Item 6

Application Number:	**AWDM/0785/24**	**Recommendation - REFUSE**
Site:	**Land East Of 1 To 11 Mercury House, Ham Road Shoreham-by-Sea, West Sussex**	
Proposal:	**Application to vary condition 1, of previously approved AWDM/1450/21 (as amended by AWDM/1024/23) to incorporate amendment of roof design for the 8-9 storey tower section of block b to replace approved pitched roof with a flat roof.** **Original description (as previously amended by AWDM/1024/23) : erection of two blocks of development ranging in height between 3 - 9 storeys comprising 159 residential units comprising a mix of 1-bed, 2- bed and 3-bed units (including a minimum of 30% of affordable housing), commercial (class e) floorspace at ground floor, and associated parking and landscaping. Application to vary conditions 1 of previously approved AWDM/1450/21 (approved drawings).**	
Applicant:	The Hyde Group	Ward: St. Mary's
Agent:	HGP Architects	
Case Officer: Stephen Cantwell		

Additional Supporting Information

The applicant has provided the additional further comment (slightly summarised):

'As you are aware, one of our key focuses for delivering this project is a sustainable development that achieves an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) rating of A. This offers a significant saving for the running costs for the much needed affordable housing in this area.

In regards to the concerns about the flat roof, such as allowing sufficient space to fit the solar panels on the flat roof, we had to run a full model to enable us to calculate the EPC rating A. We can confirm the flat roof is the optimum design for installing PV, if we are to achieve this saving for the future residents.

The development contractor (PMC Ltd.) is extremely experienced in doing flat roofs with PV panels on it and we have completed over 30 projects with a flat roof with PV arrangement, including 10 large blocks and a further 3 currently at Kingston Wharf. We are extremely well versed and experienced in all of the potential issues with PV on a flat roof and have not had any issues with any of the blocks we have built previously.

Due to the shading caused by the pitch of the approved roof, we need considerably more panels to achieve the same level of output, because any panel on the Northern elevation is calculated to work at a much lower efficiency. The current PV design for the pitched roof is 90 panels to allow us to achieve building regulation compliance.

The amount of space required on a pitched roof to allow for a man-safe system means the panels become spread apart, in a similar way as they do on a flat roof. This has an adverse impact on the amount of panels we can fit on the pitched roof.

This is not a normal PV installation whereas panels can be grouped together due the fact we are allocating on average 3 panels per property with each flat having a standalone inverter. The PV panels are directly connected to each flat, so the occupier gets the full benefit of the panels connected to their flat. However to achieve this, direct access routes are required for cables from the roof to the apartment in order to balance the system in an orderly way.

The importance of safe access for future maintenance without the need for expensive plant and scaffold that imposes a larger service charge for the tenants should not be underestimated. When PV is installed on flat roofs there is no ongoing cost for access as PV panels require a regime of regular cleaning. Hence, in a pitched roof situation this becomes an onerous maintenance factor.

When constructing a flat roof parapets walls are installed to 1100mm high along with roof access providing a safe working environment for the operatives maintaining the PV.

With a pitched roof they also have to clear out the valley gutters regularly, which again requires expensive access equipment. We try and create spaces for people that are both cost effective to live in and sustainable notwithstanding the driver to secure EPC A

We would also reiterate that all of the buildings surrounding the Adur Civic Centre have flat roofs, including the building directly opposite, so the proposed flat roof is more in keeping with the surrounding buildings.'

Additional Consultation Responses. None

Planning Assessment Update

The applicant's additional comment throws further light on the practical issues and cost of providing and maintaining solar PV panels, and more generally the maintenance of gutters.

Whilst this does not affect the report conclusions concerning energy and CO2, (the attainment of policy compliant levels appears to be reached without the proposed change), the practical benefits of achieving greater renewable energy levels, an EPC

‘A’ standard and overall affordability to residents and in terms of building maintenance, remain as material considerations.

It is regrettable that no other architectural solution has come forward which might consider something other than truncation of the towers. The importance of design in this highly prominent gateway location, as considered in the officer report, is considered to remain of greater overall importance and accordingly the recommendation of refusal remains.

Recommendation: Refuse