

S/2020/0467/MAF

Land off Moat Lane Towcester NN12 6AD Phase 3 (Package 1) Northampton Road / Watling Street Towcester NN12 6YZ

Variation of Condition 1 (Plans) 2 (Levels) 4 (use) S/2019/0942/MAF (Variation of condition 4 (use) to S/2019/0556/MAF (Variation of Condition 28 (noise and odour control) of S/2018/1663/MAF Variation of Condition 1 (plans) of planning permission S/2017/1579/MAF (Variation of condition 1 (plans) of planning permission S/2015/2925/MAF (The regeneration of Moat Lane, original application S/2(012/1476/MAF submitted with an Environmental Statement) to change use of plot H (unit 55) to either A1 or A3 use to subdivide 5No dwelling (Parcel A) and subdivide residential unit (Parcel B).

The site lies within Towcester Conservation Area where proposals should seek to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the area.

Consent has previously been granted for 3 storey dwellings along Northampton Road as part of the Moat Lane redevelopment, it is now proposed increase the number of residential units from 5 town houses to 10 apartments, this requires alteration to the roof form of the terrace of buildings by inserting alternating flat roof dormers and rooflights across the front street facing elevation.

I previously raised concerns regarding the increase in height of a terrace of buildings to the east of this block stating *“This Council has a strong emphasis on sympathetic and appropriate design particularly in the historic areas such as Towcester Conservation Area. Applicants should be able to demonstrate a full understanding of local character and draw on that understanding in designing new buildings. It is quite clear, even from a cursory look around the Towcester Town Centre that buildings tend to be 2 / 3 stories in height and whilst that height can vary depending on the age of the building there is no precedence for 4 storey dwellings within the town, even where the third floor is accommodated within the roof space. The scale of these buildings is out of character with the established character of the area and are not considered to preserve or enhance the conservation area. I would also suggest that this section of Northampton Road forms a transitional space between the urban form and more rural area to the east of the river, development along this road would be preferred if it reflected this transitional form. My views on this matter have not changed.*

Further, the use of rooflights, which are rarely appropriate in a historic context such as a conservation area being an overtly modern feature / intrusion particularly on a road facing, clearly visible elevation, appear an incongruous and clumsy solution on these buildings which are designed to emulate Georgian townhouses. These alterations brought about by the need to increase the number of residential units are not considered to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the area.

Mandy Lumb
Senior Conservation Officer
2 April 2020