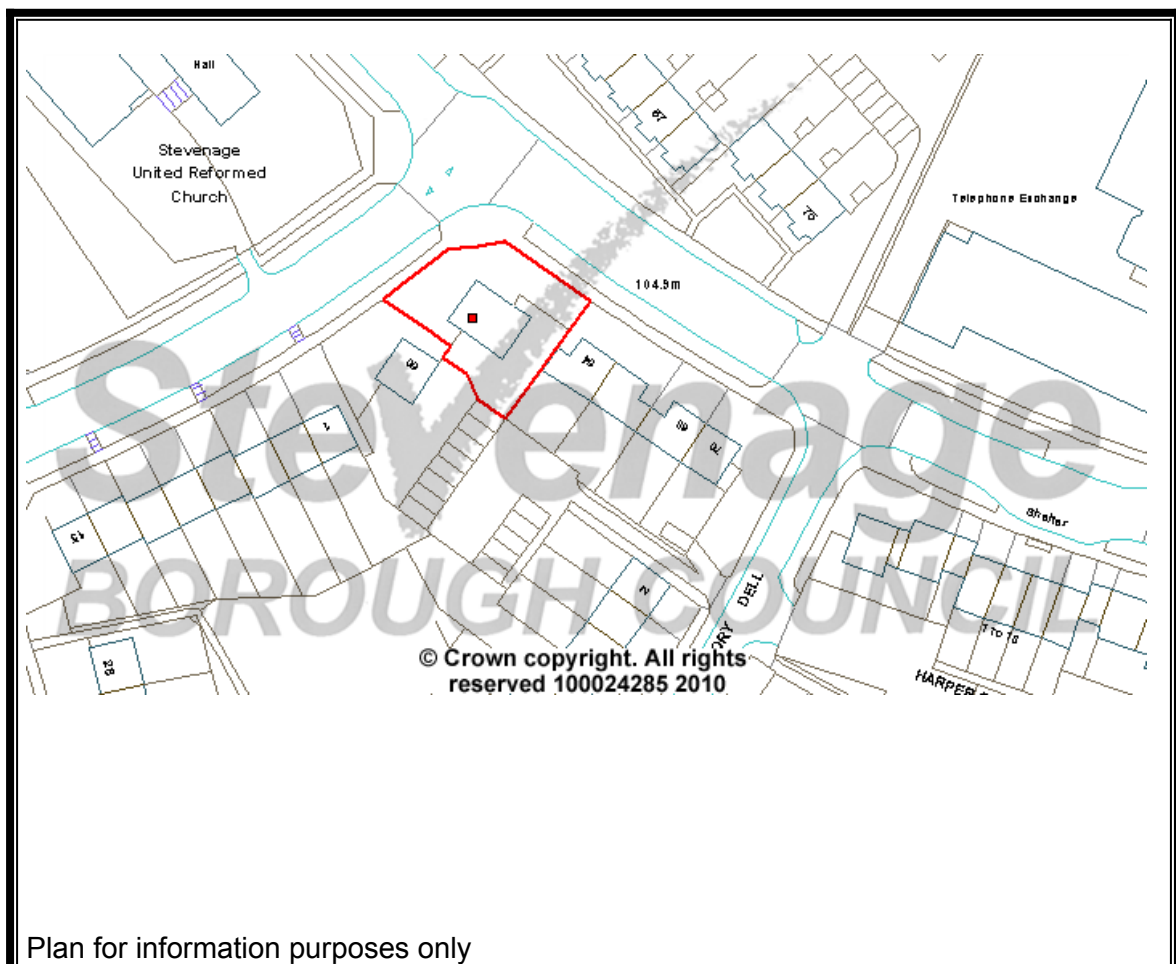


Meeting: Planning and Development Committee
Agenda Item:
Date: 6 November 2018
Author: James Chettleburgh 01438 242266
Lead Officer: Chris Berry 01438 242257
Contact Officer: James Chettleburgh 01438 242266

Application Nos:	18/00528/FP
Location:	62 Bedwell Crescent, Stevenage
Proposal:	Two-storey side and first floor rear extension and change of use of public amenity land to land associated with the dental surgery (Use Class D1) and creation of access ramp.
Drawing Nos.	812:02A; Block Plan;
Applicant:	Mr Adrian Yellon
Date Valid:	06 September 2018
Recommendation:	GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION



1. SITE DESCRIPTION

- 1.1 The application site is located at the junction of Bedwell Crescent and Cuttys Lane. The site comprises a detached, two-storey property which currently operates as an NHS Dentist. The property is constructed from brick with the roof clad in concrete interlocking bold roll tiles. To the rear and side of the original property are single-storey extensions creating a wrap-around comprising a gable-end roof and mono-pitched roof. The rear yard of the dental surgery is enclosed by a 1.8m high close board timber fence which also forms part of the common boundary with number 60 Bedwell Crescent. The main rooms within the dental surgery at ground floor level consist of the reception area, waiting room, three surgeries and a store room. At first floor level, there is a further two surgeries, waiting room and WC. There is currently no parking associated with the existing surgery.
- 1.2 The surrounding properties in the area are residential in nature and of a similar age and architectural style as the application property. The site itself is located approximately 150m west of Bedwell Neighbourhood Centre. To the east of the site there is an end of terrace property, number 64 Bedwell Crescent, which lies at right angles to the application property and which contains two windows in the facing flank elevation at first floor level, although these appear to serve a bathroom and landing. This property is located slightly higher than the application property due to the sloping topography of Bedwell Crescent.
- 1.3 To the south lies a detached house, number 60 Bedwell Crescent, which is set lower than the application site/property due to the land sloping down a gentle gradient. This property has a large single-storey extension to the rear and this lies on the boundary with the application site. The aforementioned property sits forward of the application building by approximately 3.7 metres and there are no windows in the flank elevation of number 60 which are orientated towards the application property. To the rear of the aforementioned property is a small garage court served from Priory Dell. Across Cuttys Lane fronting Bedwell Crescent is the single-storey Stevenage United Reform Church, which is at a lower level than the application property.

2. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

- 2.1 Planning application 2/0498/54 sought permission for a dental surgery with flat accommodation. This was granted permission in April 1954.
- 2.2 Planning application 08/00038/FP sought permission for a rear and side single-storey extension to the surgery. This was granted permission in March 2008.
- 2.3 Non-material amendment application to 08/00038/FP sought permission to amend the rear elevation by removing the gable feature of 1 no. window and the subsequent repositioning of the remaining windows and amendment to the front elevation by the addition of 1 no. window to the side extension. The non-material amendment was granted in February 2010.
- 2.4 Planning application 10/00567/FP sought permission for a two-storey side and first floor rear extension. This was granted planning permission in March 2011.

3. THE CURRENT APPLICATION

- 3.1 The current application seeks planning permission for a two-storey side and first floor rear extension at the existing dental surgery. The side extension would project, both ground and first floor level, 1.8m on the north side of the building which faces onto Bedwell Crescent. This extension would also be, at both ground at first floor level, 9m in length connecting to the existing ground floor extension to create a wrap-around. The side extension would follow the ridgeline of the existing building but it would be stepped back from the front elevation.
- 3.2 The first floor rear extension element would project above the existing rear single-storey extension to a depth of 3.5m from the rear elevation. The first floor extension would be 7.1m wide on the rear elevation and would face number 64 Bedwell Crescent. This extension would have the same ridge height as the existing building and would adopt the same shallow roof profile.
- 3.3 The proposed extension works would provide an extended waiting room and disabled WC on the ground floor and an extended staff room, waiting room, further surgery and x-ray room at first floor. The proposal also comprises a new access ramp to Bedwell Crescent. The existing building is stated as having a floor area of 139m² and the extensions would comprise 42m² in total. The proposed development does not seek to create any additional parking.
- 3.4 The proposal also seeks a change of use of public amenity land to land associated with the dental surgery. This is because part of the proposed extension works fall on land which lies outside the Dental Surgery's lease with Stevenage Borough Council.
- 3.5 This application has been referred to the Council's Planning and Development Committee as the application premises and the area of structural open space is owned by Stevenage Borough Council and objections have been received.

4. PUBLIC REPRESENTATIONS

- 4.1 The application has been publicised by way of letters to adjoining premises and the erection of a site notice. At the time of drafting this report, five letters of representation have been received from numbers 60 and 64 Bedwell Crescent, 16 Priory Dell, 54 Meadow Way and 25 Cromwell Road.
- 4.2 In addition, a 162 signature petition against the application was also submitted. The signatures on the petition are from the following addresses:-
- Abbots Grove – Numbers 1, 3, 4, 9, 10, 12, 13, 14, 18, 20, 22, 24, 25, 28, 30, 33, 36, 38, 40, 46, 48, 52, 54, 58, 60, 64, 66, 68, 156;
 - Archer Road – Number 484;
 - Ascot Crescent – Number 36;
 - Bedwell Crescent – Numbers 3, 11, 13, 22, 29, 32, 54, 60, 67, 69, 71, 73, 184, Unknown Property Number;
 - Bedwell Rise – Numbers 1, 2, 4, 7, 8, 9, 10;
 - Broom Walk – Number 34;
 - Brunel Road – Property Number Unknown;
 - Cuttys Lane – Numbers 1, 4, 5, 9, 10, 11, 51,
 - Chalkdown – Number 10;
 - Chester Road – Property Number Unknown;
 - Collenswood Road – Number 203;
 - Cromwell Road – Numbers 8, 47;
 - Denton Road – Numbers 3, 24;
 - Derby Way – Property Number Unknown;

- Elder Way – Number 50;
- Ellis Avenue – Number 100;
- Fairview Road – Number 180;
- Fox Road – Number 11;
- Grace Way – Numbers 22, 90;
- Haycock Road – Number 9;
- Highfield Court – Number 6;
- Hillcrest – Number 13;
- Holly Copse – Numbers 6, 7, 8, 11, 12, 14, 19, 21, 22, 26, 27, 28;
- Hopton Road – Number 2;
- Kimbolton Crescent – Property Number Unknown;
- Kymswell Road – Number 25;
- Manchester Close – Number 18;
- Marlborough Road – Number 44
- Meadow Way – Number 54;
- Pollard Gardens – Number 1;
- Priors Dell – Numbers 6, 8, 10, 12, 16, 18;
- Ramsdell – Numbers 18, 43;
- Ridgeway – Number 27;
- Ripon Road – Numbers 195, 313, 552;
- Rowland Road – Number 17;
- Ruckles Close – Number 2;
- Scarborough Avenue – Number 216,
- Scott Road – Number 25;
- Skipton Close – Number 80;
- St Margaret's – Number 9;
- Torquay Crescent – Property Number Unknown;
- Taywood Close – Property Number Unknown;
- Trumper Road – Property Number Unknown;
- Webb Rise – Numbers 57;
- Wisden Road – Numbers Unknown;
- York Road – Numbers 32, 222;
- Valley Way – Number 177;
- Vinters Avenue – Numbers 6, 10, 16, 20;
- 27 Aubries, Walkern; and
- 8 Cole Green, Hertford.

4.3 A summary of the objections raised to the application are as follows:-

- The business is out of character in this residential area;
- Overdevelopment of the site;
- Appears overbearing and dominant on neighbouring properties;
- Loss of daylight and sunlight;
- Unacceptable level of overshadowing;
- Loss of privacy;
- Stevenage Borough Council has allowed too much development on this site;
- The applicant has failed to provide adequate plans to show separation distances with neighbouring properties;
- The proposed development and its continued usage is contrary to Policy H6 of the District Plan (2004);
- The development would result in the loss of garden space;
- The Council as Landlord and Planning Authority has not been transparent or honest with residents regarding the use of the site as a dentist and the several planning permissions which have been granted;

- The use of the site as a dental surgery and its expansions have resulted in an increase in traffic and parking problems in the area;
- The dental surgery operates unregulated in terms of hours of operation by the Council which is causing unacceptable disturbance to local residents;
- The new access ramp across the amenity open space which currently compliments the aesthetic nature of this part of Bedwell is considered unacceptable;
- The new access ramp should be constructed to the front of the building;
- The increase in pedestrian traffic in close proximity to number 64 would create an unacceptable noise disturbance to this property;
- A dental surgery is more acceptable in the Town Centre and not in a residential area;
- The Council and members of the Planning Committee have a duty of care to its residents and should consider all applications on its merits. There is no merit to allowing an unacceptable development which would dominate the site and have an adverse impact on number 64;
- Patients are often parking in the United Reformed Church as there is no parking at the dentist. The car park is needed for organisations who use the church as well as persons attending events. No permission has been sought or granted for people associated with the dentist to use the church car park;
- The dental surgery due to the level of on-street parking prejudices highway safety;
- The expansion of the dentist will exacerbate the levels of on-street parking which will pose a significant safety risk on the highway;
- The roof of the building is asbestos and so there is a contamination risk to patients;
- If the application is approved, the Council must insist on the removal of asbestos be undertaken by a professional company;
- The dentist has gone from a local community centre to a major business;
- The dental surgery in the past has led to sewerage flooding to neighbouring properties and concerns this will increase if extensions are approved;
- The development would affect the value of properties;
- The development would affect the occupiers of neighbouring properties health;
- Will the electricity supply be able to cope with the extra demand from the development?;
- The application form is incorrect as there is no disabled parking available and there is no safe space for persons with disabilities to park;
- There is no area on the highway to provide disabled spaces and providing such space could be contrary to Highway Regulations and prejudice highway safety if it were located close to the junction;
- Patients have been visiting residential properties by accident, but residents expect privacy and to be unhindered, therefore will the committee respect this?;
- There is insufficient parking to serve the development.

4.4 Please note that the above is a summary of the objections/comments raised and not verbatim. However, full copies of the objections/comments raised against this application can be viewed on the Council's website.

5. CONSULTATIONS

5.1 Hertfordshire County Council as Highways Authority

5.1.1 Subject to a condition on the new public footpath access up to the dental surgery and an informative, the proposed development would not have a detrimental impact on the safety and operation of the highway network.

5.2 Environmental Health

5.2.1 There are no concerns with the proposed development subject to the following conditions:-

- Restriction on hours of construction;
- Details of a scheme for dust control measures;
- No burning of waste materials;
- Submission of an asbestos survey;
- Restriction on installation of external lighting; and
- A methodology for the screening of plant and machinery.

5.3 Council's Parks and Amenities Section

5.3.1 There is no concern as to the small loss of amenity land provided the applicant incorporates planting along the perimeter of the proposed extension. In addition, planting plans, specifications and details are to be submitted and approved in advance by the Parks Sections. Furthermore, planting must be designed to provide an attractive amenity and acceptable to the Parks Section in terms of maintenance. Therefore, all planting should be hardy to typical winters, drought tolerant and show consideration for year round interest.

5.3.2 There should be a twelve month establishment defect period for new planting areas and any defects/plants fail to establish must be suitably rectified to the satisfaction of the Parks Team.

5.4 Police Crime Prevention Officer

5.4.1 As the Dental Surgery is an NHS facility, Department of Health Guidance need to be taken into consideration in that, all schemes should be considered against Secured by Design. Given the scheme is classed as small scale, as such only the principles of Secured by Design guidance has to be considered in this instance. Therefore, correspondence has been made with the agent to agree what will be required in line with Secured by Design. Given this, the Police Crime Prevention Design Service supports the application.

5.5 Thames Water

5.5.1 No comments 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 reached an advanced stage in the preparation of a new Stevenage Borough Local Plan 2011-2031. The Plan has been used as a material consideration in the determination of all planning applications registered on or after

Wednesday 6 January 2016. The Plan has now been through the Examination process and the Inspector's Report was received in October 2017. This recommended approval of the Plan, subject to modifications proposed. The Plan is currently subject to a holding direction placed upon it by the Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government (MHCLG), which prevents its adoption whilst MHCLG are considering whether or not to call it in.

- 6.1.2 The National Planning Policy Framework sets out that decision-takers may give weight to relevant policies in emerging plans according to their stage of preparation, the extent to which there are unresolved objections to relevant policies, and their degree of consistency with policies in the National Planning Policy Framework.
- 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, bearing in mind the positive Inspector's Report, significant weight will be afforded to policies within the emerging Local Plan.

6.2 Central Government Advice

- 6.2.1 A revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published in July 2018. 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 213 of the NPPF applies which states that 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 Planning Practice Guidance must also be taken into account. It states that, where the development plan is absent, silent or the relevant policies are out of date, paragraph 11 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 District Plan

TW1: Sustainable Development;
TW2: Structural Open Space;
TW8: Environmental Safeguards;
TW9: Quality in Design;
T6: Design Standards;
T12: Bus Provision;
T13: Cycleways;
T14: Pedestrians;
T15: Car parking strategy;
EN27: Noise Pollution;
EN36: Water Conservation;
EN38: Energy Conservation and Supply.

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

Policy SP1: Presumption in favour of sustainable development;
Policy SP2: Sustainable Development in Stevenage;
Policy SP5: Infrastructure;
Policy SP6: Sustainable Transport;
Policy SP8: Good Design;
Policy SP11: Climate Change, Flooding and Pollution;
Policy SP12: Green infrastructure and natural environment;
Policy IT5: Parking and Access;
Policy IT7: New and improved links for pedestrians and cyclists;
Policy HC5: New Health, social and community facilities;
Policy GD1: High Quality Design;
Policy FP1: Climate Change;
Policy FP7: Pollution;
Policy NH6: General protection for open space.

6.5 Supplementary Planning Documents

Parking Provision Supplementary Planning Document January 2012.
Stevenage Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document January 2009.

APPRAISAL

7.1 The main issues for consideration in the determination of the application are its acceptability in land use policy terms, Impact on visual amenity, Impact on residential amenities, parking provision and highway safety.

7.2 Land Use Policy Considerations

7.2.1 In land use policy consideration, the application property is a purpose built dental surgery as determined under application reference 2/0498/54 although it does fall outside of a designated neighbourhood centre and Stevenage Town Centre. Notwithstanding this, the site is only located approximately 150m from the Bedwell Centre, which is classified as a large neighbourhood centre under Policy NC1 of the District Plan (2004) and as a local centre under Policy HC1 of the Emerging Local Plan (2016). Therefore, the dental practice provides a nearby health facility attributed to what is traditionally found in a neighbourhood centre. In addition, the proposed works would be in line with Emerging Plan Policy HC5 in that they extend and modernise the existing dental practice and the fact that this facility is easily accessible to existing residents.

7.2.2 In regards to open space, the development includes an area of informal open space which would be utilised to construct the side extension. Given this, Policy TW2 of the adopted Local Plan (2004) and Policy NH6 of the Emerging Local Plan (2016) need to be taken into consideration. Policy TW2 states that development proposals which have an unacceptable adverse impact on structural open spaces of the town will not be permitted. The criteria used in assessing the impact that a development proposal may have are a) the size, form, function and character of the structural open space affected by the development proposal; and b) the impact of the development proposal on the structural open space.

7.2.3 Policy NH6 stipulates that for development of any existing, unallocated open spaces, development would be permitted where:

A) the loss of the open space is justified having regard to:

- i) the quality and accessibility of the open space;
- ii) the existence, or otherwise, or any interventions to improve the quality or access;
- iii) whether the open space is serving its function and purpose; and
- iv) whether alternative space(s) remain available for community use, and

B) Reasonable compensatory provision is made.

7.2.4 Part of the application comprises an area of grassed amenity space between the northern elevation of the building and the public highway of Bedwell Crescent. The area of amenity space to the side of the property does not form an area of useable amenity space but is rather a grassed area of landscaping. Consequently, whilst the proposal would require developing on a small piece of amenity land including its change of use to form part of the dental surgery, a large strip of amenity land between the development proposed and the public footpath would be retained. The retention of these areas would maintain the function of this landscaping strip which assists in giving this part of Bedwell Crescent an open and green character. Turning to compensatory provision, given the limited quality of the structural open space and the lack of purpose it serves to the wider community, it would be unreasonable to require the applicant to provide compensatory open space elsewhere in the estate.

7.2.5 Taking into consideration of the above, whilst concerns have been raised by neighbours about the impact the development would have on this area of amenity space, it is not considered that the limited loss of amenity space would be detrimental to the visual amenities of the wider street scene. In addition, the Council's Parks and Amenities Section have raised no concerns about its loss subject to the provision of suitable planting. It is considered that replacement planting can be secured by the imposition of a landscaping condition which can be attached to any permission issued.

7.3 Impact on Visual Amenity

7.3.1 The existing building resembles a detached house and has previously been extended at ground floor to the side and rear. The extensions proposed are not considered to have a detrimental impact on the character and appearance of the area. Firstly, the side extension only projects 1.8m from the existing side elevation. Whilst this part of the extension is not set down from the main ridge of the property, it is stepped back from the original front wall in accordance with the principles set out within the Stevenage Design Guide SPD (2009). Therefore, it has been designed to appear as a secondary and proportionate addition to the main building.

7.3.2 In addition to the above, windows at first floor level and a door at ground floor level are now proposed which introduce architectural features into what is currently a blank elevation, thus providing interest to the side elevation facing Bedwell Crescent. Some shrubs would need to be removed to facilitate this but a condition could be imposed to require replacement planting.

7.3.3 The first floor rear extension extends 3.5m from the existing rear elevation and whilst it is a large element, it is considered to be appropriately designed with the roof profile of this part of the development complementing the shallow roof profile of the existing property. Turning to visual appearance, the proposed works would be constructed from similar materials to those used in the construction of the existing building. In addition, the windows and doors which form parts of the development have been symmetrically aligned, evenly spaced and have been designed to reflect the fenestration pattern and detailing of the existing premises. Given this, the proposed development works have been designed to reflect the architectural composition of the application property.

- 7.3.4 Dealing with the proposed access ramp/ footpath, this would measure 1.49m in width and 5.11m in length and would be constructed from concrete. The ramp has been designed to follow a gentle gradient up to the proposed development from Bedwell Crescent. It is considered that overall design of the new access ramp/footpath would be similar to the existing ramped/access positioned to the front of the building. Moreover, a number of properties along Bedwell Crescent comprise of similar access arrangements across the open space. Therefore, it would not appear out of character in this instance. Separately, despite the proposed ramp resulting in a loss of amenity space, the Council's Parks and Amenities Section has not raised any objection as the proposal would have a limited impact on the structural open space subject to the provision of replacement planting. In addition, the proposal also seeks to retain the existing ramped access located at the front of the dental practice to ensure that persons in for example wheelchairs are still able to access the surgery.
- 7.3.5 Taking into consideration the above assessment, the proposed development would not have a detrimental impact on the character and appearance of the property or the visual amenities of the wider street scene.

7.4 Impact on Amenities

- 7.4.1 With regards to the impact on neighbouring properties, the closest properties which would be affected by the development are numbers 60 and 64 Bedwell Crescent. Dealing with number 60, this lies to the south-west of the application property and both properties face onto Cuttys Lane. Number 60 itself lies forward of the application property by approximately 3.7m.
- 7.4.2 Looking at the proposed first floor rear extension, this would not adversely impact on number 60 as it is set to the north-east with the proposed works set away from the shared boundary of this property by 7m. Given this, the proposal would not breach the 45 degree amenity line as drawn from the centre point of the nearest habitable window in both plan and elevation form. In addition, the proposed extension does not comprise of any side windows which would overlook this property. In relation to the proposed side extension, as this is located on the north-eastern elevation of the building away from the aforementioned property, it would have no impact on the owner/occupiers of number 60 Bedwell Crescent.
- 7.4.3 In relation to the impact on number 64 Bedwell Crescent, this property lies 'side on' to the application building and it is set at a slightly higher level. It has two secondary windows at first floor level with a side door at ground floor level and an original single-storey wing. The proposed first floor rear extension would be constructed above the existing single-storey extension and thus, it would not protrude any further than the existing extension where 6m of garden depth would be retained. Given the orientation of the extension to the north-west of number 64, it would not generate any worsening of overshadowing from the first floor rear extension to this property.
- 7.4.4 Turning to the impact the development may have on light from the sky, the BRE Guide – Site Layout Planning for Daylight and Sunlight: A Good Practice Guide, states that when assessing the impact on existing buildings, windows to bathrooms, toilets, circulation areas (such as hallways) do not have to be assessed. This is because these areas are not classified as habitable rooms. Given this, as the windows on the side elevation of 64 Bedwell Crescent do not serve habitable rooms, an assessment as to the impact on the level of light received at the aforementioned property does not have to be undertaken in this instance.
- 7.4.5 In terms of the impact of sunlight, the aforementioned BRE Guide states that obstruction to sunlight may become an issue if some part of a new development is situated within 90 degrees of due south of an existing building. Given the proposed

development is not located within 90 degrees of due south of any main windows on number 64 Bedwell Crescent, the development would not result in an unacceptable loss of sunlight to this property in this instance.

- 7.4.6 With respect to privacy, there is some concern regarding the potential for overlooking of the rear garden area of number 64 Bedwell Crescent, given the introduction of two windows at first floor level in the proposed extension. However, there are windows at first floor level in the existing rear elevation and this proposal would only bring these windows 3.5m closer. Additionally, the closest window serving an x-ray room has been shown to be fitted with obscure glazing, which assists in addressing this privacy issue. Notwithstanding this, a condition would be imposed to any permission granted requiring this window to be obscurely glazed and non-opening as measured 1.7m from finished floor level. This will ensure that the privacy of the aforementioned property is protected.
- 7.4.7 Turning to the window serving the surgery at first floor level which faces south-east, this would overlook the public amenity space located to the front of number 64. Therefore, it would not have a detrimental impact on the privacy of the aforementioned property. In addition, this window would be at an oblique angle and the screening that currently exists on the boundary with number 64, would ensure that overlooking of this property would not be worsened such as to sustain a refusal of permission.
- 7.4.8 In relation to noise, the proposed development does not seek to increase or upgrade any existing plant or equipment such as air-conditioning units and extraction systems. In addition, the use of the property as a dental surgery has already been established so any level of noise created from the development would not be significantly worse over and above the current situation. In terms of the hours of operation, there do not appear to be any restrictive conditions which control the hours in which the dental surgery can operate under the original 1954 planning permission. Consequently, whilst it is noted concerns have been raised by local residents about the unacceptable hours in which the dental practice operates, there are currently no planning conditions on the original permission which restrict its use in terms of hours. In addition, the Council's Environmental Health Section has not raised any concerns regarding the existing operation of the premises as a dental practice.
- 7.4.9 With respect to hours of construction, as recommended by the Council's Environmental Health Section, to ensure the amenities of neighbouring properties are protected during the construction phase of the proposed development, a condition would be imposed to any permission issued if the application were to be granted. In relation to external lighting, the proposed development does not comprise the provision of any external lights such as flood lights and lighting bollards. However, to ensure the amenities of neighbouring properties are protected, a condition would be imposed to any permission issued.

7.5 Parking Provision and highway safety

- 7.5.1 The Council's adopted Parking Standards SPD (2009) requires a maximum of three parking spaces per consultation room plus one space per employee other than consulting dentists. Taking this standard into consideration, the existing dental practice would require 17 off-street parking spaces. Given that there is currently no off-street parking serving the practice, there is currently an existing deficit of 17 spaces.
- 7.5.2 The proposed development seeks to create an additional surgery and employ a further full time member of staff. Taking this into consideration based on the aforementioned Parking Standard, an additional 4 parking spaces would be required to serve the proposed development. However, as the site is located in non-residential accessibility zone 4, a degree of restraint can be applied in the number of off-street parking spaces

that can be applied, which in this instance, is between 75% to 100% of the maximum number of spaces which are required. Taking this into consideration, there would be a requirement to provide between 3 to 4 parking spaces. This parking requirement combined with the existing dental practice requirement, amounts to a total of 21 parking spaces.

- 7.5.3 The proposed development does not seek to create any additional off-street parking in order to serve the proposed enlargement to the dental practice. Consequently, there would be a deficit of a further 3 to 4 car parking spaces. However, whilst the concerns of residents are recognised in relation to the lack of parking, this additional deficit is not considered to be sufficient to warrant refusal. This is because firstly, whilst there are double yellow lines positioned on the junction of Cuttys Lane and Bedwell Crescent, the remainder of both roads in close proximity of the site have no restrictions in place. Therefore, vehicles could potentially park on the highway as per the current situation. Additionally, there is parking capacity at the Bedwell Centre which is only approximately 150m from the application site.
- 7.5.4 In addition to the above, the site is accessible to public transport, is in walking distance to Stevenage Town Centre and is thus accessible by other modes of transport other than the private car. Further, it is noted that Hertfordshire County Council (HCC) as Highways Authority has stated that whilst the business has increased in size and further extension will generate additional trips, they consider that this increase is acceptable as it would not have an unreasonable impact on the safety and operation of the highway network. In addition, they do not raise any concerns with respect to additional vehicles potentially parking on the highway. Consequently, whilst there is a shortfall in off-street parking and the proposal is likely to result in additional on-street parking, it would not lead to a situation which would prejudice the safety and operation of the highway.
- 7.5.5 Further to the above, it is important to note that the Council as the Local Planning Authority approved a similar development under planning application 10/00567/FP. The Vehicle Parking Provision SPD (2003) in which the aforementioned permission was assessed against, had a similar parking requirement to the current Parking Standard SPD. Secondly, the proposal at that time had no off-street parking provision as per the current planning application, and, HCC as Highways Authority determined that the increase in parking demand in connection with the expansion to the size of the surgery would be considered insignificant in terms of traffic generation and that the site is in a sustainable location. Given this, it is considered that there are insufficient grounds to warrant refusal as the situation has not substantively changed in terms of parking requirements and highways related matters between the 2010 application and the current application which is before the Council.
- 7.5.6 With respect to cycle parking, the applicant is seeking to provide three secure cycle parking spaces at the site. This would assist visitors and staff wishing to cycle to the site.

7.6 Other matters

Sustainable construction and climate change

- 7.6.1 Policy EN36 of the District Plan states that development proposals will be encouraged to reduce water consumption and run-off by using suitable water conservation and storage measures such as the use of rainwater, water efficient devices and by recycling water. Policy EN38 of the same document states that development proposals will be expected to demonstrate that methods of maximising energy efficiency and supplying of energy in the development need to be considered. Policy FP1 of the Emerging Local Plan (2016) stipulates that development that planning permission will

be granted for development that can incorporate measures to address adaptation to climate change. New developments will be encouraged to include measures such as:

- Ways to ensure development is resilient to likely variations in temperature;
- Reducing water consumption to no more than 110 litres per person per day, including external water use;
- Improving energy performance of buildings;
- Reducing energy consumption through efficiency measures;
- Using or producing renewable or low carbon energy from a local source; and
- Contributing towards reducing flood risk through the use of SuDS or other appropriate measures.

7.6.2 The applicant has not provided details as to how the development would be constructed to ensure that it is adaptable to climate change. However, if planning permission were to be granted, a condition could be imposed to any permission issued requiring details of climate change adaptation measures to be submitted to the Council as the Local Planning Authority for its approval.

Loss of residential accommodation

7.6.3 It is noted that objections have been raised by local residents in that the proposed development and continued operation of the property as a dentist is contrary to Policy H6 of the District Plan (2004). It has been argued that the dental surgery has resulted in a loss of residential accommodation. However, as you will note from Section 2 “Relevant Planning History” of this report, the premises has been used as a dental surgery since 1954. Given this, the continued operation of the application property as a dental surgery is not contrary to Policy H6 of the District Plan.

7.6.4 Further to the above, the proposed extension works support the ongoing operation of the lawful use of the application property as a dental practice. Therefore, the development and its ongoing use has not resulted in the loss of residential accommodation in this instance.

Asbestos

7.6.5 In regards to concerns raised in relation to asbestos and its removal combined with the recommendation to impose a condition by the Council’s Environmental Health Section, this is a matter that falls outside the control of Planning. However, any matter with respect to the handling, removal and disposal of asbestos from a building, including licencing and surveys, is all controlled by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE).

Impact on property value

7.6.6 Concerns have been raised about the impact that the development could have on property values. However, despite the concerns raised, it has long been established through planning case law that in the assessment of planning applications, it is the conventional tests of impact on planning policies and amenity, harm to neighbouring uses or the character of an area as a whole that is the deciding issue and not any possible consequential effects on nearby property values.

Impact on the sewer network

7.6.7 Given the nature and scale of the proposed development, there is no statutory requirement for the applicant to provide drainage details. In addition, the applicant is not required to provide specifications of how they will connect to the sewer network and how they will manage effluent waters. Notwithstanding this, any matters regarding drainage would be dealt with under any subsequent Building Regulations application.

Environmental Health Conditions

- 7.6.8 The Council's Environmental Health Section has sought conditions to be imposed with respect to dust control, burning of construction waste and the screening and enclosure of plant and machinery. It is considered that such conditions are not reasonable given the generally limited size and scale of the development proposed. In addition, any issues with dust, burning of waste and construction noise if it is causing a statutory nuisance can be enforced against by the Council's Environmental Health Section under separate legislation.

Highways Condition

- 7.6.9 One of the conditions recommended by the Highways Authority is prior to commencement of development; the applicant should submit a construction management plan. This is to ensure that the carriageway and footway remains unobstructed by vehicles, machinery and other aspects of construction. It is considered that this condition would fail to accord with paragraph 55 of the NPPF (2018). This is because the condition is not considered reasonable for the limited scale of works which are proposed and is not necessary in this instance. This is because any vehicles, machinery or other equipment which obstruct the highway can be enforced against by either the Police or Hertfordshire County Council as Highways Authority.

8 CONCLUSIONS

- 8.1 The proposed extensions of 62 Bedwell Crescent are considered to be acceptable in principle. Additionally, the proposal would not have an adverse impact on the character and appearance of the area and the design of the extensions are considered to be acceptable. In addition, the proposal would not have a detrimental impact on the amenities of neighbouring properties and the lack of parking provision is not considered to be sufficient grounds to refuse the application. The proposal is, therefore, considered to be acceptable and it is recommended that planning permission be granted.

9 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.1 That 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:

Site Location Plan; 812:01; 812:02A.

REASON:- For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests 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 The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the side and first floor extensions shall be similar to the materials used in the construction of the original building to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority.

REASON:- To ensure the development reflects the character and appearance of the existing buildings and preserves the visual amenities of the wider street scene.

- 4 No development, above slab level, shall take place until there has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority a scheme of soft and hard landscaping and the treatment of all hard surfaces. The scheme shall include details of all existing trees, hedgerows or other planting on the land which are to be retained or removed together with details of all new planting to take place including species, size and method of planting. The approved hard and soft landscaping shall thereafter be implemented and maintained in accordance with the approved details.
REASON:- To ensure the development has a satisfactory appearance.
- 5 All planting, seeding or turfing comprised in the approved soft and hard landscaping shall be carried out in the first planting and seeding season following the first use of the extensions or the completion of the development whichever is the sooner. Any trees or plants comprised within the scheme of landscaping, which within a period of five years from the completion of the development die, are removed or become seriously damaged or diseased shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of a similar size and species unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.
REASON:- To ensure the development has a satisfactory appearance.
- 6 All hardsurfacing comprised in the approved details of landscaping shall be carried out within three months of the first occupation/use of the approved development or the completion of the development, whichever is the sooner.
REASON:- To ensure the development has a satisfactory appearance.
- 7 The secure cycle parking shown on drawing number 812:02A shall be implemented in full before the first occupation/use of the development hereby permitted and shall be thereafter retained in perpetuity.
REASON:- To promote the use of cycles as a mode of transport to access the site.
- 8 No development, above slab level, shall take place until details of the width and paving of the pedestrian pathway/footway that connects to the public footway with the new front entrance to the development has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The pathway/footway shall be provided in accordance with the approved details before the development is occupied or use of the extension commences.
REASON:- In the interests of providing an acceptable pedestrian access into the site.
- 9 No development, above slab level, shall take place until details of measures to address adaptation to climate change have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. These measures shall be implemented and permanently maintained in accordance with the approved details.
REASON:- To ensure that the development is adaptable to climate change in terms of energy efficiency and consumption of water.
- 10 The proposed first floor window on the eastern elevation of the first floor rear extension serving the x-ray room, shall be obscurely glazed (at level 3 or above of the Pilkington Scale of Obscurity) and non-opening as measured 1.7m from finished floor level.
REASON:- To ensure the development does not have a detrimental on the amenities of number 64 Bedwell Crescent.
- 11 All works and ancillary operations which are audible at the site boundary, or at such other place as may be agreed with the Council, shall not be carried out on any Sunday or Bank Holiday, nor before 07.30 hours or after 18.00 hours on any weekdays, nor on any Saturday before 09.00 hours or after 13.00 hours.
REASON:- To protect the amenities of adjoining land users.

- 12 No external lighting shall be installed or affixed to any buildings on the site unless the Local Planning Authority has first approved in writing the details of the position, height, design and illumination intensity. Any lighting thereafter installed shall be in accordance with the approved details.
REASON:- To ensure that exterior artificial lighting is kept to a minimum and directed away neighbouring residential properties.

Pro-active statement

Planning permission has been granted for this proposal. Discussion with the applicant to seek an acceptable solution was not necessary in this instance. The Council has therefore acted pro-actively in line with the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework (paragraph 38) and in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015.

INFORMATIVE

Hertfordshire County Council Highways

Construction standards for works within the highway: All works to be undertaken on the adjoining highway shall be constructed to the satisfaction and specification of the Highway Authority, by an approved contractor, and in accordance with Hertfordshire County Council's publication "Roads in Hertfordshire – Highway Design Guide 126 (2011)". Before works commence the applicant will need to apply to the Highway Authority to obtain their permission and requirements. Further information is available via the website <https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/highways-roads-and-pavements/business-and-developer-information/development-management/highways-development-management.aspx> or by telephoning 0300 1234047.

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 Local Plan 2011 – 2031 Publication Draft 2016
4. Central Government advice contained in the National Planning Policy Framework July 2018 and National Planning Policy Guidance 2014.
5. Responses to consultations with statutory undertakers and other interested parties referred to in this report.