Practice Guidance (the “PPG”) was published online in March 2014. It advises that “The National Planning Policy Framework represents up-to-date Government planning policy and must be considered where it is relevant to a planning application or appeal. If decision takers choose not to follow the National Planning Policy Framework, clear and convincing reasons for doing so are needed. A development that is consistent with the National Planning Policy Framework does not remove the requirement to determine the application in accordance with the development plan unless there are other material considerations that indicate otherwise.”
- 4.33 The Guidance advises that the Statutory Development Plan is “the plan for the future development of an area”.
- 4.34 It consists of: Development Plan documents adopted by local planning authorities, including any ‘saved’ policies from plans that are otherwise no longer current, and those development plan documents that deal specifically with minerals and waste. Neighbourhood Plans, where these have been supported by the local community at referendum and subsequently made by the LPA.
- 4.35 Regarding how decisions on planning applications must be made, it advises that: “The National Planning Policy Framework stresses the importance of having a planning system that is genuinely plan-led. Where a proposal accords with an up-to-date development plan it should be approved without delay, as required by the presumption in favour of sustainable development at paragraph 14 of the National Planning Policy Framework. Where the development plan is absent, silent or the relevant policies are out of date, paragraph 14 of the National Planning Policy Framework requires the application to be determined in accordance with the presumption in favour of sustainable development unless otherwise specified”.
- 4.36 The PPG also states that, to be effective, Local Plans should be kept up-to-date and reviewed regularly, which it suggests is likely to be at least every five years.

Local Plan Core Strategy (adopted 17 October 2011)

- 4.37 The Local Plan Core Strategy is part of the Three Rivers District Council Local Development Framework, setting out the long term vision and policy objectives required to address issues and deliver opportunities to the district.
- 4.38 The policies of the Local Plan Core Strategy are the basis for deciding planning applications for development, to which this application has considered.

- 4.39 PSP1 Development in the Principal Town (Rickmansworth) - Policy states that new housing will be promoted on sites within the urban area, on previously developed land, prioritising and enabling the use of public transport. In addition, development should conserve and enhance the Historic characteristics of Rickmansworth, in particular the Conservation Area.
- 4.40 CP1 Overarching Policy on Sustainable Development states that all development must contribute to addressing climate change and the sustainability of the district.
- 4.41 CP3 Housing Mix and Density outlines the Council expect proposal to take into account a range of housing types and mixes to reflect the existing and future needs of the district. The assessment highlights a provision of 30% one-bedroom units, 35% two-bedroom units, 34% three-bedroom units and 1% of four+-bedroom units.
- 4.42 CP4 Affordable Housing states the LP affordable housing policy, adopted prior to the NPPF, identifies the need for affordable housing in the district. Consequently, outlines the Council will seek an overall provision of 45% affordable housing contribution from development seeking the overall net gain of one or more dwellings. In addition, and in relation to small sites delivering between one and nine dwellings, consider the use of commuted payments towards provision off site.
- 4.43 CP8 Infrastructure and Planning Obligations outlines a community infrastructure levy was introduced and adopted in 2015, contributing to the infrastructure necessary to support growth within the district.
- 4.44 CP9 Green Infrastructure states the Council seeks the net gain in the quality and quantity of Green Infrastructure.
- 4.45 CP10 Transport and Travel requires that all development should be designed and located to minimise the impacts of travel by motor vehicle on the District, furthermore outlining the need for developments provision of a sustainable and integrated transport network, promoting walking and cycling in accordance with parking standards.
- 4.46 CP12 Design of Development outlines all development must be designed to local context, enhancing the character, amenities, heritage and quality of an area. In addition, development should make efficient use of land whilst respecting the distinctiveness of the surrounding area in terms of density, character, layout, scale, height, massing and materiality.
- 4.47 CP13 Monitoring and Delivery states the Council will ensure a continuous supply of deliverable housing by preparing and updating a Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment in conjunction with the development industry and housing suppliers.

Site Allocations Local Development Document (adopted November 2014)

- 4.48 The Site Allocations Local Development Document (adopted November 2014) makes up part of the Three Rivers District Council Local Development Framework. The document allocates sites for housing, employment, retail, open space, education and community uses.
- 4.49 There are currently no relevant policies within the Site Specific Allocations Document to this proposal.

Development Management Policies Local Development Document (adopted July 2013)

- 4.50 The Development Management Policies Local Development Document forms part of the Three Rivers District Council Local Development Framework, in which all planning applications within the District will be considered against.
- 4.51 DM1 Residential Design and Layout states new residential development should protect the local character and satisfy design criteria, including consideration of; privacy, outlook, amenity, visual impact, and avoiding adverse impacts from poor design consideration.
- 4.52 DM3 The Historic Built Environment states that development will only be supported if it sustains, conserves and enhances the significance, character and setting of the asset and surrounding historic environment. Within Conservation Areas development will be permitted if the overall design constitutes preservation and enhancement of the developments setting. In addition, demolition within a conservation will be acceptable if the structure to be demolished makes no material contribution to the special character or appearance of the area.
- 4.53 DM4 Carbon Dioxide Emissions and On-Site Renewable Energy states applications will need to demonstrate development has been designed in line with Building Regulations Part L, reducing carbon dioxide emissions and meeting a zero carbon standard either through design or contribution to the Carbon Offset Fund.
- 4.54 DM6 Biodiversity, Trees, Woodlands, Watercourses and Landscaping states development should not result in the loss of biodiversity value across the district.
- 4.55 DM9 Contamination and Pollution Control states the planning permission shall not be granted for proposals that adversely impact the acoustics of the existing environment and/or would be subject to unacceptable levels of noise from the existing surrounding context.

- 4.56 DM10 Waste Management states that new development should consider adequate provision of recycling and waste storage, integrated into the development and easily accessible. In terms of construction the policy states reuse of existing materials and modular construction for new development would be preferred.
- 4.57 DM13 Parking policy states that development should make provision for parking standards, including one car parking space per one-bed dwelling and one long term cycle space per two proposed one-bed flatted units. In addition, the Council encourages the delivery of infrastructure to support the use of low carbon transport.

Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document (approved at Executive Committee June 2011)

- 4.58 The Affordable Housing SPD was adopted in June 2011, prior to the NPPF's first consultation draft published on the 25th July 2011 and subsequent adoption on the 27th March 2012. Consequently, the Affordable Housing Documentation has been considered in line with statutory guidance from the NPPF.
- 4.59 AFH2: Amount and Tenure Split of Affordable Housing states that proposals for residential development will require the provision of 45% affordable housing.
- 4.60 AFH3: Mode of Provision requires an affordable housing provision will be expected to be made on-site.
- 4.61 AFH10: The Development Plan target requirement for affordable housing provision for all residential development is 45%. Only where it can be demonstrated and robustly justified by viability evidence will the Council consider reducing the 45% target. Where a reduction is considered appropriate, viability will inform the:

- Level of on-site provision; or

- The level of any commuted sum (where such sums would be appropriate in accordance with AFH3)

The Council will consider whether it is appropriate to permit a reduced level of provision in each case having first considered the effect of different tenure mixes and only where:

- The applicant has provided a robust financial appraisal and the reasonable cost of an independent assessment on the Council's behalf has been submitted with the application

4.62 AFH11: Commuted Payment Formula states a commuted payment can be sought as a contribution to the developments affordable housing provision. The sites within the Prime Three Rivers Market area and as such would require £1250 contribution per square metre of proposed development.

Rickmansworth Conservation Area Appraisal and Character Assessment (August 1993)

4.63 Rickmansworth was designated a Conservation Area in 1974, extending in 1980 to include the Victorian development of the town. Three Rivers District Council aims to preserve and enhance the area in line with the Conservation Area designation.

4.64 The site is not noted within the Conservation Area character assessment, nor noted as a Grade listed or locally listed building.

Cycling Strategy October 2003

4.65 The Cycle strategy sets out guidance towards provision of cycle spaces within development outlining that 1 space is required per dwelling if no shed or garage is provided.

Three Rivers District Council Local Plan: Annual Monitoring Report 2021/2022 Covering the Period 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022 (published December 2022)

4.66 Three Rivers' Local Plan is more than 5 years old and has not been reviewed, the housing need figure has been calculated using the standard method, with the five year housing land supply being calculated from this.

4.67 Three Rivers District Council has a housing land supply of 1.9 years according to the Annual Monitoring Report 2021/2022, consequently, Three Rivers District Council is not able to demonstrate a five year + 20% supply of deliverable housing.

4.68 The document highlights that the Council is underproviding the Local Plan Document's target of 30% one-bedroom units in accordance with Policy CP3 of the Local Plan Core Strategy.

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

4.69 A charging schedule was approved by the Council on 24 February 2015, coming into effect on 1st April 2015. The site is located in Area A and charged a rate of £250.59 per sqm when index linked.

5.0 Key Development Considerations

- 5.1 This section underlines why the proposed development is both acceptable and desirable regarding the planning policy context as discussed in Section 4. This section will similarly address the technical considerations that are relevant to the proposals.

Principle of Development

- 5.2 The site lies within the defined settlement boundary of Rickmansworth, which is a Principal Town within the jurisdiction of Three Rivers District Council and, as such, the proposed dwellings are acceptable in principle in line with Policy PSP1 of the Local Plan Core Strategy. The site is located within the Main Centre of Rickmansworth, with access to various independent shops, multiple public houses, restaurants, cafes, schools, a library, community facilities, sports facilities and open green space.
- 5.3 The provision of new residential development is set out in Policy CP2, anticipating that 60% of housing requirements will be met in key centres. The proposed dwellings will make a modest but measurable contribution to meeting this strategic target.
- 5.4 Policy CP13 outlines the Council's monitoring and delivery of deliverable housing, detailed in the Strategic Housing Land Assessment. The latest Annual Monitoring Report 2021/2022 highlights that Three Rivers District Council is unable to provide a 5 year housing land supply ("5 YHLS"), currently providing a 1.9 years, meaning the delivery of new housing across the district is urgent.
- 5.5 Paragraph 11(d) of the NPPF provides that where an LPA cannot demonstrate a 5 YHLS, the presumption in favour of sustainable development requires the application of the "tilted balance" in decision making. The tilted balance provides that where the planning policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date (where the LPA cannot demonstrate a 5 YHLS), planning permission should be granted unless the application of policies in the NPPF that protect areas or assets of particular importance provide a clear reason for refusing development.
- 5.6 In line with Policy CP1, new development will be directed to sustainable settlements based on the first three tiers of the settlement hierarchy, which are evidenced as being the most sustainable settlements in which to provide housing development, related to the scale, character and role of the settlement. The site is located in tier 3 and designated as a sustainable settlement.

- 5.7 The proposed development will support Policies PSP1, CP1, DM1, and DM3. resulting in a positive and suitable sustainable alternative use of housing to aid Three River District Council's and Rickmansworth's housing targets on the previous underutilised brownfield car park.
- 5.8 Affordable housing is only required on schemes of ten or more units, the scheme proposes three residential units, so there is no requirement for affordable housing in accordance with the NPPF Paragraph 64. However, Policy CP4 and the Affordable Housing SPD require a 45% contribution of affordable housing of proposed development or an in-lieu of an onsite provision of a commuted sum can be sought.
- 5.9 The Application contributes to the realisation of sustainable development, as defined and emphasised in the NPPF definition, in the following ways:

Economic

- 5.10 The proposed development retains the existing public house and community facility, such that the proposal will have no impact on the operation of the business. Indeed, it is likely the occupiers of the proposed dwellings will patron the public house.
- 5.11 The proposed site is an area of brownfield land currently serving as a car park to the rear of the pub, the development will provide a reconfigured car park to serve the pub. In addition, the current seating area to the front of the pub will be retained as existing, therefore, the proposal will not have adverse impacts upon the offering of the pub and bolstering of its long-term viability.
- 5.12 The proposal for the new dwellings will benefit the local economy, providing new households of consumers and an increase in local authority revenue.
- 5.13 The construction works will provide a much-needed medium-term workflow to small and medium local contractors and associated professions such as sales agents.

Social

- 5.14 The proposal is of a high-quality design, with both soft and hard landscaping, benefiting future residents as they will have access to their own private amenity space and cycle store facilities on site,
- 5.15 The proposed development is within 50 metres walk to the Main Town centre High Street, including convenience shops, public houses, cafes, restaurants and shops and 250 metres to open green space with an associated Children's Play Area and Water Sports facilities.
- 5.16 The proposed development site for three one-bedroom dwellings is an area of brownfield land currently serving as a car park to the rear of the pub, proposing soft and hard landscaping in line with the Town's character and wider surroundings of Rickmansworth, aiding the Council's housing targets outlined in the Three Rivers District Council Local Development Framework.

- 5.17 The proposed development will make a measurable contribution towards the district’s housing stock, providing much-needed housing for residents.

Environmental

- 5.18 The development will be designed sympathetically to be in line with local character and local design guidance, conforming to the local vernacular and character of Rickmansworth’s surroundings.
- 5.19 The proposed dwellings will have provisions to store bicycles, encouraging sustainable travel.
- 5.20 The relationship between the proposed dwellings, the public house and neighbouring houses provides a sustainable approach, maximising the potential of the site and providing a positive and sustainable use to the brownfield land to the south of the public house, maintaining the permeable street scene and sympathetic materiality of the local vernacular, in turn promoting a sustainable community.
- 5.21 The proposed site will benefit in the increased green landscaping area, including private outdoor amenity space, increasing planting and hedging to promote biodiversity and respect the local setting.
- 5.22 Moreover, this Statement is accompanied by technical documents that confirm there will be no adverse impacts on the surrounding environment from the proposed development.

Continued Viability of the Public House

- 5.23 The Western will remain fully operational during and after the construction of the two dwellings.
- 5.24 Access to the pub will be unaffected by the proposal, and servicing arrangements will remain as they are currently. There will be only a marginal loss of car parking.
- 5.25 The proposal involves the demolition of one of the pub’s outbuildings to enable the proposal, however, the demolition of the outbuilding will not materially impact on the viability of the public house.
- 5.26 The proposed dwellings will have full cycle storage provision, encouraging sustainable travel.
- 5.27 As such, the proposal is considered to be fully compliant with the Three Rivers Development Plan documents and policies which protect community facilities and will ensure the public house remains a viable business.
- 5.28 The owner of the public house, Punch Pubs, is supportive of the application and confirms that it will not impact on the viability of the public house. Furthermore, the Publican of the Western public house confirms their support for the application, confirming the development will not impact upon the viability or operation of the business, as confirmed in the letter attached in the Appendix.

- 5.29 The development proposal is compliant with Policy CP8, concerning the protection of existing community facilities, as the existing public house will be retained and not affected by the proposed use.

Heritage

- 5.30 The Application is accompanied by a Heritage Statement prepared by RP Heritage, which concludes that the proposed development of three one-bedroom units has been carefully designed to respect and enhance the building's historical and architectural significance. Furthermore, there will be no harm arising from the proposed development on any of the identified heritage assets, and their respective significance will be preserved from harm.
- 5.31 The site is located within the Rickmansworth Conservation Area, designated in 1974, and expanded in 1980, with a Conservation Area Appraisal being prepared in 1993, this document comprises guidance on the historical significance of the area and its characteristics, which have been considered in reference to this application.
- 5.32 There are two Grade II listed buildings lying within 100m of the Site, within the Rickmansworth Conservation Area. Whilst the Western is not identified as a locally listed building, due to its age, dating to the mid-nineteenth century, it is considered herein as a non-designated heritage asset. Due to the urban form between the Site and the two listed buildings, there is not considered to be any potential impact upon their significance.
- 5.33 The setting of the Western comprises of the immediate surroundings of the High Street, being dominated by the Marks and Spencer store adjacent to the pub, which makes no contribution to the significance of this non-designated heritage asset, whilst opposite are a series of terraces and semi-detached properties of late nineteenth century date which provide an appropriate historic context for the building.
- 5.34 To the west lies an apartment block dating to the mid to late 1960s, Wensum Way, which again makes no contribution to the significance of the building. The rear of the pub is dominated by the small car park and the modern brick garage, with the rear elevation of the Marks and Spencer store, forming the dominant backdrop, none of which makes any particular contribution to any of the heritage values of the pub.
- 5.35 In terms of the proposed development's impact upon the setting of the Western public house, the development of a new modern apartment block of a scale and massing appropriate to its location

will see the modern garage be removed and the car park improved in terms of landscaping. As such, there will be a minor enhancement to the significance of this non-designated heritage asset.

- 5.36 Furthermore, the Heritage Statement concludes that the proposed development is positioned in an area where views to the rear of the supermarket are detrimental to the conservation area, and considering the high quality design and appropriate scale and massing of the proposed building, such views will be greatly improved. Thus, its significance will be preserved from harm, and there will be a very minor enhancement through the removal of unsympathetic views of the rear of the supermarket.
- 5.37 Consequently, the proposed development has been shown to meet the requirements set out within Policy CP12 of the Three Rivers Core Strategy Local Plan (2011) and Policy DM3 of the Three Rivers Development Management Policies Local Development Document (Adopted July 2013). As such, there is no heritage reason for the application to be refused.

Residential Amenity

- 5.38 The proposed three one-bedroom apartments have been designed to a high quality, with access to public transport and private outdoor amenity space.
- 5.39 The GIA for each apartment is 50 sqm, as evidenced in the schedule of accommodation for three proposed one-bedroom dwellings, which is considered to be an appropriate size for a one bed dwelling, as prescribed in the Nationally Described Space Standards.
- 5.40 The sitting of the development respects the area's important character whilst maintaining passive surveillance techniques onto the shared public realm.
- 5.41 In line with Policies CP12, DM1 and DM3 and the Rickmansworth Conservation Area Appraisal and Character Assessment (August 1993), a key focus of the design was through sensitive development that contributes to a sense of place, which supports community identity and pride, and ultimately protects the conservation area.
- 5.42 The proposed dwellings are reflective of the surrounding massing and form, in respect of the adjacent dwellings and local characteristics of the urban grain of Rickmansworth. The proposed apartments are orientated north to south, with private amenity space situated to the west and being appropriately massed to positively support the Western's established building line/pattern of development.
- 5.43 A key design consideration has been to mitigate any potential adverse overlooking impacts from the proposed dwellings. To the south and west of the proposed development, the dwellings' windows

have been positioned sufficiently far away from the existing residential and commercial development, with appropriate separation distances. The proposed flats are not considered to lead to an unacceptable loss of privacy for existing or proposed residents.

- 5.44 It is important to consider the relationship of new development to existing dwellings adjacent to the site, in response to Policies CP3, CP12 and DM1. The proposed residential development is massed to present minimal impact within the street scene, elongating the form east to west, and as such presenting an active frontage to Wensum Way, with this highway separating the proposed residential development from the existing Wensum Court flatted development.
- 5.45 The proposed development promotes a dual aspect window treatment, orientating the openings away from the public house and car park, placing private amenity space towards the existing residential development, maintaining over 16 metre separation distance.
- 5.46 The proposal has been designed to avoid windows into habitable room on the north elevation, to help to mitigate any overlooking from the public house car park and enhance privacy.
- 5.47 The location and appropriate separation distances of the proposed dwellings will not therefore result in an unacceptable overshadowing and overlooking to the Western public house or 'Wensum Court' residential flatted development.
- 5.48 Consequently, the proposed development preserves and where possible enhances the amenity of existing neighbours and the occupiers of the proposed dwellings.
- 5.49 The proposal utilises the existing access from Wensum Way to the rear of the public house car park, the public house's vehicle access will remain as existing.
- 5.50 The residential boundary will be distinguished from the public house's car park through a soft landscaping boundary and footpath access, as shown on plan 23.3442.102.
- 5.51 The addition of soft landscaping to the site will increase the existing biodiversity, enhancing the green and permeable local character of the Rickmansworth.
- 5.52 The urban realm of the development consists of hard landscaping constituting a car park providing a nil parking scheme for the flats, with self-contained bin and cycle storage facilities, in line with Policies CP9, CP10, DM6, DM10 and DM13.
- 5.53 The proposed dwellings are sited with an active frontage in mind, assessing the established terraced and residential surroundings, emulating Victorian and Georgian elements of detailing in a contemporary fashion, utilising brick detailing and vertical panelled elements.

- 5.54 A key consideration for development has been designing the elevations to reduce the proposal's visual prominence, to not impact upon amenity, health or security, and to construct to a high quality in the massing, scale and orientation of the development.
- 5.55 Furthermore, the living rooms are located towards the front of the Site and consequently, increasing passive surveillance and privacy onto the public realm and highway, in line with policies CP12 and DM1.
- 5.56 The proposal does not involve any application for additional lighting, therefore the proposal should not impact negatively on the existing level of public lighting.
- 5.57 The proposal has been considered to mitigate any harmful impacts of overlooking and loss of privacy from the proposed dwellings.
- 5.58 The proposal utilises the existing access from Wensum Way, with the provision of a cycle and refuse storage for the residential apartments, therefore supporting Policies CP1 and CP10 supporting the provision of sustainable transport options.
- 5.59 Consequently, we consider the proposed development preserves and where possible enhances the amenity of existing neighbours and the occupiers of the proposed dwellings.

Ecology

- 5.60 In line with Policies CP9, DM6 and DM10, the proposed development aims to increase the green infrastructure of the site, providing private amenity space and providing an overall net benefit to local biodiversity.
- 5.61 The site is brownfield in nature and is considered unlikely to house any protected species or habitats.
- 5.62 The site is neither designated nor immediately adjacent to any designated areas of nature conservation.
- 5.63 The site consists of a tarmacked public house car park and outbuilding, access to the car park is gained to the west with a primarily hard landscaped character. Kingdom Ecology have carried out an Ecological Walkover Survey and Bat Scoping Assessment of an area of car park and a detached outbuilding located to the rear of the Western pub. Please see the associated reports accompanying this application.
- 5.64 The development will require the removal of the outbuilding and will affect areas of existing car park only. The proposed development will not affect any trees or significant areas of vegetation, and the affected area of car park is considered to be of very limited ecological value.

5.65 Whilst the outbuilding has some damaged slates at the base of the south facing roof, no evidence of bats was found, and the features were found to be cobwebbed internally. Given the building's highly urbanised setting and an absence of bat field signs within the potential features, the building was assessed as offering a 'negligible' suitability for roosting bats. It is therefore considered to be very unlikely that any roosting bats would be affected by the development proposals.

5.66 The site is considered very unlikely to currently support any other protected species.

Affordable Housing

5.67 Bespoke Property Consultants ("BPC") have prepared a Development Viability Report to be read in conjunction with this application, providing an appraisal output for the proposed scheme having regard to the methodology and inputs outlined in their report.

5.68 In order to assess the gross development value of the proposed scheme, BPC undertook an internet-based market research exercise to determine sales values for the different unit types in the current market. We have assessed these results in the context of comparable locations, actual sales prices, unit sizes and anticipated build quality in accordance with para 11 of the NPPG. This resulted in assessing the site based on the development of a 100% open market scheme in line with planning policy for small sites.

5.69 In addition, development timescales and build costs have been inputted into the assessment. Bespoke Build Costs were commissioned due to the limited local examples relating to the existing site and the proposed scheme. Build costs have been informed by Edmond Shipway who have provided a detailed cost assessment for the proposal. A full breakdown of the cost report can be found at Appendix C of the Report.

5.70 BPC note that there is limited evidence for new build flats within the locality of the subject site. Considering this the report looked at both new build and existing stock transactions within Rickmansworth. The report collates a number of factors, as highlighted in the table below, to outline the Viability Assessment in relation to the Local Plan.

Table 1 – Local Plan Viability Assessment Summary

Item	Local Plan Allowance	BPC Allowance	Comment
Benchmark Land Value	N/A	£85,000	Reflects EUV + as per NPPG
Sales values / m ²	£175,000 - £220,000 per 1 bed flat	£300,000 per 1 bed flat	In excess of Local Plan Position
Base build / m ²	£1,115 plus 15% for externals and 5% for abnormals where appropriate	£2,688 inclusive of external costs and abnormal costs	The local plan allowance is very low in the current market. The Applicant has provided a detailed cost plan drafted by Edmond Shipway to evidence their position.
Professional fees	12%	10%	Lower than Local Plan Assessment.
Contingency	5%	5%	In line with Local Plan Assessment
Sales & Marketing costs	3%	2.5%	Lower than Local Plan Assessment
Finance interest rate	7%	7.5%	Changed in line with recent BoE base rate changes.
Profit margin: Open market Affordable	Blended 15%	20% on Market Units	In line with current market conditions.

5.71 The assessment comprises an appraisal to determine the residual land value of the proposed development on a 100% open market sale basis. The output of this appraisal is shown in the Reports Table 6 and recreated below:

Table 6 – Appraisal Output

BLV	Profit	Residual Value	Surplus/Deficit
£85,000	20%	£50,578	-£34,422

Source: BPC

- 5.72 Based on the output of the appraisal, BPC advise that the proposed scheme would be unable to provide any contributions towards Affordable Housing and/or S106 contributions in addition to the CIL required of £41,497.
- 5.73 Therefore, BPC advise that the proposed scheme is currently unable to provide any contributions towards addition affordable housing or S106 obligations given the viability position of the scheme.

Flood Risk

- 5.74 The entirety of the Site is located within Flood Zone 1, according to Environment Agency Flood Maps, and is therefore at the lowest risk from flooding.

6.0 Design

- 6.1 The application site is located in Rickmansworth and seeks to demolish an existing outbuilding and erect three one-bedroom residential apartments on land associated with The Western, 205 High Street, Rickmansworth, WD3 1BB.
- 6.2 Policy CP12 of the Local Plan Core Strategy and Policies DM1 and DM3 of the Development Management Policies Local Development Document require residential development to be well designed and to respect the character of the city, and as such the proposal has been considered in line with policy guidance.
- 6.3 The proposed dwellings seek to create 114sqm of residential floor space. The proposed dwelling will be sustainably built, in accordance with Policy DM4.
- 6.4 The proposal offers a car free development and as such no car parking spaces are provided, reinforcing the Site's accessibility and providing provision for sustainable transport options in line with Policy CP10.
- 6.5 The proposed development utilises materiality choices that sit within the locality and context of the Western and the wider Conservation Area, highlighting the juxtaposition of the darker timber clad and buff brick. Furthermore, the proposal aims to present a high quality design by varying the depth and linear organisation of the elevational treatment, through projecting brick detailing and recessed window elements.
- 6.6 Each apartment has been designed to meet minimum space standards and to provide dual aspect accommodation. The windows elements have been designed to present a positive outlook for the residents, whilst maintaining appropriate separation distances to avoid overlooking and overshadowing.
- 6.7 The residential development surrounding the proposed site is predominantly post-war residential dwellings and commercial development. A typical suburban organisation with a fluid yet structured urban grain is achieved through the stepping and slight differentiating orientation and angle of the housing to follow the curvature of the roads. This organisation permeates from the historic town centre of Rickmansworth, which has an eclectic mix of shops, terraced and semi-detached housing.
- 6.8 The surrounding apartments consist of 3-storey development, including the Western public house, promoting three storeys and a pitched roof. The surrounding residential houses consists of 2-storey detached or semi-detached forms mixed with rows of 2-storey terraces, set back from the road with some soft landscaping, consequently presenting active frontages to the street.

6.9 The materiality palette consists of traditional red or buff brick dwellings, with particular emphasis on mirroring local brick bond treatments, such as horizontal soldier courses and brick detailing around the openings, typically with dark painted windows organised in a symmetrical Georgian elevation treatment, and roof tiling with chimney stacks. Alternatively, residential developments employ white render timber frames with dark tiled roofing with chimney stacks. The materials proposed in this scheme are designed to place it within the existing context of the site, respecting the local character of Rickmansworth and the Western.

6.10 A Local Character Appraisal highlights the following:

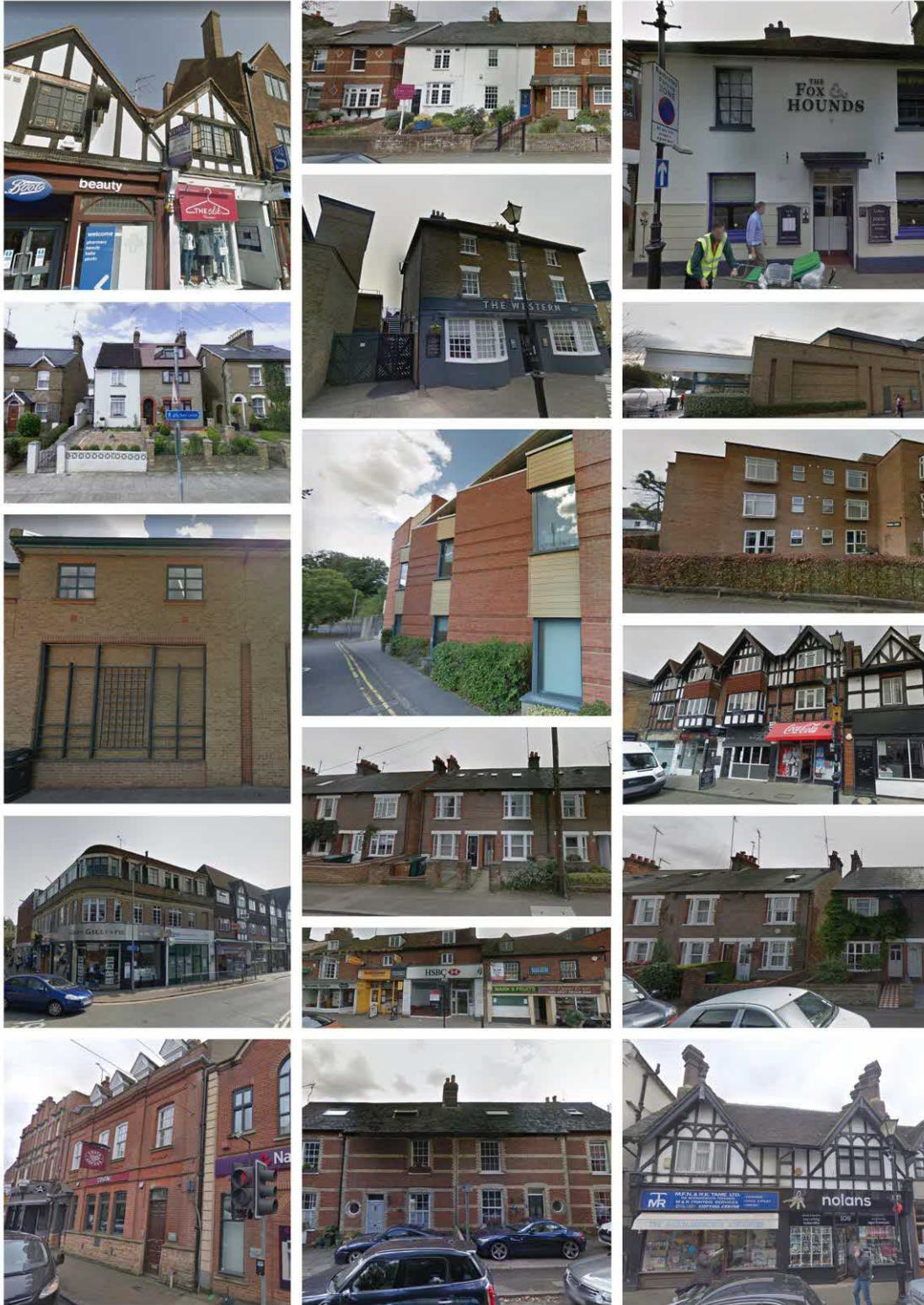
A desktop local materiality appraisal highlights the eclectic vernacular of the surrounding architectural styles and materiality treatments.

Traditional buff brick and white render are a predominant connective theme throughout the street frontage character. The facades are treated symmetrically with the roofscapes mainly treated as pitched with chimney stacks.

This study has highlighted the residential buildings are largely two storeys, with chimneys and gable fronts utilised to break up the symmetry of the elevations.

Furthermore, the historic prevalence of the town centre highlights the building form abutting the streetscape, encompassing and enclosing the public realm, consequently the proposed development continues this massing and height of development within the public realm.

Materiality Collage of Local Character



6.11 The small-scale development seeks to utilise the land associated with the public house, erecting three dwellings of one bedroom each, each with private amenity space and cycle storage.

Dwelling	Bedroom	Person	GIA (m ²)	Private Amenity Space
Apartment 1	1	2	50	Terrace
Apartment 2	1	2	50	Balcony
Apartment 3	1	2	50	Balcony

6.12 The Public House remains as existing, the proposal considers the impact upon the public house, sensitively respecting the viability of the pub to be enjoyed and used whilst maintaining the building’s character and sitting within the context of the Town.

6.13 The proposed dwellings will be sustainably built, with sufficient space for cycle parking, bin storage and collection in accordance with the Sustainability requirements of the policy outlined in Section 4.0.

6.14 It is proposed that the existing vehicular access to the site will be retained and serve as the main entrance to the proposed development. The access to the public house remains as existing from Wensum Way, leading to the public house car park.

6.15 In conjunction with the Policies PSP1, CP1, CP3, CP9, CP10, CP12, DM1 and DM3, the development has been located and designed in a way that is sensitive to its landscaping setting, enhancing the character of the street scene from Wensum Way, and utilising key land to deliver housing targets in Rickmansworth, from the Three Rivers Development Plan.

6.16 In concurrence with Policies DM1 and CP12, the development aims to meet the needs of the area and businesses without compromising the ability of future generations to enjoy the same quality of life that the present generation aspires to. This has been achieved through;

Providing flexible designs through the amenity space and floor plans.

Providing a type and mix of homes to meet local housing need and increase choice in the local housing market.

Applying passive surveillance techniques to the development to design out anti-social behaviour.

Designing appropriate means of access to promote sustainable transport options such as walking and cycling.

Being of a high standard of design, architecture and landscaping, respect and enhance the character of its surroundings and be in accordance with the character of the area.

Creating a strong sense of place through design and materiality.

Curating a massing, scale, and amount of development that avoids unacceptable impact on the amenities of neighbouring properties or the wider area, by reason of noise, vibration, smell, light or other pollution, loss of light or overlooking.

6.17 In accordance with the Three River's Policy Guidance and the Rickmansworth Conservation Area Appraisal and Character Assessment, the design has aimed to;

Respond to and reinforce locally distinctive patterns of development, built heritage, culture, landscape, materiality and living sustainably.

Clearly define public and private spaces through landscaping and material finishes.

Promote the continuity of street frontages, setting the development abutting the road and rounding off with adjacent development.

Be mindful of environmental sustainability design as a key consideration of the development.

6.18 Furthermore, in consideration of the overall policy and design guidance, the development has embodied these key design considerations and emulated them within this proposal, as outlined below.

The design has considered; character, roads, pedestrianisation access, design and construction and environment and the community. The height of the proposed buildings is comparable to those of the neighbouring sites, proportional in width to allow for the buildings to sit within the site contextually.

Understanding the existing area and how this can translate into the context and character of the area.

Creating a clear distinction between front and back, cycle storage and bin storage facilities.

Where possible the design has aimed to maximise the solar orientation the dwellings.

The 3-storey height and width of the street in section, creates the scale and sense of enclosure, whilst remaining permeable in elevation. The urban grain emulates that of the

surrounding street frontage by matching the front elevation mass of a semi-detached dwelling.

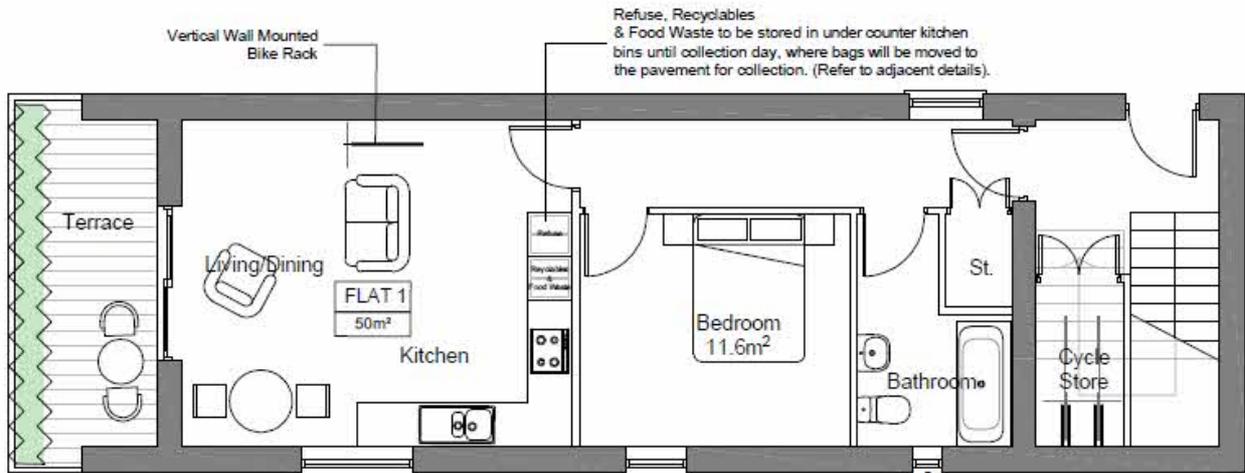
Traditional scale rectangular forms and building lines have been emulated.

The proposed developments construction materials, colours, textures, and finishes to external walls has been considered to compliment the local character of the area.

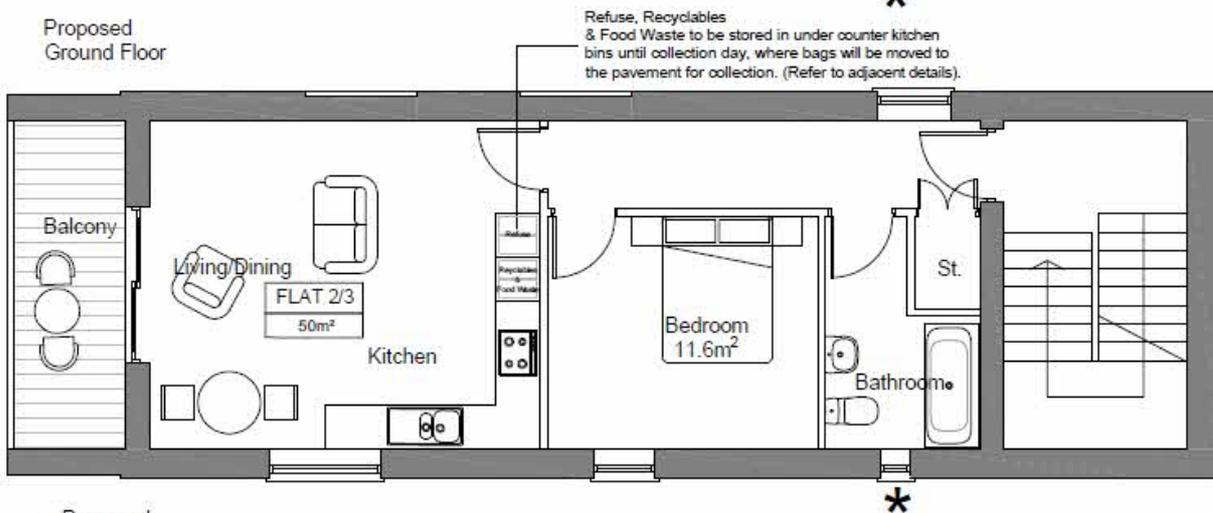
Proposed Site Plan



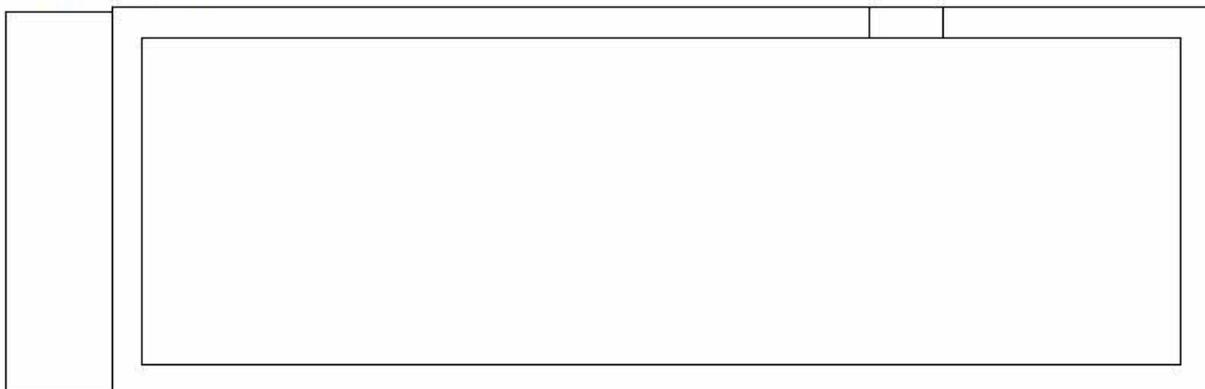
Proposed Plans and Roof Plan



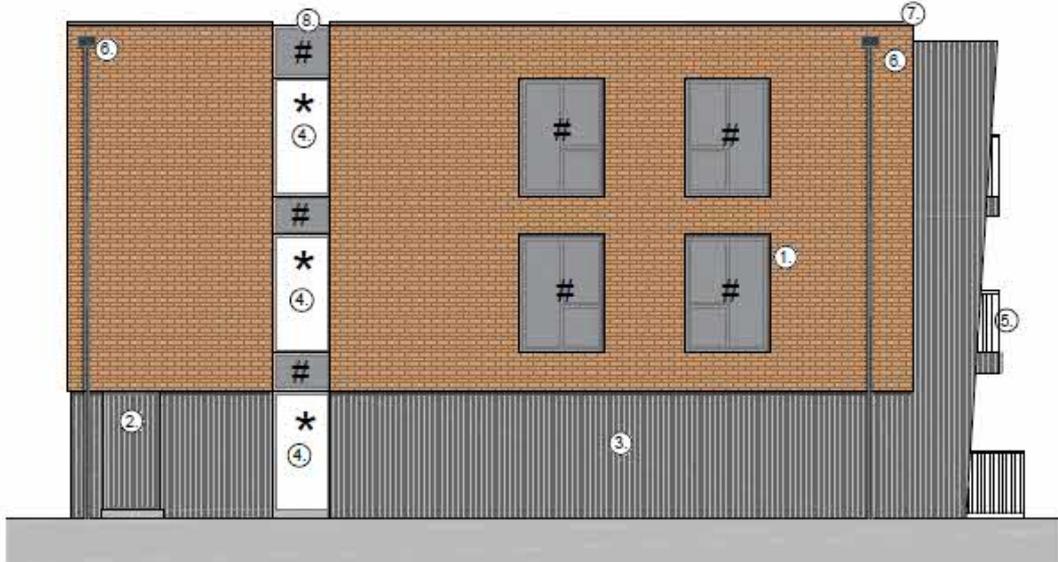
Proposed Ground Floor



Proposed First/Second Floor



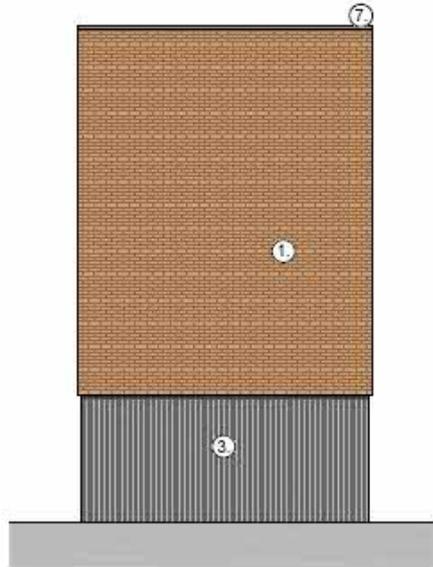
Proposed Elevations



Proposed
North Elevation



Proposed
South Elevation



Proposed
East Elevation

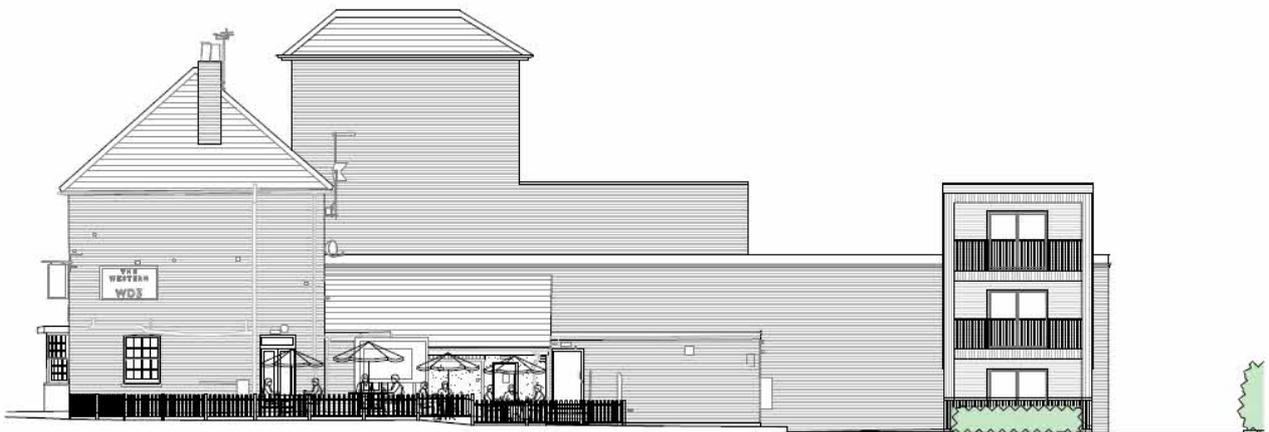


Proposed
West Elevation

Existing and Proposed Street Scene – Wensum Way



Existing Wensum Way Elevation



Proposed Wensum Way Elevation

Sustainable Place Shaping

6.19 In accordance with Policies CP1, CP3, CP10, DM1, DM3, DM4, DM6 and DM10, the development aims to:

Incorporate flexible designs to adapt to the needs of the users.

Seek to design out antisocial behaviour, and crime through passive surveillance and well-lit pedestrian access.

Increase biodiversity and soft landscaping on the site.

Provide parking to policy-compliant standards.

Be designed to the human scale, prioritising pedestrian access and promoting sustainable transport through providing private bike stores to each dwelling.

Make use of underutilised parking land.

6.20 The development proposals are of a high standard of design, architecture and landscaping, respect and enhance the character of its surroundings and are in accordance with the character of the area. In addition, the proposed development aims to;

Strengthen and contextually situate itself within the existing urban grain and streetscape of Wensum Way and the wider area.

Promote healthier lifestyles through the provision of sustainable design.

Avoid an unacceptable impact on the amenities of neighbouring properties or the wider area, by reason of noise, vibration, smell, light or other pollution, loss of light or overlooking.

Avoid adverse impacts on the existing highway network, please refer to the Transport Statement for further information.

Increase the sites existing green infrastructure.

6.21 In summary, the proposed development constitutes the sensitive and respectful development of a brownfield site. The proposed dwellings are of a high quality and represent the local vernacular.

7.0 Access

- 7.1 The Application is accompanied by a Transport Statement prepared by TPA which shows that the location of the development is sustainable in terms of access.
- 7.2 The proposed scheme comprises the provision of three one-bedroom flats and associated cycle parking, located to the south of the public house.
- 7.3 The majority of central Rickmansworth is walkable within 15 minutes, with the villages of Batchworth, Northwood, Harefield and Chorleywood can be accessed within a 20-minute cycle journey from the Site. The closest bus stop of the site is located approximately 100m to the north on High Street, with four services available from this bus stop.
- 7.4 Rickmansworth railway station is located approximately 322m to the north of the Site. The station can also be accessed within a four-minute walk or a two minute cycle. The station is part of the Metropolitan line on the London Underground network. It falls in Zone 7, Trains from Rickmansworth run towards central London, with destinations such as Baker Street, King's Cross St Pancras, and Liverpool Street.
- 7.5 The proposed development will retain the existing access point from Wensum Way. Pedestrian and cyclist access will continue to be taken directly from the existing access point from Wensum Way.
- 7.1 Refuse collections and servicing for the new dwellings will be via the public highway, consistent with the arrangements for other dwellings on Wensum Way.
- 7.2 There will be a reduction in car parking at the public house from eleven spaces to four spaces. The public house is within a highly accessible location within Rickmansworth centre, where the majority of the trips are expected to be achieved by active modes of travel (mainly walking) and public transport. It is therefore considered that the decrease in parking provision for the public house is not expected to have a material highway impact.
- 7.3 The development could provide a maximum of 1.5 residential parking spaces. The proposals are however for the dwellings to be 'car free', which is considered to be appropriate given the sustainable / accessible location of the site, which is surrounded by local amenities within a short walk.
- 7.4 The Site benefits from good accessibility by sustainable modes of transport, including walking and public transport (bus) with local amenities such as a convenience store, place of worship, schools, childcare facilities, leisure facilities and post office within IHT maximum walking distances.

- 7.5 The proposals are compliant with the national and local transport policies and would not result in a material impact on the existing network or local on-street parking stress or conditions. It is therefore considered that there are no highways and transport reasons for refusal of the planning application.

8.0 Conclusion

- 8.1 CPC produced this Planning, Design and Access Statement in support of Punch's planning application for three new dwellings on the land associated with the Western, 205 High Street, Rickmansworth, WD3 1BB.
- 8.2 The planning application proposes the retention of the existing public house, demolition of ancillary outbuilding and erection of three one-bedroom apartments (Use Class C3) utilising existing access off Wensum Way, with hard and soft landscaping, including the reconfiguration of the car park.
- 8.3 This Statement and enclosed documentation demonstrate the proposed development has been designed in accordance with the relevant local and national planning policies and responds positively to the locale.
- 8.4 The proposed erection of three apartments is considered sustainable development as defined in the NPPF. The proposal aims to reconfigure the existing brownfield rear car parking site to accommodate the proposed development, with links to local community facilities such as sports facilities and the High Street both within 500 metres from the proposed site.
- 8.5 The proposed development supports National and Local Policy resulting in a positive outlet and suitable sustainable use of housing to aid Three Rivers District Council's housing targets, helping to address the shortfall in housing land supply, consequently, supporting paragraph 11(d) of the NPPF.
- 8.6 The proposed houses reflect the character of the area in terms of the prevailing building line, urban grain, and the design of nearby houses. High quality materials will be used.
- 8.7 As mentioned previously, the proposals have been carefully designed in response to the prompts provided in the policy documentation, adopting a context and landscape driven design rationale. Throughout the document, the following have been addressed; landscape and townscape; layout, height and massing and local character, materials and appearance.
- 8.8 The external consultant's reports provided alongside the application support the proposed design and access arrangements for the dwellings.
- 8.9 The Council is therefore politely invited to grant planning permission for the proposals without undue delay.

Appendix – Publican Support Letter

Three Rivers District Council
Three Rivers House
Northway
Rickmansworth
WD3 1RL

Dear Sir / Madam

**Re: Planning Application to develop on the land at the Western, 205 High Street, Rickmansworth
WD3 1BB.**

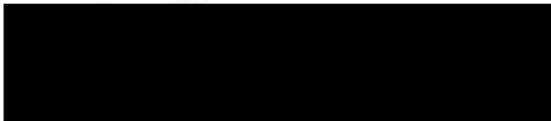
In my capacity as the publican of the Western public house, I write in connection to the planning application submitted to develop three apartments on part of the car park and garage next to the pub.

I do not envisage that this development will detract from the operations of the pub with a new storage area and bin holding point proposed.

I am supportive of this application. As the current publican I am well placed to comment on this application and feel that the loss of this space is not fundamental to the business.

Please contact me should you have any questions on the above.

Yours sincerely,



Claire Corbett
Drinks & Chill Limited
The Western
205 High Street
Rickmansworth
WD3 1BB