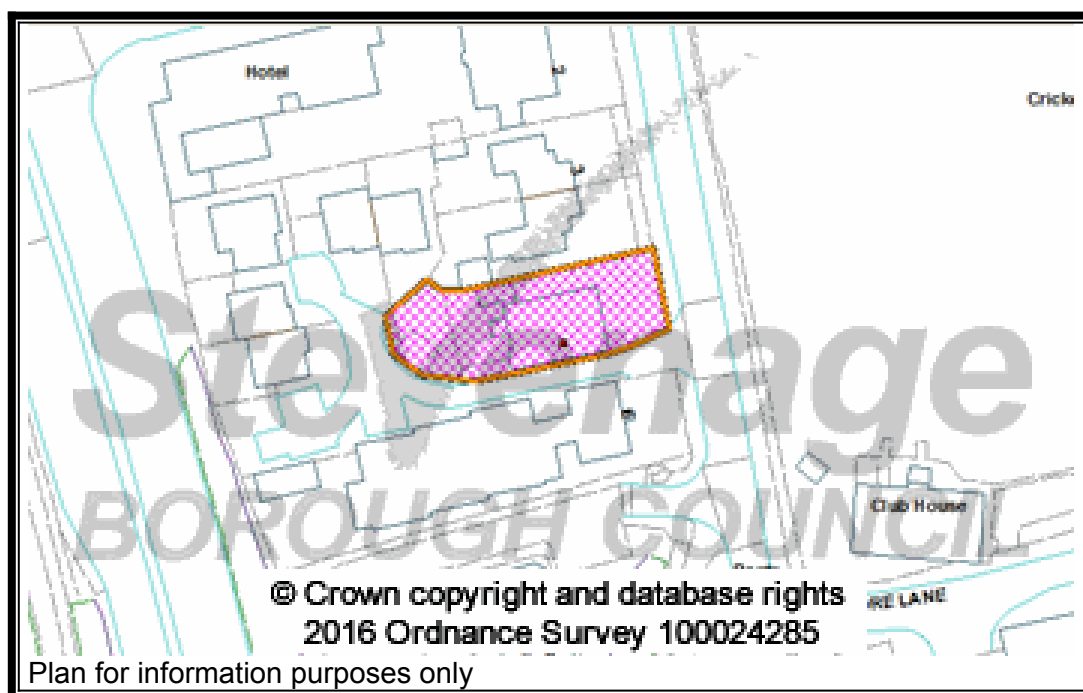


Meeting: Planning and Development Committee
Agenda Item:
Date: 24 May 2018
Author: Dave Rusling 01438 242270
Lead Officer: Zayd Al-Jawad 01438 242257
Contact Officer: Dave Rusling 01438 242270

Application No:	18/00107/FP
Location:	5 Ditchmore Lane, Stevenage
Proposal:	Demolition of existing rear extension and erection of a two storey rear extension to facilitate creation of 4no. one bed flats
Drawing Nos.:	17047su1 01A, 02, 03, 17047wd2.01B, 02B, 03C, 05
Applicant:	Stevenage Borough Council
Date Valid:	1 March 2018
Recommendation:	GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION



1. SITE DESCRIPTION

- 1.1 The application site comprises No.5 Ditchmore Lane, which is an attractive unlisted, but nevertheless historic, building located within the southern end of the Old Town Conservation Area. This property is constructed of red brickwork under a slate roof and is currently vacant, having previously been occupied by Stevenage Haven. To the north, the site is adjoined by Nos. 3 and 4 which are a pair of semi-detached properties constructed of red facing brickwork

under a brown plain tiled roof. Although currently vacant, these properties were previously used as a residential property (No.3) and as a community mental health premises operated by Hertfordshire NHS foundation trust (No.4). These properties have planning permission to be converted into flats. Number 6 is the Stevenage Haven, which comprises a detached historic building at the front and a three storey flat roof modern extension to the rear which provides accommodation for the homeless. Finally, to the rear of the application site are 5 bungalows which are accessed via an access from Ditchmore Lane between Nos 5 and 6. This is now known as Fairlight Close and provides a landscaped area and parking facilities for these properties and The Haven.

- 1.2 Opposite the property, located on the western side of Ditchmore Lane is Stevenage Cricket Club, whilst to the south of the site is the four-storey office block (Saffron Ground).

2. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

- 2.1 Permission granted under ref 2/0107/98 in May 1998 for change of use of 4 Ditchmore Lane from hostel for the homeless to community resource centre for mental wellbeing.
- 2.2 Permission granted under ref 02/00094/FP in July 2002 for change of use of No.5 Ditchmore Lane from dwelling house to night shelter for the homeless and ground floor rear extension.
- 2.3 Permission granted under ref 04/00472/FP in November 2004 for retention of a rear conservatory at 5 Ditchmore Lane.
- 2.4 Permission granted under ref 2/0334/91 in February 1992 at 6 Ditchmore Lane for two storey rear extension and ground floor rear extension for residential and veterinary surgery use and car parking spaces.
- 2.5 Permission granted under ref 07/00138/FP in June 2008 at 6 Ditchmore Lane for change of use and sub-division of existing veterinary surgery into 2no two bed flats and erection of three storey building to accommodate 4no one bed and 5no two bed flats, with associated car parking and refuse storage. This permission was never implemented and has now lapsed.
- 2.6 Planning permission granted under ref 12/00577/FPM in August 2013 for refurbishment of Nos. 3, 4 and 5 to provide 2no. five bed dwellings and 1no. one bed flat; erection of 4no. two bed and 1no. three bed bungalows; extension to No. 6 to provide homeless hostel for The Haven; change of use of No. 4 from office to residential; associated access, car parking and landscaping.
- 2.7 Conservation Area Consent granted under ref 12/00608/CA in August 2015 for demolition of existing outbuildings and extensions to the rear of 4, 5 and 6 Ditchmore Lane 15.08.2013
- 2.8 Permission granted under ref 13/00417/COND in November 2013 for discharge of conditions 4 (landscaping); 8 (Tree Protection) and 18 (noise protection) attached to planning permission 12/00577/FPM.
- 2.9 Permission granted under ref 13/00431/COND in November 2013 for discharge of Condition 14 (Wheel Washing) attached to planning permission reference number 12/00577/FPM.
- 2.10 Conservation Area Consent granted under ref 13/00444/CA in November 2013 for demolition of existing boundary wall and replacement with new brick and timber boundary enclosure.
- 2.11 Planning permission granted under ref 13/00445/FP in December 2013 for replacement of existing boundary wall with new brick and timber boundary enclosure.

- 2.12 Permission granted under ref 13/00554/COND in March 2015 for discharge of Conditions 16 (Travel Plan) and 22 (External Lighting) attached to planning permission reference number 12/00577/FPM.
- 2.13 Consent granted under ref 13/00570/NMA in March 2013 for non-material amendment to planning permission reference number 12/00577/FPM to alter the position of the vehicular access and amendments to specified trees.
- 2.14 Consent granted under ref 14/00575/NMA in November 2014 for non-material amendment to previously approved planning permission reference number 12/00577/FPM to amend bin store roof construction.
- 2.15 Consent granted under ref 15/00003/NMA in February 2015 for non-material amendment to previously approved planning permission reference number 12/00577/FPM to amend proposed road surface from block paving to tarmac.
- 2.16 Permission granted under ref 13/00391/COND in November 2013 for discharge of condition 5 (bat survey) and partial discharge of condition 3 (archaeological investigation) attached to planning permission 12/00608/CA.
- 2.17 Permission granted under ref 13/00392/COND in November 2013 for discharge of conditions 3 (materials); 10 (means of enclosure); 21 (bat survey report) and partial discharge of condition 9 (archaeological investigation) attached to planning permission 12/00577/FPM.
- 2.18 Consent granted under ref 13/00400/NMA in October 2013 for non-material amendment to previously approved planning permission reference number 12/00577/FPM for amended parking bays to No.5, vehicular access bellmouth northern kerblin repositioned, and brick wall to rear of Nos. 3 & 4 amended to close boarded fence.
- 2.19 Permission granted under ref 15/00080/FP in April 2015 for demolition of existing rear extensions, single garage and outbuilding; erection of two storey and single storey rear extensions and conversion of existing properties into 3no. one bed and 3no. two bed flats
- 2.20 Consent granted under ref 16/00230/NMA June 2016 in for Non-material amendment to previously approved planning permission 12/00577/FPM to amend landscaping proposals to create 2no. new parking spaces; widening of driveways; amendments to approved fenestrations and materials; and amendments to wall finishes.

3. THE CURRENT APPLICATION

- 3.1 The current application seeks planning permission for the demolition of an existing part two storey, part single storey extension and conservatory and for the erection of a 2 storey rear extension to facilitate the conversion of the property to 4 one bed flats. The submitted drawings identify the new extension projecting 7.7m to the rear of the existing main elevation of the property, having a width of 4m. It is designed with a pitched roof having an eaves height of 5.7m and a ridge height of 7.2m. The extension would project out 600mm further than the existing rear extension and conservatory to be demolished, which would bring it out in line with an existing two storey extension on the southern part of the rear elevation.
- 3.2 The layout of the units is such that there would be 2 flats at ground floor level and a further 2 flats within the first floor. Access to the dwellings would be taken via the existing front door via a hallway leading to the separate flats. Externally, no changes are proposed to the front elevation with minor changes to the fenestration in the existing side elevations with a new window proposed in the north elevation and 4 new windows in the south elevation of the property. The front garden of the premises is to be retained primarily as a landscaped garden area, affording pedestrian access to the building. An existing vehicular access to the north of

the building will be retained and used to access 2 tandem parking spaces, partly to the side and front of the property. A bin and cycle store is proposed adjacent to these spaces which will be set back within the site. At the rear, it is proposed to provide 2 parking spaces for the new units which would supplement the existing parking to the rear of the property which will be increased from 2 to 3 spaces. It is also proposed to provide a communal garden area for the flats as well as a small private garden area to serve flat 1. There would also be pedestrian access to the rear of the site from both Ditchmore Lane and Fairlight Close.

- 3.3 The application comes before the planning committee for determination as the applicant and land owner is Stevenage Borough Council.

4. PUBLIC REPRESENTATIONS

- 4.1 The proposal has been publicised by way of letters to adjoining premises, press notice and a site notice was displayed to the front of the property. The occupiers of 3 Fairlight Close and 172a High Street have raised objections to the application for the following reasons:-

4.2 3 Fairlight Close

- 4.2.1 Whilst has no objection in principle to the conversion of the properties, has concerns about parking problems in Fairlight Close to the rear of the application site and, in particular, indiscriminate parking blocking the access.

Raises concerns with regard to access for emergency vehicles and ambulances.

Has forwarded a number of photographs and videos identifying parking issues within Fairlight Close which he attributes to the Haven.

Inadequate car parking facilities exist to serve visitors and employees of The Haven.

Concern that the 2 spaces immediately to the rear of No.5 are dangerous.

Concern that the security hoarding erected around the site has affected visibility for users leaving Fairlight Close onto Ditchmore Lane.

4.3 172a High Street

- 4.3.1 The original application indicated that the property was to be utilised as the training/rehabilitation area for the halfway house.

It was stated at the time of the last application that housing need outweighed the harm to the Conservation area and the removal of trees. The last application was, therefore, granted on housing need. Given the number of houses which have recently been built there is no need any more units at this location.

I have not had the opportunity to check the number of police and emergency services visits to this site, but I can assure you that they are numerous. There have been other crimes committed by residents of the Haven. This was never a suitable location for this type of accommodation and increasing the number of residents, whilst removing and reducing the ability to rehabilitate the current residents is not acceptable.

5. CONSULTATIONS

5.1 Hertfordshire County Council - Highways

- 5.1.1 The proposal is for the demolition of existing rear extension and erection of a two storey rear extension to facilitate the creation of 4no. one bed flats. The site has vehicular access off

Fairlight Close which is a private access road which has a junction with Ditchmore Lane, classified as a local access road. There are no highway issues associated with this proposal and, therefore, the Highway Authority does not wish to restrict the grant of planning permission. However, as Parking Authority no doubt you will ensure that the parking provision for the development complies with your parking standards.

5.2 BEAMS (Council's Conservation Advisor)

- 5.2.1 No objection. In principle a two-storey rear extension as proposed is supported, it is not overly prominent and retains the front and side elevations of the original Victorian property relatively unaltered. Unfortunately the extension is set in by only a small amount, a greater amount of set in would be preferred and it would relate better to the host property if it featured a hip end.
- 5.2.2 In terms of materials it is vital the brickwork of the new extension is of good quality and a good match to the existing in size, colour and brick bond. The window design and use of slates for the roof is acceptable. The use of double glazed sashes (to match existing) to the front elevation is welcomed.

5.3 HCC Crime Prevention Design Service

- 5.3.1 Thank you for inviting me to comment on the recent planning application for the above location. I have been dealing with this site since the original application and currently the whole of the new site has been fully accredited to the Police preferred minimum security standard that is Secured by Design. I have been in contact with the agent and fully expect to receive a completed SBD application should permission be granted. Given the current situation and the evolution of the site the Police Crime Prevention Design Service fully support this planning application.

5.4 HCC Senior Historic Environment Advisor

- 5.4.1 The new extension appears to lie mainly above the previous one. Therefore in this instance we consider that the development is unlikely to have a significant impact on heritage assets of archaeological interest, and we have no comment to make upon the proposal.

5.5 Council's Arboriculturist

- 5.5.1 No comment received.

5.6 Environmental Health Section

- 5.6.1 No comment received.

6. RELEVANT PLANNING POLICIES

6.1 Background to the Development Plan

- 6.1.1 In the determination of planning applications development must be in accordance with the statutory development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. For Stevenage the statutory development plan comprises:

- Hertfordshire Waste Development Framework 2012 and Hertfordshire Waste Site Allocations Development Plan Document (adopted 2012 and 2014);
- Hertfordshire Minerals Local Plan 2002 – 2016 (adopted 2007); and
- The Stevenage District Plan Second Review 2004.

The Council has now commenced work on the new Stevenage Borough Local Plan 2011-2031. The draft version of the Plan was published in January 2016 and will be used as a material consideration in the determination of all planning applications registered on or after Wednesday 6 January 2016. The Site Specific Policies DPD, the draft Gunnels Wood Area Action Plan (AAP), the draft Old Town AAP, the Pond Close Development SPG, Stevenage West Masterplanning Principles SPG, the Gunnels Wood Supplementary Planning Document and the Interim Planning Policy Statement for Stevenage are no longer material considerations in the determination of all planning applications registered on or after Wednesday 6 January 2016.

- 6.1.2 Where a Development Plan Document has been submitted for examination but no representations have been made in respect of relevant policies, then considerable weight may be attached to those policies because of the strong possibility that they will be adopted. The converse may apply if there have been representations which oppose the policy. However, much will depend on the nature of those representations and whether there are representations in support of particular policies.
- 6.1.3 In considering the policy implications of any development proposal the Local Planning Authority will assess each case on its individual merits, however where there may be a conflict between policies in the existing Development Plan and policies in any emerging Development Plan Document, the adopted Development Plan policies currently continue to have greater weight.

6.2 Central Government Advice

- 6.2.1 In March 2012 the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published and in doing so it replaced many documents including all Planning Policy Guidance Notes and Planning Policy Statements. The NPPF sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. Annex 1 of the NPPF provides guidance on how existing local plan policies which have been prepared prior to the publication of the NPPF should be treated. Paragraph 215 of the NPPF applies which states that only due weight should be afforded to the relevant policies in the adopted local plan according to their degree of consistency with it.
- 6.2.2 Planning law requires that applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The NPPF is itself a material consideration. Given that the advice that the weight to be given to relevant policies in the local plan will depend on their degree of consistency with the NPPF, it will be necessary in the determination of this application to assess the consistency of the relevant local plan policies with the NPPF. The NPPF applies a presumption in favour of sustainable development.
- 6.2.3 In addition to the NPPF advice in the National Planning Practice Guidance (March 2014) also needs to be taken into account. It states that, 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.

6.3 Adopted Local Plan

TW1 - Sustainable Development;
TW8 - Environmental Safeguards;
TW9 - Quality in Design;
H7 - Assess of Windfall Residential Sites;
H8 - Density of Residential Development;
EN13 - Trees in New Developments;
T15 Car Parking Strategy;
EN13 Trees in New Developments;

6.4 Stevenage Borough Local Plan 2011-2031 Publication Draft (Emerging Local Plan)

SP1 - Presumption for Sustainable Development;
SP2 - Sustainable Development in Stevenage;
SP7 - High Quality Homes;
SP8 - Good Design;
HO5 - Windfall Sites;
GD1 High Quality Design;
IT5 Parking and Access
NH5 Trees and Woodlands

6.5 Supplementary Planning Documents

Parking Provision Supplementary Planning Document January 2012.
Stevenage Design Guide 2009.
Old Town Conservation Area Management Plan – July 2012.

7 APPRAISAL

7.1 The main issues for consideration in the determination of this application are the acceptability of the proposal in land use policy terms; impact upon the character and appearance of area; impact upon the amenities of neighbouring properties; suitability of the residential environment, impact on the highway network and car parking provision.

7.2 Land Use Policy

7.2.1 The application site is not allocated for residential development within the District Plan Second Review 1991 – 2011 and is, therefore, regarded as a 'windfall site'. The proposed development must, therefore, be considered having regard to policy H7 relating to windfall residential sites. In accordance with this policy, planning permission will only be granted where the site is on land classified as previously-developed or small underused urban sites; development of the site would not lead to the loss of structural open space features as defined in policy TW2; there is no detrimental effect on the environment and the surrounding or adjoining properties; there is access to local facilities; and they include opportunities to access alternative forms of travel to private motorised transport.

7.2.2 Policy H05 of the Draft Local Plan (2016) (windfall sites) generally reflects Policy H7 of the adopted Local Plan. However, this policy does stipulate that proposals should not prejudice the Council's ability to deliver residential development on allocated sites, and, it does not overburden existing infrastructure.

7.2.3 For the purpose of clarity, the definition of previously-developed land, as stated within the NPPF, is "that which is or was occupied by a permanent structure including the curtilage of the developed land and any associated fixed surface infrastructure". The definition of previously developed land excludes private residential gardens. By this definition, No.5, which although vacant, was previously last used by the Haven as a homeless shelter, does not fall within the definition of residential. Consequently, it is considered that the proposal comprises the redevelopment of primarily previously developed, brownfield land.

7.2.4 Policy TW2 of the District Plan relates to the structural open spaces that exist throughout the town. In this instance, the site is located in a well-established mixed use area and does not impact on any structural open space in the immediate locality. Policy TW3 of the Adopted Plan states that proposals will not be permitted which involve the loss of neighbourhood facilities,

except where it is proven that there is no need for the facility in its existing use or any other social, community, education or leisure use. The proposed development would not result in the loss of any neighbourhood facilities.

- 7.2.5 In accordance with Policies H7 and H05, residential developments of windfall sites must have a good level of access to local facilities. In this instance, the site is within easy walking distance of Stevenage Town Centre being located only 25m from the pedestrian bridge linking Ditchmore Lane with the Tesco Superstore at the northern end of the town centre. Added to this, the site is very close to the Old Town and the facilities contained therein. Access to the site by non-car modes of transport is also an important consideration in respect of windfall residential sites. The application site enjoys very good links to pedestrian and cycle routes and is within a short walking distance of the town's bus and rail stations. In view of the aforementioned, it is considered that the site accords with the advice in the aforementioned policies of the adopted local plan. Furthermore, it fully accords with the advice in the NPPF as it provides a highly sustainable form of development, would bring a vacant property back into use and would provide a mix of housing to cater for different groups in the community.
- 7.2.6 The NPPF states at paragraph 49 that "housing applications should be considered in the context of the presumption in favour of sustainable development" and that "relevant policies for the supply of housing should not be considered up-to-date if the local planning authority cannot demonstrate a five year supply of deliverable housing sites." Taking these issues in turn, as set out above, the site is considered to be in a sustainable location.
- 7.2.7 In relation to the five year supply of deliverable housing, paragraph 47 of the NPPF states that Local Planning Authorities should identify and update annually a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide five years' worth of housing against their housing requirements with an additional buffer of 5% (moved forward from later in the plan period) to ensure choice and competition in the market for land. The most up to date housing supply figures indicate that the Council is unable to provide a 5 year supply of deliverable housing. The fact that the Council is unable to meet its requirement to provide a 5 year supply of housing is thus a strong material consideration that significantly weighs in favour of the application.
- 7.2.8 In terms of housing mix, the proposal by predominantly providing smaller one bedroom units in this area would provide an acceptable mix of units.
- 7.2.9 Setting aside the impact upon the character and appearance of the area and the amenities of the adjoining properties, which are considered elsewhere in this report, the application is considered to be broadly in accordance with policy H7 of the adopted local plan and H05 of the emerging local plan.

7.3 Impact upon the Character and Appearance of the Area

- 7.3.1 In terms of the character and appearance of the area, the site lies at the southern end of the Old Town Conservation Area. The Conservation Area Management Plan (CAMP) for this part of the Old Town conservation Area identifies one of the strengths being No's 1 to 6 Ditchmore Lane which are considered as being structures of importance and which have retained a number of their original features. The CAMP also makes reference to the application site and states that development on the site could make more efficient use of these low density plots given their highly sustainable location. However, it also states that the need to retain the original buildings in an appropriate setting should form an essential part of any future scheme.
- 7.3.2 As set out in section 2 above, this site has been developed out in part under the planning permission granted in 2013, with the Haven being relocated to No.6 Ditchmore Lane which has been significantly extended to the rear to provide new accommodation. Similarly, 5 bungalows have been erected to the rear of Nos 2-6, along with a new access road and associated landscaping and car parking. No.5 was originally intended to be retained as part of the Haven, however, the permission to extend and alter this has not been implemented and

the property has remained vacant. Similarly, Nos 3 and 4 although having permission to be converted to flats have yet to be built out.

- 7.3.3 In terms of the current proposals for No.5, this is an attractive, mid-19th century detached villa on the west side of Ditchmore Lane and at the south end of the Stevenage Old Town Conservation Area. It forms a group with the Victorian properties either side. The 2009 Conservation Area Appraisal highlights the building as being of local architectural merit and one which makes a strong positive contribution to the special interest of the Old Town Conservation Area. It is proposed to convert the property into 4 flats which would result in the demolition of an existing part two storey, part single storey rear extension which would be replaced by a two storey extension. No alterations are proposed to the front elevation of the property.
- 7.3.4 The Design Statement submitted with the application describes the new rear extension as only being visible from the rear of the site; however, it is considered that the side elevation of the extension will be partly visible from within the Ditchmore Lane street scene. Notwithstanding this, in principle, a two-storey rear extension as proposed is considered acceptable as it is not overly prominent and retains the front and side elevations of the original Victorian property relatively unaltered. The Council's Conservation advisor has commented that the extension is set in by only a small amount and that a greater amount of set in would be preferred and also recommends that it would relate better to the host property if it featured a hip end.
- 7.3.5 The applicant has been made aware of the above comments, however, considers that to reduce the width of the extension would compromise the internal layout of the flats 1 and 3. With regard to the alteration to the roof, whilst a hip could be introduced they note that the existing two storey rear extension to be retained and the modest extension to be demolished are both designed with a gable roof. In view of this, they feel it would be more appropriate to retain the new extension with a gable roof. Whilst the proposed and existing rear extensions would have different widths, it is considered that the design solution proposed is acceptable and, on balance, would not harm the character or appearance of the Conservation Area. Similarly, as only minor alterations are considered to the fenestration of the building, these are considered acceptable. Subject, to a condition being imposed requiring details of the materials to be used in the extension and conversion to be submitted for approval, the impact upon the character and appearance of the Conservation Area is considered to be acceptable.

7.4 Impact upon the Amenities of Neighbouring Properties

- 7.4.1 In assessing the impact of the proposal upon the amenities of those adjoining properties, those most affected are No.4 Ditchmore Lane to the north, no's 1-5 Fairlight Close to the rear (west) and The Haven building to the south. With regard to No.4, having considered the approved plans relating to the conversion of this property to flats, the buildings have been carefully designed to ensure that there would be no overlooking between habitable rooms in either of the properties. The rear extension to No 5, whilst projecting out further at first floor level than No.4, would have no adverse impact on the side windows serving this adjoining property, which are located toward the east of the building. At ground floor level a wall separates the two properties and it is proposed to increase the height slightly by introducing fencing on top. This would mitigate against any overlooking between the properties. At the rear, the first floor side windows would overlook a bin store and wooded area, with the useable private garden area being screened by the property itself.
- 7.4.2 To the rear of the site are the bungalows within Fairlight Close. The majority of these have their front elevations facing toward the rear of No.5 and are located over 25m away, which would meet with the Council's privacy guidelines between 1 and 2 storey dwellings. At ground floor level it is proposed to enclose the rear garden serving the flats with a 1.8m high close boarded fence, which would maintain a private garden area for the new flats. With regard to The Haven to the south of the application property, whilst there are some windows facing toward this building they would only overlook communal areas and non-habitable rooms, with the main residential rooms being located away from the side of No 5 to the south west.

7.4.3 Having regard to the above assessment, it is considered that the proposed development would have an acceptable relationship with the adjoining properties. In terms of the residential environment for the proposed occupiers, all of the flats exceed the floorspace standards set out in the Emerging Local Plan. Furthermore, an appropriate level of amenity space would be provided with flat 1 having its own private garden area.

7.5 Highway Safety Implications

7.5.1 With regard to access and highway safety, the proposal involves no changes to the main access to the site and only a minor change to the previously approved car parking layout at the rear of the site. The access is a private access road which has a junction with Ditchmore Lane which is classified as a local access road. In view of this the Highway Authority is raising no objection in terms of proposed traffic generation created from the new development.

7.6 Car Parking

7.6.1 With regard to car parking provision, when the previous scheme to re-develop the whole of 3-6 Ditchmore Lane was granted, parking provision for vehicles was provided within the site. In total 26 spaces were approved, 16 for the residential units and 10 for the Haven. These were considered to be acceptable in this highly sustainable location (zone 1).

7.6.2 Subsequent amendments to the parking layout were made, relocating 2 spaces from the front of No.5 to the rear of the building. A further non-material application was approved 2016 which sought to introduce 2 additional spaces to the rear of No.5 and to retain the existing driveway to the front/side of No.5, which allowed for 2 cars to be parked in a tandem arrangement. Consequently, an additional 4 car parking spaces are available within the curtilage of No.5 as well as the 26 permitted under the approved scheme.

7.6.3 Based on the Council's adopted car parking standards for 1 bed flats, each unit would require 1 space and, therefore, 4 spaces would be required. However, given the sustainable location, location (zone 1) the requirement can be reduced to between 25% and 50% below the minimum. Consequently, between 1 and 2 spaces would be required. In view of this, the provision of 4 spaces, albeit 2 in a tandem formation would meet the Council's car parking requirements.

7.6.4 Notwithstanding the aforementioned, the comments of the objector in Fairlight Close and the photographic evidence provided does indicate that there are parking problems within Fairlight Close which appear to be attributable to employees and visitors to the Haven. Whilst this development would meet the Council's adopted standards and is acceptable, it is clear that there is a parking management issue related to the Haven. In view of this, the Council as landowner is looking into the problem with a view to ensuring that the parking problems are addressed and that indiscriminate parking does not occur which may hinder access to the properties at the rear, particularly if access for emergency vehicles/ambulances is required. Additionally, as part of this application it is proposed to extend the existing 2 parking bays to the rear of the property to create a third bay for use by the Haven.

7.6.5 In terms of cycling provision a cycle store for 4 cycles is provided within the site which also meets with the Council's adopted standards. Similarly, bin storage facilities are provided within the application site to serve the flats.

7.6.6 Taking into account the above assessment, the application would accord with the Council's adopted parking standards and notwithstanding this, additional parking to serve the Haven would be provided. Additionally, the Council is looking to improve the management of parking at the site

7.7 Other matters

- 7.7.1 With regard to the comments of the objector regarding housing supply, as set out in the report, whilst there may have been new housing provided since The Haven was redeveloped, the Council is still unable to meet its 5 year housing supply and, therefore, there is still a requirement for new housing in the Borough. With regard to the comments in respect of crime, it can be seen at paragraph 5.3 of this report that the Police Crime Prevention team are raising no objection to the application. Finally, issues relating to archaeology and ecology were dealt with when the Haven was redeveloped.

8 CONCLUSIONS

- 8.1 The proposed residential redevelopment of the site complies with the National Planning Policy Framework and current Development Plan policies. It is considered that the proposal would have an acceptable impact on the character and appearance of the area and the Old Town Conservation Area within which the site lies. It would not harm the amenity of neighbouring land users. Additionally, the proposed scheme would not adversely affect the operation or safety of the local highway network and would provide a sufficient level of car parking. Accordingly, it is recommended that planning permission be granted.

9 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.1 Planning permission be GRANTED subject to the following conditions:-

1. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: 17047su1 01A, 02, 03, 17047wd2.01B, 02B, 03C, 05
REASON: - For the avoidance of doubt and in the interest of proper planning.
2. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.
REASON:- To comply with the requirements of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004).
3. No development shall take place until a schedule and samples of the materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details
REASON:- To ensure the development has an acceptable appearance and to safeguard the appearance of the Old Town Conservation Area.
4. Prior to the first occupation of the dwellings hereby permitted the parking spaces and turning facilities identified on drawing 17047wd2.01B shall be constructed, hardsurfaced and made ready for use to serve the occupants of those properties unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The spaces shall be permanently retained in that form thereafter.
REASON:- To ensure that adequate parking facilities are available within the site and that there is no detriment to the safety of adjoining highways
5. No construction work relating to this permission shall be carried out on any Sunday, Public or Bank Holiday nor at any other time except between the hours of 0730 and 1800 on Mondays to Fridays and between the hours of 0900 and 1330 on Saturdays.
REASON: - To safeguard the amenities of the occupiers of neighbouring properties.
6. Notwithstanding the details shown in this application, the treatment of all boundaries including details of any walls, fences, gates or other means of enclosure shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to the commencement of development. The approved boundary treatments shall be completed before the use hereby permitted is commenced or before the buildings are occupied and thereafter permanently retained.

REASON:- To ensure a satisfactory standard of development in the interests of amenity.

7. All areas for parking, delivery and storage areas associated with the construction of the development must be provided on land which is not public highway and the use of such areas must not interfere with the use of the public highway.

REASON:-In the interests of highway safety, amenity and free and safe flow of traffic in accordance with the advice contained in the National Planning policy Framework.

8. The cycle parking facilities identified on drawing 17047wd2.01B shall be provided prior to the first occupation of the dwellings hereby permitted and shall be permanently retained at the site.

REASON:- To promote the use of sustainable transport modes and reduce reliance on the private car in accordance with Government advice contained in the National Planning Policy Framework.

9. The first floor window proposed in the north elevation of flat 4 serving the kitchen/dining area (nearest to the lounge) shall be fitted with obscure glazing and shall be fixed so as to be incapable of being opened below a height of 1.7 metres above finished floor level and shall be retained in that form thereafter.

REASON:- To safeguard the privacy of the occupiers of flat 3.

Pro-active Statement

Planning permission has been granted for this proposal. The Council acted pro-actively through positive engagement with the applicant during the determination process which led to improvements to the scheme. The Council has therefore acted pro-actively in line with the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework (paragraphs 186 and 187) and in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015.

10 BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

1. The application file, forms, plans and supporting documents having the reference number relating to this item.
2. Stevenage District Plan Second Review 1991-2011.
3. Stevenage Borough Council Supplementary Planning Documents – Parking Provision adopted January 2012. Stevenage Design Guide 2009.
4. Stevenage Borough Local Plan 2011-2031 Publication Draft.
5. Responses to consultations with statutory undertakers and other interested parties referred to in this report.
6. Central Government advice contained in the National Planning Policy Framework March 2012 and Planning Practice Guidance March 2014.