

**Address to Members of Braintree District Council's Planning Committee –
16/02/2021**

Foley House – ref: 20/01391/FUL

Good evening Members,

Background

As you will be aware the applicant has engaged in positive and productive pre-application discussions with officers on 2 occasions prior to the submission of this detailed planning application. Subsequently, the applicant and officers have continued to work proactively and collaboratively to agree a beneficial and high quality scheme for this currently derelict site which will preserve the locally-listed building of Foley House and its setting now and for future generations.

This has resulted in the high quality conversion proposals for 18 new apartments and associated development which is before you this evening as supported by officers with their recommendation of approval.

Design & Layout

The design and layout is a culmination of collaborative working with officers to agree a suitable quantum of redevelopment and the associated finer detail. This has resulted in the high quality, well considered conversion now before you this evening.

In addition the proposals also demonstrate full compliance with the relevant provisions of the Council's adopted Parking Standards and Essex Design Guide as confirmed within Officers Committee report.

Heritage

As depicted by the final drawings a number of alterations and a modest extension to the main building are proposed to ensure that a high quality and beneficial conversion of the building can ultimately be achieved. Central to this consideration has been the preservation of the locally-listed building and its setting with officers concluding that these proposals would retain the historic character of the asset.

Importantly, these conclusions are fully supported by the Council's Historic Buildings Consultant who has also been evolved in the proposal evolution process.

Other Matters

The detailed proposals are acceptable in all other planning-related regards including in respect of trees, ecology, drainage, neighbour amenity and highways as confirmed by officers.

This includes no objections from statutory consultees with a small number of neighbour representations fully covered by officers in their Committee report.

S106

The applicant remains committed to delivering the planning obligations required by such a development and is pleased to report that a finalised draft of the Section 106 Agreement is nearing completion.

It is important to highlight that this includes local contributions towards healthcare and open space as well as appropriate mitigation in respect of HRA considerations. It is also important to highlight that no affordable housing contribution is required from this development given the Government's Vacant Building Credit provision as confirmed by officers within their Committee report.

Conclusion

In conclusion, these detailed proposals represent a sustainable and policy-compliant form of redevelopment in line with adopted and emerging Local Plan expectations as well as those of the NPPF.

It is important to acknowledge that the acceptability of such high quality and sustainable proposals in planning terms is re-enforced by the NPPF's tilted balance whereby it is clear that there are no adverse impacts associated with this proposal which would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when weighed against the NPPF as a whole.

Therefore we respectfully request Members support officer's positive recommendation and grant detailed planning permission for this development accordingly.

Thank you