

The Meeting: Planning and Development Committee **Agenda Item:**

Date: 18 June 2020

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Application Nos:	20/00135/FPM
Location:	Car park bounded by Lytton Way, Danesgate and London Road, Stevenage
Proposal:	New bus interchange including covered bus waiting area, ancillary accommodation building which consists of a café retail unit, shop mobility store, waiting area and toilet facilities, Lytton Way bus shelters and coach stands, associated vehicle hardstanding, public realm improvements, associated highway works and external stores on London Road.
Drawing Nos.	STV-SGP-AA-00-DR-A-2060 P5; STV-SGP-Z0-ZZ-DR-A-1000 P7; STV-SGP-Z0-ZZ-DR-A-1601 P6; STV-SGP-AA-00-DR-A-2120 P8; STV-SGP-AA-R1-DR-A-2021 P2; STV-SGP-AA-R2-DR-A-2020 P7; STV-SGP-AA-ZZ-DR-A-2800 P7; 500 P03; LA1 P6; 6301 P01; 6302 P01; 6701 P01; LONRD-01A; LONRD/02A; STV-SGP-Z0-XX-DR-A-1602; STV-SGP-Z0-XX-DR-A-1603; STV-SGP-Z0-DR-A-1001 3; STV-SGP-Z0-ZZ-DR-A-1002 P3; STV-SGP-Z0-ZZ-DR-A-1003 P2; STV-SGP-Z0-ZZ-DR-A-1004 P1; STV-SGP-Z0-ZZ-DR-A-1005 P1; STV-SGP-Z0-ZZ-DR-A-1605 P4; STV-SGP-Z1-ZZ-DR-A-2640 P6; STV-SGP-Z1-ZZ-DR-A-2600 P7; STV-SGP-Z0-ZZ-DR-A-1606; STV-SGP-Z1-ZZ-DR-A-2740 P6; STV-SGP-Z1-ZZ-DR-A-2700 P5; STV-WYG-Z0-00-DR-E-960002 P01.
Applicant:	Stevenage Borough Council
Date Valid:	6 th March 2020
Recommendation:	GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION



1. SITE DESCRIPTION

- 1.1 The application site is located at the western edge of Stevenage Town Centre and comprises a surface car park and vehicular access which is also known as the old London Road. The site is bordered to the north by the existing Arts and Leisure Building and to the west by the A602 Lytton Way which is a dual carriageway. Along the southern boundary is Danesgate which is a spur road off Lytton Way and to the east is the Magistrates Court and Registry Office. The site is currently served by a vehicle access off Danesgate.
- 1.2 In terms of the surrounding area, beyond Lytton Way is Stevenage Train Station and associated parking. To the south-west lies Stevenage Police Station and to the south and south-east is additional surface parking and the Matalan Store. To the east beyond the Magistrates Court and Registry Building are the main Stevenage Borough Council Offices, the existing bus station as well as the main town centre. To the north beyond the Arts and Leisure building lies Tesco superstore and Skyline development.

2. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

- 2.1 There have been numerous permissions granted in the past for advertisements, extensions and refurbishment works to the Arts and Leisure building. These are not particularly relevant to this planning application.
- 2.2 Planning application 07/00810/OP sought outline permission for a comprehensive redevelopment for a mix of uses to include a full range of retail uses (Class A1, A2, A3, A3 and A5), housing (Class C3), hotel (Class C1), leisure (Class D2), offices (Class B1), voluntary services (Class D1), magistrates court, replacement bus station, together with ancillary and associated developments, pedestrian and cycle circulation and open space, car parking, vehicular access, servicing facilities, highway works, plant and machinery, landscaping and enabling works. Demolition of existing buildings and structures, the closure and alteration of highways and cycleways and the internal and external alteration of buildings being retained, engineering works and construction of new buildings and structures. This application has not been proceeded with.

3. THE CURRENT APPLICATION

- 3.1 The proposed development seeks planning permission for the creation of a new bus interchange. This facility would replace the existing bus station which lies to the east of the application site. The bus interchange would comprise the erection of the main accommodation building which would consist of a retail unit, shop mobility store, waiting area and toilet facilities. The development would also comprise an external canopy with glass screen forming part of the main bus apron. The application would also comprise the erection two standalone bus shelters positioned adjacent to Lytton Way and the proposed at grade crossing to the west of the main bus apron. These shelters would serve as either a coach stop (such as for National Express) and/or bus stop.
- 3.2 The development would also comprise new public realm works which would allow the development to connect to the main town centre as well as the train station. There would also be the creation of a new vehicle access off Lytton Way to serve the bus interchange. In addition, the proposal would also include associated highway works on Lytton Way in order to create a designated lane into the main bus interchange. The highway works would also include an at grade crossing along Lytton Way which would be signalised to aid pedestrian movement along with the narrowing of Lytton Way to 2 lanes, both northbound and southbound. In addition, a bus priority system would also be created on Lytton Way in order to improve accessibility to the interchange and the flow of buses onto the main highway network. These works will be secured via a

Section 278 Agreement with Hertfordshire County Council as the Highways Authority under the Highways Act 1980.

- 3.3 The proposal also incorporates the installation of a storage area under the footbridge which runs up to the Arts and Leisure building opposite the ground floor entrance into this building. This is to replace the storage being lost which is currently provided within shipping containers and these are to be removed as part of the development proposal. Further to this, the proposed development comprises engineering works to the northern end of London Road near the junction with Swingate. This would incorporate the creation of a new turning head with associated retaining wall on the old London Road. The engineering works are required in order to facilitate a new vehicle access for emergency vehicles such as fire tenders to service the Arts and Leisure building. Finally, the proposal also comprises the creation of six designated disabled parking bays along London Road which would serve the leisure and theatre building.
- 3.4 This application comes before the Planning and Development Committee as the application is a Major development and the applicant and landowner is Stevenage Borough Council.

4. PUBLIC REPRESENTATIONS

- 4.1 Following notification of the application via letter, the erection of site notices and the issuing of a press notice, no comments or representations have been received.

5. CONSULTATIONS

5.1 Hertfordshire County Council as Highways Authority

- 5.1.1 The County Council as Highways Authority has undertaken a review of the documents and drawings submitted in support of the application. The Highway Authority is content to accept that the new position of the bus station may be accommodated on the local highway network and will also accrue benefits in terms of accessibility to the station and also with respect to the wider development of the town centre.
- 5.1.2 The Highways Authority does not wish to restrict the grant of planning permission, although recommends the inclusion of a number of conditions and advisory notes.

5.2 Lead Local Flood Authority

- 5.2.1 The drainage strategy is considered to be acceptable subject to conditions.

5.3 Council's Environmental Health Officer

- 5.3.1 The findings and proposals arising in the applicant's air quality assessment are acceptable. With regards to contamination, it is recommended a standard condition is imposed if any previously unidentified contaminants are found during construction in which a remediation strategy would have to be submitted to the Council for its approval.

5.4 Thames Water

- 5.4.1 The proposed development is within 15 metres of underground waste water assets. Therefore, an informative should be added if permission were to be granted. It is also expected the developer to demonstrate what measures will be undertaken to minimise groundwater discharges into the public sewer. Groundwater discharges typically result from construction site dewatering, deep excavations, basement infiltration, borehole installation, testing and site remediation. Any discharge made without a permit is

deemed illegal and may result in prosecution under the provisions of the Water Industry Act 1991. Should the Local Planning Authority be minded to approve the planning application, Thames Water would recommend an informative be attached to the planning permission.

5.4.2 With regards to surface water drainage, Thames Water advises that if the developer follows the sequential approach to the disposal of surface water, then no objections would be raised. However, where the developer proposes to discharge to a public sewer, then approval will be required from Thames Water.

5.4.3 Separately, it is advised that with regard to the waste water network and sewage treatment works infrastructure capacity, there are no objections on the planning application. In relation to water supply, this is covered by Affinity Water.

5.5 Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust

5.5.1 There appears to be little ecological impact and the recommendations in the ecological report are acceptable.

5.6 Police Crime Prevention Design Advisor

5.6.1 Due to involvement at earlier stages with the Council, all concerns previously raised have been addressed and as such, the Police Crime Prevention Design Service supports the application. However, it is recommended that the Data Cabinet Room is fully protected by the buildings electronic intruder detection system. It is also recommended that as a minimum security standard, that the building meets Secured by Design (Commercial Standards). This will address any potential issues around crime, disorder and the fear of crime which may arise.

5.7 Environment Agency

5.7.1 The previous and proposed site use suggests the potential presence of contamination and the site is situated in a vulnerable groundwater area within Source Protection Zones 2 and 3. Therefore, it is recommended that the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework and National Planning Practice Guidance are followed. This means that all risks to groundwater and surface waters from contamination need to be identified so that appropriate remedial action can be taken.

5.7.2 The Environment Agency expects reports and Risk Assessments to be prepared in line with their Groundwater Protection Guidance. In addition, in order to protect groundwater quality from further deterioration:-

- No infiltration based sustainable drainage systems should be constructed on land affected by contamination, as contaminants can remobilise and cause groundwater pollution;
- Piling, or any other foundation designs using penetrative measures, should not cause preferential pathways for contaminants to migrate to groundwater and cause pollutions;
- Investigative boreholes are decommissioned to ensure that redundant boreholes are safe and secure, and do not cause groundwater pollution or loss of water supplies.

5.8 Council's Arboricultural Officer

5.8.1 There are no objections to the application on arboricultural grounds. It is noted a relatively small number of less significant trees will be removed, however, the trees and shrub planting in the landscaping proposal will compensate for this loss.

5.9 Hertfordshire County Council Archaeology

- 5.9.1 The proposed development is circa 200m to the north of the nearest Area of Archaeological Significance, that being the Six Hills Barrows, which are a Scheduled Monument, and therefore of national importance. However, of particular relevance to the proposed development is the remains of a portable Roman road (subsequently, the Medieval Highways: Historic Record no. 10565), which ran beside the barrows and passed through the eastern part of the proposed development area.
- 5.9.2 It is probable that remains of this road, should they survive below ground, will be impacted by the proposed development. Associated archaeological features on site may also be present. This is because funerary activity close to roads in the Roman period was common, and Roman features have been found next to the course of the road to the north, within Old Stevenage.
- 5.9.3 An archaeological desk-based assessment (DBA) was submitted by the applicant to judge the potential for unrecorded archaeological remains at the site. The DBA identified the site as having a moderate potential for archaeological remains to be present. However, this depends on how much truncation of deposits occurred during the 20th century development of the site, but, it is likely that, within the car park, the impact may have been comparatively slight. Significant archaeological remains have been shown to survive beneath large 20th century buildings elsewhere in the county, such as at GlaxoSmithKline in Ware, or Birchley Green shopping centre in Hertford.
- 5.9.4 Archaeological evaluations should therefore take place anywhere that ground impact of any depth will occur. It is believed that the position of the development is such that it should be regarded as likely to have an impact on heritage assets of archaeological interest and it is recommended that conditions should be imposed should planning permission be granted.

5.10 Hertfordshire County Council Minerals and Waste

- 5.10.1 The Waste Planning Authority is keen to ensure the appropriate management and minimisation of construction, demolition and excavation (C, D & E) waste for all relevant construction projects. As the Borough Council is aware, the Hertfordshire Waste Local Plan is under review. The Capacity Gap Report produced to support the Waste Local Plan review, identifies C, D, & E waste to be the most significant capacity gap for Hertfordshire. The county does not have the number of facilities it would need to treat the excessive volumes of C, D & E waste which arises in Hertfordshire (a large proportion is also imported from London) and therefore every effort must be made to reuse and recycle as much of this waste as possible.
- 5.10.2 The Waste Planning Authority would like for a SWMP (or similar) to be prepared for the proposed developments either at this stage or as part of a requirement by a pre commencement condition. It is recognised that the Construction Management Plan submitted with the application does provide some details with regards to waste management. It is encouraging to see the commitment to applying the waste hierarchy and working towards a 100% landfill diversion rate. Part 4.5 of the document states:
- ‘Though SWMP’s are no longer a legislative requirement, we continue to use them to help us create resource efficiency action plans for our construction projects.’*
- 5.10.3 It is assumed from the above statement that a SWMP will be prepared for the project. The County Council as Waste Planning Authority would be happy to assess any SWMP that is submitted as part of this development and provide comment to the Borough Council.

5.11 Stevenage Borough Council Car Parks Manager

5.11.1 The Car Parks P and H are currently used as overflow for the Railway Car Parks. However, there is capacity available in St George's multi-storey car park which is sufficient to provide parking for those displaced by the development.

5.12 Council's Parks and Amenities Section

5.12.1 At this stage there are minimal details for Stevenage Direct Services (SDS) to be able to fully comment on the soft & hard landscaping proposals. SDS will require full details, specifications, and plans of the areas that are expected to be maintained and adopted by SDS. It is recommended all planting schemes, specifications, and plans are to be approved by SDS before commencement of any planting, seeding, turfing etc. and shall comply with the relevant British Standards. SDS supports the proposals for high-quality planting and landscaping.

5.12.2 SDS understand that the developer will be responsible for maintaining the landscaping for 12 months before handover to the Council. During this period the developer must rectify all issues (e.g. plant establishment, defects etc.). Any issues that have not been resolved by the end of this period will extend the handover until resolved and SDS is satisfied. All rectifications works shall be undertaken and completed all at cost to the applicant.

5.12.3 The developer is to appoint a representative to oversee, control, and manage the delivery and maintenance of the landscaping elements. The representative will be proactive in working with the relevant Officers from the Council (including SDS) to pick up on issues, defects, corrections throughout the entire delivery of the development. This may include regular site visits and recorded meetings. SDS will not adopt the maintenance or repairs of any physical drains, pipes, channels, etc. as SDS does not have the expertise to undertake such maintenance. All landscaped/planted areas must be designed to be easily accessible for maintenance.

5.12.4 All soft and hard landscaping elements must be designed to provide an attractive amenity, whilst being mindful of the increased revenue costs associated with high-quality maintenance. To assist with any street sweeping activities, all planted borders that are directly adjacent to hard surfacing should be designed with this in mind. Any furniture, seating, etc. should be flush to the ground of any hard surface so detritus, litter, leaves, etc. can be cleared easily. All planting shall be hardy to typical winters, drought-tolerant, and show consideration for year-round interest. Plants should also be pollinator friendly, both in terms of floral potential but also potential to support overwintering species.

5.12.5 Where applicable, landscaping considerations must take into account the effects of building shadowing and sheltering. Proposed planting and grassed landscaping must also consider location in respect of glazed windows and doors. Areas of planting must not interfere or have the potential to block windows and doors. Grassed areas shall not be near low-level glazing due to the risk of material being thrown from machinery. Provision should also be made for protecting areas of the landscape that could be vulnerable to damage by large turning vehicles (i.e. road verge corners). All proposed planting shall be undertaken during the winter months (October to February).

5.12.6 SDS is increasingly mindful of the potential threats posed to the environment from imported pests and diseases as well as a result of climate change. The developer must show how it plans to manage biosecurity risks. This will include sourcing plant stock from local and responsible growers with full tractability. All hard surfaced areas must be resilient to mechanical sweeping and the current agreed cleaning agents used

within the town. All surfaces must also be resilient to heated chewing gum removal systems.

5.12.7 In regards to Litter Bins, these should be as follows:-

- All litter bins shall be of the same design and specification for continuity with the rest of the town centre public realm;
- Bin capacity shall be 90-120 litres;
- Bins shall be of a pleasing design that compliments the town centre design;
- All bins must be highly durable, easy to operate, and deter birds and vermin. Consideration should also be given for cigarette disposal.

5.12.8 SDS require the contact details and locations of other local authorities or development projects where 'rain gardens' have been installed and are already place (ideally local to Stevenage). This is so that SDS can have the opportunity to investigate and understand more fully the design and what may be expected with the maintenance of rain gardens. We will then be in a better position to be able to comment more fully on these proposals. The use of any loose-fill hard aggregate for decorative landscaping or mulching will not be acceptable.

5.12.9 SDS note the proposals for polished concrete benches; however consideration must be given to deterring skateboards and/or bikes. As such skate stops or other appropriate furniture shall be incorporated.

5.12.10 In regards to road crossing beds, following recent discussions, consideration must be given to the safe maintenance of these proposed shrub beds, in particular on the roadside. As such, an attractively hard landscaped buffer (resin bonded gravel?) shall be incorporated into the design of this bed along the roadside. This is to reduce the requirement for our maintenance teams to be on the roadside whilst undertaking works to the bed. As already identified, careful thought will need to be given to the proposed planting in this area in respect of visibility and maintenance. Protection of the planting may also be required here in terms of reducing erosion and damage from pedestrians following desire lines to and from the interchange/station/town etc.

5.12.11 The planting within this scheme is of paramount importance for an attractive and impressive arrival space. As such the planting must be provided to create an immediate impact, which can be achieved through providing large, well-formed plants at appropriate spacing. The *Buxus spp.* shall be removed from the design and replaced with a suitable alternative. From experience, *Pachysandra spp.* struggles to establish within Stevenage. A suitable alternative shall be found. In reference to the *Tilia spp.* (Lime trees) shall not be planted over or near any hard surface or street furniture due to the heavy residue deposits.

5.12.13 There is an opportunity to incorporate swathes and clumps of naturalising bulbs within the larger open space to the South. Further details of naturalising bulb selections can be found here: <https://www.rhs.org.uk/advice/profile?pid=150>

5.12.14 Wildflower meadows – SDS note the proposals for a wetland meadow mix. Whilst SDS agree with the incorporation of a meadow, there are concerns around its maintenance for a cut and collect regime twice annually, given the difficulties in topography. SDS recommend consulting with Emosgate to identify a possible mix that would be suitable for the area whilst allowing a 'cut and drop' style maintenance regime to be employed here.

5.13 Stevenage Borough Council CCTV

5.13.1 The proposed CCTV system is considered to be acceptable.

5.14 UK Power Networks

5.14.1 No comments.

6. RELEVANT PLANNING POLICIES

6.1 Background to the development plan

6.1.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 provides that the decision on the planning application should be in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. For Stevenage the statutory development plan comprises:

- The Stevenage Borough Council Local Plan 2011-2031
- Hertfordshire Waste Development Framework 2012 and Hertfordshire Waste Site Allocations Development Plan Document (adopted 2012 and 2014); and
- Hertfordshire Minerals Local Plan 2002 – 2016 (adopted 2007).

6.2 Central Government Advice

6.2.1 A revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published in February 2019. This largely reordered the policy substance of the earlier 2012 version of the NPPF albeit with some revisions to policy. The Council are content that the policies in the Local Plan are in conformity with the revised NPPF and that the Local Plan should be considered up to date for the purpose of determining planning applications. The NPPF provides that proposals which accord with an up to date development plan should be approved without delay (para.11) and that where a planning application conflicts with an up to date development plan, permission should not usually be granted (para.12). This indicates the weight which should be given to an up to date development plan, reflecting the requirements of section 38(6) of the 2004 Act. The NPPF and the PPG, with which Members are fully familiar, are both material considerations to be taken into account in determining this application.

6.3 Planning Practice Guidance

6.3.1 National Design Guide (2019).

6.4 Stevenage Borough Local Plan 2011-2031 (Adopted 2019)

Policy SP1: Presumption in favour of sustainable development;
Policy SP2: Sustainable Development in Stevenage;
Policy SP4: A vital Town Centre;
Policy SP5: Infrastructure;
Policy SP6: Sustainable Transport;
Policy SP8: Good Design;
Policy SP11: Climate Change, Flooding and Pollution;
Policy SP12: Green infrastructure and the natural environment;
Policy SP13: The Historic Environment;
Policy EC1: Allocated sites for employment development;
Policy TC1: Town Centre;
Policy TC4: Station Gateway Major Opportunity Area
Policy TC5: Central Core Major Opportunity Area;
Policy IT4: Transport Assessments and Travel Plans;
Policy IT5: Parking and Access;
Policy IT6: Sustainable transport;
Policy IT7: New and improved links for pedestrians and cyclists;

Policy IT8: Public parking provision;
Policy GD1: High Quality Design;
Policy FP1: Climate Change;
Policy FP2: Flood risk in Flood Zone 1;
Policy FP5: Contaminated land;
Policy FP7: Pollution;
Policy NH5: Trees and woodland;
Policy NH9: Areas of Archaeological Significance.

6.5 Supplementary Planning Documents

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

6.6 Community Infrastructure Levy Charging Schedule

- 6.6.1 Stevenage Borough Council adopted a Community Infrastructure Levy Charging Schedule in 2020. This allows the Council to collect a levy to fund infrastructure projects based on the type, location and floorspace of a development.

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 amenities, archaeology, parking provision, means of access and highway safety, trees and landscaping, impact on the environment, development and flood risk and ecology and protected species.

7.2 Policy Considerations

- 7.2.1 Policy SP2 of the Local Plan provides that planning permission will be granted where proposals demonstrate, how amongst other matters they will:

- Regenerate areas of the town that are under performing;
- Make good use of land and maximise opportunities for brownfield redevelopment in the town;
- Improve quality of life and make sure that residents share in the benefits of regeneration;
- Promote journeys by bus;
- Make high quality buildings and spaces that respect and improve their surroundings; and
- Support facilities that encourage people to live, work and spend leisure time in Stevenage.

- 7.2.2 Looking at the site itself in terms of its allocation in the Local Plan, this is located in Stevenage Town Centre as identified under Policy TC1 in the Stevenage Borough Local Plan 2011-2031 (adopted 2019). More specifically, the site is designated as falling within the Station Gateway Major Opportunity Area (MOA) under Policy TC4 and Central Core MOA under Policy TC5. Dealing firstly with Policy TC4, part b of this policy states that planning permission will be granted for a new bus station and part g is permissive if new class A1 and A3 uses are provided. In relation to Policy TC5, again, this is permissive of A1 and A3 uses and part i of this policy states that applications should address the principle of a replacement bus station closer to the train station. Employment Policy EC1/5 of the adopted Local Plan (2019) identifies Stevenage Central, in which this application site forms part of, as an area to provide 10,000m² of B1(a) Office floorspace.

- 7.2.3 The proposed development is seeking to re-locate the existing bus station onto an existing car park which borders Lytton Way, Danesgate and the old London Road. This is in order to create a closer and better connection with Stevenage Train Station to form a sustainable transport interchange. In addition, the scheme incorporates a new pedestrian at level crossing along Lytton Way in order to connect with the train station.
- 7.2.4 With regards to sustainability, the development utilises an existing brownfield site and is in a sustainable location. In addition, the scheme helps to promote sustainable forms of travel with an enhanced connection with Stevenage Train Station. The development would also serve Stevenage Town Centre as a whole where the wider community would have access to amenities and facilities which make up the town centre. It would also help to support the delivery and operation of new office floorspace which is to be delivered as part of the wider regeneration of the town centre. In terms of Use Class A1 (shop) /Use Class A3 (Café) as per the policies outlined in paragraph 7.2.2, the proposed development does include a small unit within the ancillary bus interchange building for such purposes. The development also includes a “Shop Mobility” unit within the ancillary building as well. These units would help to complement the overall operation of the bus interchange.
- 7.2.5 In summary, the proposed development would create an enhanced public transport hub with improved connections to Stevenage Train Station. As such, the proposal would help to encourage a modal shift away from the private car. The development proposal would also meet the requirements of delivery of a new bus facility as part of the wider regeneration programme for Stevenage Town Centre. In addition, the site is in a sustainable location and utilises a brownfield site in accordance with the Council’s policies and would help to support the delivery of employment floorspace in the town centre as well. Therefore, it can be concluded that the overall principle of development has been established in this instance in land use policy terms.

7.3 Impact on Visual Amenity

- 7.3.1 In terms of design, Policy SP8 of the Local Plan requires new development to achieve the highest standards of design and sustainability. Policy GD1: High quality design generally requires all forms of development to meet a high standard of design which includes form of built development, elevational treatment and materials along with how the development would integrate with the urban fabric, its relationship between buildings, landscape design and relevant aspects of sustainable design. Part ii of Policy TC4 of the adopted Local Plan (2019) sets out that planning applications will need to address the demolition of the Arts and Leisure Centre. This is in order to facilitate better east-west integration and create new development sites in the environs of the train station.
- 7.3.2 The Council’s Design Guide SPD (2009) sets out that a high quality environment is essential for providing a good quality of life for residents. A well-designed and managed space not only provides a visually attractive environment, but can also help to ensure that a place is easy to move around and within, is safe and secure, and is useful for all members of the community.
- 7.3.3 Paragraph 127 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2019 stipulates that planning decisions should ensure development functions well and adds to the overall quality of the area, not just in the short term but over the lifetime of the development. It also sets out that development should be visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping, is sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting. Paragraph 130 of the NPPF states that “permission should be refused for

development of poor design that fails to make available opportunities for improving the character and quality of an area and the way it functions”.

7.3.4 The National Design Guide (2019) which was published by National Government is a material consideration in the determination of planning applications. It sets out that Buildings are an important component of places and proposals for built development are a focus of the development management system. However, good design involves careful attention to other important components of places. These include:

- the context for places and buildings;
- hard and soft landscape;
- technical infrastructure – transport, utilities, services such as drainage; and
- social infrastructure – social, commercial, leisure uses and activities.

7.3.5 A well-designed place is unlikely to be achieved by focusing only on the appearance, materials and detailing of buildings. It comes about through making the right choices at all levels, including:

- the layout;
- the form and scale of buildings;
- their appearance;
- landscape;
- materials; and
- their detailing.

7.3.6 The Guide further iterates that all developments are made up of these components put together in a particular way. As such, the choices made in the design process contribute towards achieving the ten characteristics and shape the character of a place. For reference, these ten characteristics are as follows:-

- Context – enhances the surroundings;
- Identity – attractive and distinctive;
- Built form – a coherent pattern of built form;
- Movement – accessible and easy to move around;
- Nature – enhanced and optimised;
- Public spaces – safe, social and inclusive;
- Uses – mixed and integrated;
- Homes and buildings – functional, healthy and sustainable;
- Resources – efficient and resilient;
- Lifespan – made to last.

7.3.7 This section of the report will deal with the aforementioned characteristics excluding nature and movement. With regards to nature, this will be dealt with in Sections 7.8 (Trees and Landscaping) and 7.11 (Ecology and Protected Species) of this report. In relation to movement, this will be dealt with in Section 7.7 (Means of access and highway safety) of the report.

7.3.8 Dealing firstly with the bus interchange building, it would comprise of a retail area, customer seating area, supervisor desk, shop mobility store, bin stores, and w.c. facilities. The building would measure approximately between 5.53m to 12.95m in length and between 12.61m to 25.02m in width. In terms of height, the building would have a maximum height of approximately 5.30m. With respect to visual appearance, the ancillary building would be constructed from contrasting, high quality and resilient materials which would comprise the following:-

- Fibre Cement Equitone Tectiva cladding TE40 Sahara;

- Equitone Natura cladding N074 grey;
 - Polyester Powder Coated (PPC) graphite grey (RAL 7024) curtain walling with double glazed units, automated double sliding doors and hinged doors;
 - PPC graphite grey (RAL 7024) grey steel louvered doors;
 - Barrel vault roof light with polycarbonate gable-end walls;
 - PPC aluminium capping running along the top edge of the buildings elevations.
- 7.3.9 The building has a broadly triangular footprint with strong angled walls and a flat roof and associated parapet wall. It would also have a well-defined entrance feature on the north-eastern corner which would be slightly recessed and comprise of a vaulted and angled barrel shaped canopy finished in grey with an external supporting column. This would form the main pedestrian access into the building arriving from the town centre.
- 7.3.10 The external canopy which will sit in conjunction with the ancillary interchange building, would comprise of a cantilevered gull-wing style canopy system (fins) which would be positioned south of the Arts and Leisure building and to the rear of the ancillary bus interchange building. It would measure approximately 72m in width and 14.50m in depth, with part of the canopy sitting above the bus interchange building. The canopy is designed to create a covered walkway and outdoor seating areas which serve each individual bay. The fins would have a height of approximately 6.57m, with the supporting steel frame measuring a total of 8.56m. Part of the canopy roof would comprise of photovoltaic panels and ETFE (plastic) panels with the centre consisting a glazed barrel vault roof light. There would also be a glazed protection screen which is approximately 4m in height and would be attached to the canopy and form part of the covered seating area.
- 7.3.11 To the west of the application site, adjacent to the pedestrian crossing on Lytton Way, there would be 2 no. bus shelters with fixed seating. These would measure approximately 1.53m in length and span 5.30m. The shelters would comprise of a gull-wing style roof with an overall height of between approximately 3m to 3.59m, supported by steel columns. In terms of construction, the main structure would be polyester powder coated (ppc) steel frames finished in grey with toughened glass panel inserts. Turning to the proposed external stores, these would be positioned north of the bus station, under the ramp which serves the Arts and Leisure Building and train station. These stores would measure approximately 2.82m by 2.59m with an overall height of approximately 2.86m. The stores would be constructed in a steel framed cladding system finished in light grey. They would have a set of metal doors with a louvered grill above.
- 7.3.12 In addition to the above, the proposal also comprises engineering works to the old London Road in order to create a new turning head for emergency vehicles. This area is located north of the proposed bus interchange in close proximity to the ramp. This would require the creation of a new retaining wall positioned between the tuning head and Swingate West car park. The wall would be 780mm in height and 2m in length with an associated handrail combined with concrete slabs at the edge of the turning head. The existing hardsurfaced, sloped gradient would also be re-engineered to a shallower gradient. This is in order to allow fire tenders to be able to safely manoeuvre within the turning head.
- 7.3.13 A key component of the development proposal is also the creation of a newly designed public realm with a shared pedestrian and cycle highway. This would be adjacent to the building as well as running along the old London Road up to the Arts and Leisure centre and the ramped access to the north. The public realm also runs east to west between the new pedestrian crossing and the old London Road. The public realm works includes substantive provision of new block paving with the provision of new street furniture such as cycle racks, stainless steel balustrading along the edge of the bus apron, stainless steel bollards, along with Head of Queue information totems,

benches (including Escofet 'Milenio' concrete benches around the edges of the Swales) and refuse bins. There would also be the creation of large areas of soft landscaping which incorporate planted swales and/or mounds, tree planting, amenity grass, meadow grass, shrubs, ornamental planting etc.

- 7.3.14 It is considered that the scale and design of the interchange building is appropriate for its town centre location and sits in context and appropriately responds with the built form of the Arts and Leisure centre and surrounding buildings. The interchange is characterised by active frontages with a strong articulated design with the use of high quality materials on the façade. In addition, the main entrance to pedestrians is legible and prominent with a strong connection with the old London Road which forms part of this key east to west connection with the town centre.
- 7.3.15 The use of a dynamic corner on the north-western elevation fronting the public realm is very effective and creates an element of variety and interest into the built form of the interchange. The overall canopy design also complements the contemporary modern architectural composition of the proposed bus interchange building. With regards to the proposed bus shelters on Lytton Way, these are of a contemporary modern design and would not appear prominent in the street scene being set against the backdrop of the existing Arts and Leisure building. The development would also utilise high quality, resilient materials which will ensure the development will be made to last.
- 7.3.16 With regards to the public realm, this is a welcome enhancement to the visual amenities of the area and creates a better defined streetscape. In addition, due to the siting and position of the proposed stores, these would not be visually prominent in the street scene and would have a high quality finish. In relation to the engineering works, these have been designed to have a limited impact on the street scene and would tie in with existing works associated with the turning head.
- 7.3.17 In terms of the extensive comments raised by the Council's Parks and Amenities Department (Stevenage Direct Services/SDS) on the public realm, these would be dealt with in more detail in Section 7.8 Trees and Landscape of this report.
- 7.3.18 Given the aforementioned assessment, it is considered that the proposal would deliver a high quality bus interchange and would create a landmark feature as viewed from Lytton Way. It would appear in keeping with the massing and scale of existing development in the area and would help to facilitate the wider regeneration of the town centre as it would allow the existing bus station to be utilised in the future re-development of Stevenage Town Centre.

7.4 Impact on Amenities

- 7.4.1 In terms of impact on amenities, due to the siting and position of the proposed development, the nearest residential development which would be affected by the proposal would be Pinetree Court. This residential development is positioned only 118m from the application site. Given this, there is the potential for noise during the construction and operation phases to impact the residents of this development.
- 7.4.2 Dealing firstly with construction noise, if permission were to be granted, a condition can be imposed restricting the hours contractors can undertake noisy construction activities. This would help to limit the timeframes in which occupiers of Pinetree Court would be affected by the proposal. Turning to the operation of the development, whilst there is the potential for adverse noise impacts, the site is an existing car park and therefore an existing source of noise and Pinetree Court is located on the other side of Matalan which is a retail operator. This will form a buffer between the proposed bus interchange and the residential development at Pinetree Court. Furthermore, this is

also a noise generating use which forms part of the established background noise levels of the area.

- 7.4.3 Further to the above, the residential development lies in close proximity to Danestrete, Lytton Way and Six Hills Way where there is already a level of traffic noise generated which forms part of the established background noise level. Moreover, being in a town centre location, there will also be noise generated from reversing alarms along with noise from mechanical plant and equipment from neighbouring properties. In addition to this, buses already travel past Pinetree Court in order to access the existing bus station located more centrally within the town centre.
- 7.4.4 Given the aforementioned, the bus interchange would operate within established background noise level and as such, would not likely result in an adverse effect on the amenities of the occupiers of Pinetree Court. In terms of the approved residential development (Planning Permission Reference:- 14/00559/OPM) at Matalan and the potential impact this could have on future occupiers of the development, firstly this permission is in outline form. Therefore, details such as siting and position of windows and habitable rooms will be addressed at Reserved Matters Stage. However, having regard to the context of the sites, the distance between them and allowing for mitigation which can be designed into the details of the Matalan development, officers are satisfied that a satisfactory relationship will exist between the two developments. Consequently, it is not considered the proposal would prejudice the delivery of the residential development at the Matalan site if it was to come forward.
- 7.4.5 Taking the above into consideration and the established noise environment which already exists, the Council's Environmental Health Section has not raised any concerns in terms of noise when consulted on this particular planning application. In addition, noise during the construction phase can be managed via the imposition of suitable conditions.

7.5 Archaeology

- 7.5.1 The NPPF paragraph 128 states that *"In determining applications....Where a site on which development is proposed includes or has the potential to include heritage assets with archaeological interest, local planning authorities should require developers to submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation"*.
- 7.5.2 Paragraph 129 notes *"Local planning authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal (including by development affecting the setting of a heritage asset) taking account of the available evidence and any necessary expertise. They should take this assessment into account when considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset, to avoid or minimise conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal"*.
- 7.5.3 As part of the application, archaeological reports were submitted relating to the historic environment. This included an archaeological desk based assessment (DBA). This assessment concluded that the site has high potential for Roman remains, with the presence of a possible Roman Road (which relates to the Scheduled Six Hills Round Barrows) and the Line of the Old Highway running through the eastern section of the site. Following an assessment of the information submitted with the application and through consultation with Hertfordshire County Council's Historic Environment Advisor, the details submitted are considered to be acceptable, and there is no objection to the grant of planning permission for the proposed development subject to the imposition of conditions.

7.6 Parking Provision

- 7.6.1 Policy IT5 of the Local Plan (2019) states that planning permission will be granted where proposals comply with the parking standards set out in the plan. Policy IT8 of the same document relates to public parking facilities. This policy sets out that planning permission resulting in the loss of existing car or cycle parking provision will be granted where:-
- i. Existing spaces are replaced within or adjacent to the new development;
 - ii. Replacement car and cycle parking provision are made within 200 and 80 metres walk respectively of the key attractors currently served; or
 - iii. It can be robustly evidenced that the parking is no longer required.
- 7.6.2 The Council's Parking Standards SPD (2012) sets out the maximum level of parking requirements for passenger transport facilities which this proposal would fall under. The car parking requirement for this is to be decided in each case on individual merits.
- 7.6.3 The overall objective of the proposed development and the relocation of the bus station is to encourage sustainable modes of transport and to reduce the reliance on private car transport throughout the town. There is a small retail/café area included in the plans for the convenience of bus service users and whilst a retail use would normally generate a parking requirement, this facility is to be used by those who will be waiting at the bus interchange. As such, it will not be a destination for car borne travel. The bus station is designed to be accessed by pedestrians and cyclists being a bus interchange with close links to the train station with links to car parks in the area. Moreover, being in a sustainable location (non-residential accessibility zone 1), the Council's Parking Standards SPD does allow for 0 parking for non-residential development schemes located within the town centre. Therefore, it is considered reasonable to not provide car parking spaces as part of the development proposal in this instance.
- 7.6.4 In relation to the loss of the public car parking facility, a study was undertaken to assess the overall need for car parking facilities across the town centre. The existing car park currently has 90 car parking spaces. In terms of the overall town centre (including Stevenage Leisure Park), there are 4,125 spaces of which 1,208 spaces are located in the Leisure Park. However, whilst the parking in the Leisure Park is free and there are no time restrictions, users are charged a fine if they leave the site. This is in order to prevent the car park being used by rail commuters and/or visitors to the rest of the town centre.
- 7.6.5 Turning to the existing car parking in the town centre, these are either Long Stay or Short Stay spaces. In terms of the Long Stay car parking, these are predominantly located at the Railway Station and the western part of the town centre. However, St George's Way Multi-Storey Car Park (MSCP) is the largest capacity Short Stay car park with 900 spaces. The analysis undertaken by the applicant identifies that the occupancy of the Long Stay car parks are the highest on Thursday during usual working hours when all the car parks are full and this drops to just over half full on Saturday. The occupancy of the short stay car parks is the highest on Saturdays. The main occupancy of the long stay car parks are by commuters, whilst the short stay car parks tend to be used by people shopping in the town or for leisure activities.
- 7.6.6 The leisure centre car park which is the subject of this application, is full for the longest time during the week with a 100% occupancy between 9am to 8pm on Thursday which includes commuters during the day and leisure centre users in the evening. This means the car park is used by people who work in the town or use the train station during the week because it is near the station. On Saturday, there is 100% occupancy between 3pm and 9pm and it is predominantly used for retail and leisure purposes.

- 7.6.7 Looking at the wider regeneration of the town centre, the SG1 Planning Application (19/00743/FPM), if granted planning permission by the Council, would involve the closure of Swingate East (81 parking spaces) and Southgate (211 parking spaces) car parks, with Southgate Car Park identified as the site for a Primary School. The Local Plan (2019) also identifies Marshgate Car Park (156 spaces) as a Major Opportunity Area (Policy TC7) for redevelopment. In addition, the Council granted planning permission (14/00559/OPM) for the redevelopment of the Matalan Site which also includes Danesgate Car Park. This would result in a further reduction of 178 spaces (101 spaces at Matalan and 77 spaces at Danesgate). As such, if all this development comes forward, there would be a significant reduction in available parking within the town centre.
- 7.6.8 Taking into consideration of the above and following an analysis of all the car parks, the Car Parking Assessment undertaken by the applicant identifies that as a worst case scenario, for both days (Thursdays and Saturday), there is spare capacity in St George's Way MSCP which can accommodate all of the cars from the closed car parks (including the Leisure Centre car park). After the proposed transfer, the St George's Way car park will still have almost 100 vacant parking spaces on Thursday and almost 250 vacant spaces on Saturday. In addition, during the weekday, there is plenty of capacity in Westgate and The Forum which both have a similar charging regime to St George's Way. As such, whilst some car parks will be lost, including the one which is subject to this application, there is still capacity within the retained car parks to absorb the displaced spaces. Turning back to the proposal itself, the Council's Car Parking Manager has confirmed that there is sufficient capacity in the St Georges Way MSCP to accommodate any parking which is displaced by the proposed development. Therefore, it can be concluded that there would still be sufficient public car parking provision to serve the town centre in this instance.
- 7.6.9 Dealing now with disabled parking, it is noted there are 14 disabled parking bays which are positioned on Old London Road. This parking is generally for persons who require easy and safe access into the Arts and Leisure building. However, in order to compensate for the loss of disabled parking spaces on this stretch of old London Road, there would be the provision of six new spaces at the northern end. However, it is appreciated there would be a reduction of 8 disabled spaces. Unfortunately, there is not sufficient space within the site boundary to provide any more spaces to serve disabled customers of the Arts and Leisure Centre. Whilst this loss is a harm which counts against the proposals, the proposed scheme is fundamental in facilitating the wider regeneration of Stevenage Town Centre. In addition, it would help to create a sustainable transport interchange and it would be more accessible and more attractive to users with a disability given there is the provision of a disabled toilet, a Shop Mobility unit and shelter from the elements. The development would also encourage a modal shift away from the private car and with the facilities being provided, encourage persons who are disabled to potentially use the bus. In addition, there are also disabled parking facilities across the town centre which will still be available for persons who are disabled. As such, the overall benefits of the scheme combined with the facilities being provided for person(s) who are disabled, outweigh the loss of some of the disabled parking spaces which serve the Arts and Leisure Centre.

7.7 Means of Access and Highway Safety

- 7.7.1 Policy IT6 of the Local Plan sets out a number of new and improved sustainable transport schemes, including a new town centre bus station located to the west of the existing site and in close proximity to the train station. Proposals that facilitate the creation of these schemes will be granted planning permission. Policy IT7 seeks to introduce new pedestrian and cycle links, with particular emphasis on connections to the town centre.

- 7.7.2 In relation to Stevenage's Mobility Strategy, Part 14 of this strategy states "as part of the regeneration of the town centre, it is proposed to close the existing bus station and replace it with a new bus interchange at the railway station. It is also proposed to significantly improve connections into and through Stevenage, which will enable more employees in the town centre and Gunnels Wood Employment Area easily access their place of work".
- 7.7.3 The plans and Transport Assessment submitted with the application identify that vehicular access to the site would be taken from the existing left-in slip road off the A602 Lytton Way which provides access to Danesgate. In terms of egress, the existing access road to the east of the Long Stay car park which currently serves the Arts and Leisure Centre will be incorporated into the bus station egress. This egress will be off Danesgate, which is an unclassified local access road. The space which is presently occupied by the eastern access road would be taken up by the new public realm which would be incorporated into the wider bus station development. Buses will be expected, once egressing the site, to turn right out of the re-configured exit onto Danesgate and then via the existing left-out only junction onto Lytton Way and connect with Six Hills Way. The only vehicles which will be allowed to enter the site will be buses, coaches and maintenance vehicles with all other vehicles banned. In terms of emergency access to the Arts and Leisure Centre, this will be relocated from its existing position to the north of the site via Swingate. This would involve undertaking of engineering works on the old London Road to create a safe turning head for emergency vehicles on London Road.
- 7.7.4 In addition to the above, whilst there would be bays within the proposed bus apron, there would also be additional bays on Lytton Way outside of the Arts and Leisure building. In regards to pedestrian and cycle access to the bus interchange would be via the old London Road which would connect the site to the wider town centre. This would include the provision of extensive public realm works in order to help facilitate improved access for pedestrians and cyclists into and out of the development. The scheme also incorporates a new at grade Toucan crossing across Lytton Way to connect the bus interchange with Stevenage Train Station. In order to deliver the crossing, it would require the narrowing of Lytton Way to two lanes at the point of the crossing from the existing three lanes plus layby. This will allow pedestrians to safely cross the dual carriageway, rather than waiting within a central refuge. However, pedestrians can still use the footbridge and route through the Leisure Centre.
- 7.7.5 With the pedestrian and cycle improvements described above, there would be good quality pedestrian and cycle infrastructure in the vicinity of the bus interchange to accommodate the need of both pedestrians and cycles which would be generated by this development. It would also help to encourage people to travel by bus with the creation of an integrated crossing with the train station. It also helps to meet one of the key objectives of the Stevenage Mobility Strategy set out in the Council's Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) (March 2017). This seeks improvements to the walking and cycling network in order to create better access such as to the railway station. The proposal would also help better connect the train station with the wider cycle and pedestrian network which traverses through parts of the town centre as well as the well-defined network which connects the town centre to the wider Borough of Stevenage.
- 7.7.6 The Highways Authority considers the proposed access arrangement serving the development would not prejudice highway safety. However, in regards to the additional bays on Lytton Way, they recommend that there may be a requirement to provide variable message signs on Lytton Way to inform bus drivers about the availability of vacant bays within the bus station. In addition, at the detailed design phase, the Highways Authority will look at ensuring buses wait safely and not obstruct or interfere with the proposed at-grade crossing or new entrance into the main bus station. These elements would be considered as part of any Section 278 agreement under the

Highways Act 1980 between the applicant and Hertfordshire County Council as Highways Authority. In terms of bus egress, the Highways Authorities preference will be for all buses to exit via Lytton Way. This is due to potential future changes to the public realm on Danestrete and Danesgate which could be prejudiced by routeing of buses through an area which is being reconfigured to enhance pedestrian access. For reference, these enhancements to the public realm referenced by the Highways Authority are detailed in the not yet determined planning application for regeneration of Stevenage Town Centre known as SG1 (Planning Reference:- 19/00743/FPM).

- 7.7.7 With respect to walking and cycle connections, these are fully supported by the Highways Authority. However, they recommend further clarification about the through links from the bus station to the east and north towards the town centre which will come forward under the Town Centre Regeneration Masterplan detailed under the planning application referenced in paragraph 7.7.6. This is a matter which is outside the scope of this application as it will be a determining factor as part of the assessment of the Masterplan in which the Highways Authority are being consulted on.
- 7.7.8 In relation to the internal layout of the new bus station, there would be ten drive-in / reverse out bus bays. These would be situated adjacent to the proposed concourse to allow for convenient disembarking by passengers. The proposal also incorporates seven layover bays on the opposite side of the apron so that buses can wait safely without obstructing other operating services. The Transport Statement includes Swept Path Analysis for buses and coaches to demonstrate vehicles can safely manoeuvre within the site and exit in a forward gear. The scheme has also been designed with a greater capacity than the existing site in order to accommodate demand for some increase in bus movements.
- 7.7.9 The Transport Assessment also details how existing bus routes will be affected by the proposal and how the routes will operate once the facility is in operation. The bus station, however, has been designed to make it easier for inbound bus routes from the north and north-east which affects approximately 50% of bus arrivals. All outbound buses will travel south out of the bus station with the preferred route of using Lytton Way in order to reduce vehicle flows through the improved public realm of Danestrete if it is implemented by the future regeneration plans for the town centre. The implementation of bus priority along Lytton Way would help to encourage bus drivers to utilise this route.
- 7.7.10 For bus routes from the south and south-east, the inbound routes would be longer than the existing because they will need to travel northbound along Lytton Way, come around the roundabout on the junction with Fairlands Way and then travel southbound to the proposed bus station. This would increase the journey by approximately 800m, however, the proposed bus priority lanes being introduced would facilitate the passage of buses along these routes. The proposal would also provide additional bays on Lytton Way. These buses can travel through the bus interchange or continue along Lytton Way.
- 7.7.11 As indicated earlier, a Transport Assessment (TA) has been submitted with the application. This has provided a trip generation profile for the existing bus station site as well as the existing car park which forms part of the development site. The TA also details the trip generation profile the development would make and the impact this profile could have on the wider highway network. The TA applies the S-Paramics micro-simulation base model of Stevenage Town Centre which was developed by AECOM in 2015. The base model was updated in 2019 and forecasting working completed that detailed the traffic impact associated with the cumulative effect of all Local Plan growth, committed development and the regeneration scheme.

7.7.12 The modelling undertaken by the consultant considered four core assessments which are as follows:-

Core Assessment 1 (CA1)

- i. 2019 base matrix; and
- ii. Existing bus station.

Core Assessment 2 (CA2)

- i. 2021 future year matrix (to include relevant committed developments);
- ii. Committed schemes (GSK updated hamburger roundabout scheme and A1(M) Smart Motorway); SG1 Phase 1 Proposals (Plots A and K) (Planning Reference:- 19/00743/FPM); and
- iii. Relocated bus station (Preferred layout plus associated Lytton Way scheme – without bus priority lanes)

Core Assessment 3 (CA3)

- i. 2021 future year matrix (to include relevant committed developments);
- ii. Committed schemes (GSK updated hamburger roundabout scheme and A1(M) Smart Motorway); SG1 Phase 1 Proposals (Plots A and K) (Planning Reference:- 19/00743/FPM); and
- iii. Relocated bus station (Preferred layout plus associated Lytton Way Scheme – with full length bus priority lanes, including bus gates on Lytton Way north bound and south bound at end of bus lane).

Core Assessment 4 (CA4)

- i. 2021 future year matrix (to include relevant committed developments);
- ii. Committed schemes (GSK updated hamburger roundabout scheme and A1(M) Smart Motorway); SG1 Phase 1 Proposals (Plots A and K) (Planning Reference:- 19/00743/FPM); and
- iii. Relocated bus station (Preferred layout plus associated Lytton Way scheme – with partial length bus priority lanes, including bus gate on Lytton Way north boundary of bus lane).

Within each assessment, three peak periods were assessed, the AM Peak (08:00 – 09:00), PM Peak (17:00 – 18:00) and Saturday Peak (12:00 – 13:00). The Transport Assessment also sets out a number of mitigation measures which are considered as part of each core assessment which are as follows:-

- Northbound and southbound bus lanes on Lytton Way and the approaches to the roundabout at each end;
- Bus gates at the end of each bus lane controlled by traffic signals to hold general traffic and enable buses to ahead and access the correct lane at the roundabouts;
- A new Toucan crossing of Lytton Way to provide an at-grade crossing between the bus station and railway station;
- The reduction of Lytton Way from 3 lanes to 2 lanes and widening of some footways alongside the road. This is to help reduce vehicle speeds and support the reduction in speed limit from 40mph to 30mph;
- Amendments to the junctions of Swingate and Danesgate with Lytton Way;
- Pedestrian improvements between the bus station and the town centre.

The principal element of the mitigation is the implementation of a bus priority scheme and an at-grade crossing on Lytton Way.

7.7.13 However, before going into detail on the modelling and the trip generation and distribution of the development, it is important to note that the proposal involves the loss the Arts and Leisure Car Park. The study of the car park shows that it was fully occupied by 90 vehicles between 9am to 4pm on weekdays and it continued to virtually

be full until 7pm. As such, when the car park is closed, the trips associated with the car park will be removed from this part of the network. The trips would divert to other car parks across the town centre or even shift modes i.e. move away from the private car. The parking study which was submitted with the application identified, in terms of entry and exit movements, 157 vehicles using the car parking during the weekday and 180 on Saturday. The weekday movements were focussed into the peak hours whilst the Saturday movements were spread across the day.

- 7.7.14 Looking at bus services, the existing bus station contains eight drive in and drive out bays for dropping off and picking up passengers, plus one stop within the terminus that is used for dropping off only. There is also an additional layby on Danestrete for National Express and other coach services. The station also includes 8 layover bays in the centre of the bus turnaround. The existing bus station facilitates 30 bus services with a throughput of 60 buses per hour in the AM Peak, PM Peak and on Saturdays. In terms of trip distribution, buses approach from either Danesgate or Danestrete, with all buses exiting via Danestrete. The number of buses travelling to the existing bus station using Danesgate and Danestrete is split equally, around 30 inbound buses per hour. In terms of outbound buses, these are all via Danestrete.
- 7.7.15 In terms of baseline traffic flows, traffic surveys were completed in Stevenage town centre in 2015 with the results provided by HCC. The results show that Lytton Way carries large volumes of traffic at peak times. In addition, according to Department for Transport Road Traffic Statistics in 2018 (no information available for 2019), the annual average daily flow along this part of the road is 30624 vehicle movements (approximately 27,317 of these movements are by car and taxis). However, the Transport Assessment identifies that the flow of traffic on the one-way section of Danesgate is low, with a Tuesday to Thursday average of 101 vehicles per hour in the AM peak and 108 vehicles per hours in the PM peak.
- 7.7.16 In terms of the modelling output for the new bus interchange on the network, the model highlights that the network performance along with vehicular and bus journeys across the different core assessments outlined in the TA. The modelling does take into account the committed highway schemes along the A1(M) (upgrading to a SMART motorway) and the GSK roundabout, along with increase in traffic associated with the town centre regeneration proposals and background growth over the local plan period. The outputs in the model have shown the network performance generally worsens in the future, with average vehicle speeds and journey times increasing, particularly in the PM peak. This is to be expected due to background traffic growth in the future. The new bus station itself is not expected to have a significant impact on network performance, but the associated changes to the highway will be more significant, in particular the reduction in capacity along Lytton Way caused by the reduction from three lanes to two lanes.
- 7.7.17 The Highways Authority supports this as the long-term aspirations for Lytton Way is to be downgraded completely, with no through route for general traffic. They consider a phased approach can be agreed upon (or the introduction of full bus lanes) which can be secured by way of a condition. Consequently, the Highway Authority advises they accept that the proposed changes to the local highway network based on the modelling is accepted and can be satisfactorily accommodated. In addition, they consider that the overall benefits accrued to sustainable transport over and above general traffic are consistent with the principles set out in the County Council's Local Transport Plan 4.
- 7.7.18 In terms of construction, the Highways Authority recommends the inclusion of a Construction Traffic Management Plan condition be imposed if permission were to be granted. This is to ensure that the development does not prejudice highway and pedestrian safety during the construction phase of development. With regards to emergency vehicles, it is noted that there has been extensive dialogue between the

applicant and Hertfordshire Fire and Rescue regarding relocated access for emergency vehicles. They have confirmed that the new access for the Arts and Leisure Centre from Swingate/London Road to the north is acceptable. However, there will be a requirement to provide a turning head in order to accommodate the fire tender. Therefore, the Highways Authority recommends this has to be in place prior to the closure of the access road off Danestrete. This requirement can be secured by condition.

7.7.19 In summary, the proposed development can be accommodated on the local highway network and there are overall benefits which will be accrued in terms of accessibility to the railway station and the wider development of the town centre area. Fundamentally, the development would not prejudice the safety and operation of the highway network and as such, the Highways Authority raises no objection to the development subject to the imposition of appropriate conditions.

7.8 Trees and Landscaping

7.8.1 Policy NH5 of the Local Plan (2019) states that development proposals will be expected to protect and retain individual trees within development sites and should include new planting where appropriate. Paragraph 175 of the NPPF (2019) states that when determining planning applications local planning authorities should apply the principle, in respect of veteran and ancient trees, that if a development results in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats it should be refused unless there are wholly exceptional reasons and a suitable compensation strategy exists.

7.8.2 There are 67 individual trees and three groups of trees either on the site or in the immediate surroundings to it. The trees which are mostly affected by the development are located around the existing car park and along the eastern edge of the site running along the boundary of the magistrates' court, court car park and the Arts and Leisure centre building. The proposal would involve the removal of 9 trees, four of which are of moderate quality and the remainder are of low quality. The proposal also seeks the removal of one dead tree to the north of the Arts and Leisure building.

7.8.3 However, in order to compensate for the removal of existing trees, as part of the wider landscaping strategy, the applicant is proposing to plant 26 trees with a minimum height of 4.5m. The applicant is also proposing to introduce additional soft landscaping around the bus apron and wider public realm in which will include the provision of swales, native and ornamental shrubs, amenity grassland and meadow grassland areas. In order to protect the trees during construction, the Assessment recommends the use of Root Protection Area barriers in accordance with British Standards.

7.8.4 Following consultation with the Council's Arboricultural Manager, he has not raised any concerns with regards to the removal of these trees and vegetation. He also advises that the proposed landscaping strategy would help to compensate for the trees which are to be removed as part of the development.

7.8.5 The Council's Parks and Amenities Section (Stevenage Direct Services (SDS)), have raised a number of points regarding the planting strategy as detailed in the submitted landscape plans and the future management of the hard and soft landscaping. Further detailed landscaping plans, including planting strategy and overall maintenance of the landscaping area, can be secured through the imposition of a condition if permission were to be granted. With these conditions in place, from an aesthetical point of view, the landscaping would help to enhance the overall visual appearance of the development as viewed from the wider public realm. In addition, if planning permission were to be granted, it is recommended a condition be imposed requiring the tree protection measures are in place before and during the construction phases of development.

7.9 Impact on the Environment

Land contamination

- 7.9.1 The application site currently comprises the existing tarmacked surface car park adjacent to the Arts and Leisure building along with areas of highway verge, public footpaths and vegetation strips which include a number of trees. The contamination assessment did not identify any contaminants representing any human health or controlled water risks. In addition, no ground gas protection is indicated to be required. Following consultation with the Council's Environmental Health Section, they consider the findings of the report to be acceptable.
- 7.9.2 Given the above, if permission were to be granted, it is recommended a condition be imposed requiring a remediation strategy be submitted to the Council for its approval in the event that previously unidentified contaminants are detected during the construction phase of development. With these conditions in place, the health of construction works and future users of the bus interchange will not be detrimentally affected by potential contaminants on the site. It would also help to protect the wider environment.

Groundwater

- 7.9.3 The application site is located upon Secondary A aquifer within the superficial glaciofluvial sand and gravel deposits and a Principal aquifer within the Chalk bedrock. Given this, the Environment Agency recommends that in order to protect groundwater quality from further deterioration, the following need to be adhered to:
- No infiltration-based sustainable drainage systems should be constructed on land affected by contamination, as contaminants can remobilise and cause groundwater pollution;
 - Piling, or any other foundation designs using penetrative methods, should not cause preferential pathways for contaminants to migrate to groundwater and cause pollution; and
 - Decommissioning of investigative boreholes to ensure that redundant boreholes are safe and secure, and do not cause groundwater pollution or loss of water supplies, in line with paragraph 170 of the National Planning Policy Framework.
- 7.9.4 The Lead Local Flood Authority as a Statutory Consultee has taken into consideration the points raised by the Environment Agency and recommends the developer further explores the feasibility of infiltration drainage on this site, in line with the drainage discharge hierarchy. However, they do recommend shallow infiltration testing is carried out to BRE Digest 365 standards (Design of Soakaways in the UK including consideration of potential contaminants). This requirement can be secured by condition being imposed on any planning permission issued. With respect to piling and decommissioning of boreholes, these requirements can also be secured by way of condition.

Air quality and air pollution

- 7.9.5 Policy FP7 of the adopted Local Plan (2019) states that all development proposals should minimise, and where possible, reduce air, water, light and noise pollution. Looking at air quality and air pollution specifically, the development is not located within or in close proximity to an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA). In terms of the impact of the development on air quality, the air quality assessment undertaken by the applicant's consultant focuses on both the construction phase and operational phase of the development. Dealing with the construction phase, it is noted that there would be

activities which will affect local air quality. These include dust emissions and exhaust emissions from plant, machinery and construction traffic.

- 7.9.6 In order to mitigate the construction phase, the applicant would develop and implement a stakeholder communication plan that includes community engagement. They would also implement a Dust Management Plan (DMP) which will also include the recording of any complaints and identify causes, in order to facilitate remedial action. They will also look to plan the construction site layout to ensure machinery and dust and dust causing activities are located away from receptors as far as possible. In addition, during construction, solid barriers or screens would be erected around dusty activities. There would also be regular site inspections to monitor compliance of the DMP.
- 7.9.7 The applicant would take measures to avoid site runoff of water or mud and to clean fencing, barriers and scaffolding using wet methods to reduce dust build up. Materials which potentially cause dust are to be removed from site and covered where necessary. The applicant would also look to reduce the use of diesel and petrol generators and use mains electricity or battery powered equipment where possible. In addition, maximum speed limits would be imposed and vehicle engines are to be switched off when stationary. They would also look at sustainable travel as well as using specialist tools fitted with or in conjunction with suitable dust suppression techniques such as water. The applicant would avoid the use of bonfires or burning of waste and would use enclosed chutes and conveyors, loading shovels and hoppers.
- 7.9.8 Following consultation with the Council's Environmental Health Section, they do not raise any concerns with the proposed mitigation measures to be put in place during construction. With regards to air pollution relating to the future operation of the site, it is not considered the development would generate unacceptable levels of air pollution as the facility will accommodate existing bus traffic which is already travelling to and from the existing bus station. In addition, the facilities overall aim is to reduce the need to use the private car which in essence would have a positive impact on the wider environment. As such, as agreed by the Council's Environmental Health Section it is not considered that the development would have a detrimental impact on air quality.

7.10 Development and Flood Risk

- 7.10.1 The application site is located within Flood Zone 1 within the Environment Agency's flood risk map. Flood Zone 1 is defined as land having less than 1 in 100 annual probability of flooding. Therefore, all developments are generally directed to Flood Zone 1. Notwithstanding this, the application is classified as a major development, and therefore, in line with the Town and Country Planning (General Development Procedure) (England) Order 2015, the applicant has provided a Sustainable Urban Drainage Strategy.
- 7.10.2 The sustainable drainage system which would be installed as part of the development proposal comprises of a 293.5m³ storage tank for the car park, bus apron and public realm. There would also be the provision of swales and filter trenches to capture surface water run off which would feed into the proposed drainage network via the tank. Following consultation with Hertfordshire County Council as the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA), they have advised that the applicant has provided an appropriate sustainable drainage scheme in accordance with industry best practice. The LLFA has also recommended that a condition be imposed to require the development to be carried out in accordance with the detailed drainage strategy.

7.10.3 In addition to the above, a condition would be imposed to require the application to provide a more detailed drainage strategy (based on the adopted strategy for the whole site) with engineering drawings and sections of the attenuation system as well as to provide a detailed management plan. This is to ensure that the development does not result in surface water flooding both on and off the site.

7.11 Ecology and protected species

7.11.1 The application site is identified as brownfield land comprising predominantly of hardsurfacing including the Leisure Car Park, footpaths, the old London Road and Lytton Way, as well as small areas of amenity grassland and scrub punctuated by some trees. The surrounding area is urban in nature comprising of buildings and hardsurfacing with interspersed areas of amenity grassland and trees. The applicant has undertaken an Ecological Appraisal to assess the potential for the site and adjoining habitats to have species that receive legal protection at either UK and/or European level.

7.11.2 As set out in the Appraisal, a Phase 1 habitat survey was undertaken on the site to record habitat types and dominant vegetation, including invasive species and a reconnaissance survey for evidence of protected fauna and flora or habitats capable of supporting such species. A desk top study was also undertaken from Hertfordshire Biological Records Centre and from the Multi-agency Geographical Information for the Countryside (MAGIC).

7.11.3 The survey identified that the development site is of low ecological value but the taller trees, dense scrub and ivy clad trees on site do provide opportunities for common nesting birds. The nearest buildings have been identified as having either low or negligible bat roost suitability. However, the survey did identify that some of the trees have moderate suitability for nesting bats. As such, the appraisal recommends that these trees are retained where possible and if they are to be removed, there will be a requirement to undertake two dusk/dawn bat surveys. The appraisal also recommends that directional lighting is used to prevent impact on bats. Where trees are to be removed, these should be replaced with native species elsewhere on or adjacent to the site in order to maintain opportunities for nesting birds. In addition, vegetation removal should only take place outside of the nesting season. Finally, the appraisal recommends the installation of bird and bat boxes.

7.11.4 Following consultation with Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust, they consider there is little ecological impact and the recommendations set out in the report are deemed to be acceptable. As such, it is recommended that these recommendations are imposed as conditions if permission were to be granted by the Council.

7.12 Other matters

Sustainable construction and climate change

7.12.1 Policy FP1 of the adopted Local Plan (2019) 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.

7.12.2 The applicant has set out in the application that the bus interchange has been designed to adapt to future needs and users such as a future shift to electric vehicles. The development could accommodate ducting to provide localised charging points at each stand if required in the future. With regards to the building itself, it has been designed with openable windows to allow for free cooling air in the summer months to reduce the need for air conditioning units within the building. In addition, LED lights with all areas (building, canopy and bus apron) would be installed with daylight saving features to reduce energy requirements. Moreover, there would be photo-voltaic panels on the south facing canopy in order to generate electricity.

7.12.3 In relation to the construction of the development, where possible, local materials and supply chains will be used. The applicant sets out that the design team will engage with the building supply chain to carefully consider panel sizes to minimise wastage during construction. They would also introduce a Construction Methodology which looks at reducing noise, air quality, water, ground and light impacts on the surrounding area. This would also include restriction of working hours to avoid disturbance, dust suppression, screening and selection of appropriate plant and equipment. They would also look to manage and reduce waste material during construction in order to limit material export to landfill. Where possible, this would be recycled and diverted away from landfill. However, to ensure this occurs and to demonstrate in detail how they intend to achieve this, a condition could be imposed requiring the applicant to submit a Site Waste Management Plan (SWMP).

7.12.4 The development, through the creation of a bus interchange, seeks to encourage town centre users and commuters to shift mode from private car to public transport. By relocating the bus interchange closer to the railway station, users would be encouraged to modal shift and, through the provision of an enhanced waiting area and ancillary accommodation, modal shift will be further encouraged.

7.12.5 Given the above, and subject to condition, it is considered that the development has been designed in order to be adaptable to climate change through the use of sustainable technologies, construction methodology and through the encouragement of a modal shift away from the private car.

Crime Prevention

7.12.6 In terms of crime prevention, the applicant has provided details of CCTV coverage which would serve the bus interchange. In addition, the development has been designed in a way to reduce crime. Given this, the Police Crime Prevention Design Service is in support of the application. However, they recommend that the data cabinet room be fully protected by the building's electronic intruder detection system. They also recommend the scheme achieves the police minimum security standards that is Secured by Design (Commercial). It is considered that these aspects can be dealt with via an informative to any approval issued by the Council.

7.12.7 In relation to CCTV provision, the Council's CCTV Section has confirmed that the overall coverage and location of the cameras identified in the application submission are deemed to be acceptable. A condition could be imposed requiring these cameras to be installed in accordance with the details provided.

Community Infrastructure Levy

7.12.8 The CIL Charging Schedule specifies a payment for new floorspace in line with the following rates (plus appropriate indexation):

Development Type	CIL Rate (£ per square meter)	
	Zone 1: Stevenage Central, Stevenage West Urban Extension and North of Stevenage Extension	Zone 2: Everywhere else
Residential		
Market housing	£40/m ²	£100/m ²
Sheltered housing	£100/m ²	
Extra care housing	£40/m ²	
Retail development	£60/m ²	
All other development	£0/m ²	

7.12.9 CIL is a non-negotiable charge. The exact charge will be determined by the Council's CIL officer after an application has been granted in accordance with the CIL Charging Schedule and the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 (as amended). Opportunities for relief or exemption from the CIL charge exist and will be taken into account in the calculation of the final CIL charge.

7.12.10 CIL replaces the need for S106 agreements to specify financial and/or land contributions for non-site-specific infrastructure projects. This allows infrastructure to be planned on a borough-wide scale rather than on a site-by-site basis as mitigation against the impacts of individual proposals. A CIL Form 1: Additional Information has been submitted along with the application. Following an assessment of the proposed development, whilst there is 93 sq.m retail floorspace within the bus interchange building, it is not liable to CIL. This is because under Regulation 42 of CIL, liability does not arise in respect of a chargeable development if the gross internal area (GIA) of a new build is less than 100 sq.m. In terms of the bus interchange building (excluding the retail element), this is also not liable for CIL.

Equalities Impact

7.12.11 Section 149 of the Equalities Act 2010 created the public sector equality duty. Section 149 states:-

(1) A public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:

- (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
- (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

7.12.13 Officers have taken this into account in the assessment of this application and the Committee must be mindful of this duty *inter alia* when determining all applications. The consultation process has served to notify all relevant adjoining parties likely to be impacted by the development. However, additional regard has been given to any potential impact upon the protected characteristics outlined in the Equalities Act 2010 Section 149 and the provisions contained therein. It is considered that due regard has been given to the impact of the scheme on all groups with the protected characteristics schedule.

7.12.14 It is noted that the proposed development does result in the loss of disabled parking which currently serves the Arts and Leisure Building. However, the scheme does seek to provide an element of replacement disabled parking in close proximity to this building. However, as mentioned in paragraph 7.6.9 of this report, this is a reduced level of disabled parking being provided. However, whilst it is fully appreciated customers of the Arts and Leisure Centre will have to travel further, there are disabled parking bays across the town centre which could be used for persons visiting the building. In addition, due to the proximity of the bus interchange to the Arts and Leisure Centre, persons with disabilities could also travel by bus where there would be a short distance to the building's access on the old London Road.

7.2.15 Furthermore, the development would be beneficial to bus users, including those who are disabled as the development would include a "Shop Mobility" unit which would support people who are disabled. This would allow them to collect a mobility scooter in order safely travel from the bus interchange into the town centre and the wider area. The development would also comprise suitable WCs for all persons, including a baby change facility and disabled WC. Consequently, the development has been designed in order to be beneficial to all people who use the bus interchange and eliminates any discrimination towards them.

8 CONCLUSIONS

8.1 In principle, the proposed bus interchange has been established as being acceptable as it would create an enhanced public transport hub with improved connections to Stevenage Train Station. The development would also be of a high quality contemporary design and deemed to be a landmark development. It would not have, subject to appropriate conditions, a detrimental impact on the amenities of nearby residential properties. Furthermore, through the imposition of conditions, the development scheme would not have a detrimental impact on items of archaeological significance and would accord with the Council's Parking Standards. Moreover, the proposal would not, subject to conditions, detrimentally impact upon the safety and operation of the highway network.

8.2 In addition to the above, the development, whilst resulting in the loss of some established trees on-site, seeks to deliver a high quality landscaping strategy which would compensate for the loss of these trees as well as create an enhanced urban environment and public realm. The development would not have a detrimental impact on the environment, would have an acceptable drainage strategy and through enhancement measures which can be secured by condition, would have a limited impact on local wildlife and biodiversity.

8.3 Given the above, it is considered that the proposed development would accord with the policies contained in the adopted Local Plan (2019), the Council's Design Guide SPD (2009), the Council's Parking Standards SPD (2012), the NPPF (2019) and NPPG (2014).

9 RECOMMENDATIONS

9.1 That this application be Granted Planning Permission subject to the following conditions:-

1 The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans:

TV-SGP-AA-00-DR-A-2060 P5; STV-SGP-Z0-ZZ-DR-A-1000 P7; STV-SGP-Z0-ZZ-DR-A-1601 P6; STV-SGP-AA-00-DR-A-2120 P8; STV-SGP-AA-R1-DR-A-2021 P2; STV-SGP-AA-R2-DR-A-2020 P7; STV-SGP-AA-ZZ-DR-A-2800 P7; 500 P03; LA1 P6;

6301 P01; 6302 P01; 6701 P01; LONRD-01A; LONRD/02A; STV-SGP-Z0-XX-DR-A-1602; STV-SGP-Z0-XX-DR-A-1603; STV-SGP-Z0-DR-A-1001 3; STV-SGP-Z0-ZZ-DR-A-1002 P3; STV-SGP-Z0-ZZ-DR-A-1003 P2; STV-SGP-Z0-ZZ-DR-A-1004 P1; STV-SGP-Z0-ZZ-DR-A-1005 P1; STV-SGP-Z0-ZZ-DR-A-1605 P4; STV-SGP-Z1-ZZ-DR-A-2640 P6; STV-SGP-Z1-ZZ-DR-A-2600 P7; STV-SGP-Z0-ZZ-DR-A-1606; STV-SGP-Z1-ZZ-DR-A-2740 P6; STV-SGP-Z1-ZZ-DR-A-2700 P5; STV-WYG-Z0-00-DR-E-960002 P01.

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 Prior to occupation of the development hereby permitted, samples of the materials to be used in the construction of the hardsurfacing areas, including roads, footpaths and bus apron, hereby permitted shall have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The external surfaces of the development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details. Furthermore, all hard surfacing comprised in the details for the public realm works shall be carried out within three months of the first occupation of the building(s) or the completion of the development, whichever is the sooner.

REASON:- To ensure the development has an acceptable appearance and to protect the visual amenities of the area.

- 4 The external surfaces of the building, canopy and bus shelters hereby permitted shall be constructed in accordance with the details specified in the application submission.

REASON:- To ensure the development has an acceptable appearance and to protect the visual amenities of the area.

- 5 Prior to occupation of the development hereby permitted, a detailed landscaping scheme (including street furniture) and management plan shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved landscaping scheme shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details within three months of the first occupation of the building(s) or the completion of the development, whichever is the sooner. The approved scheme will thereafter be managed in accordance with the approved scheme.

REASON:- To ensure the development has an acceptable appearance and to protect the visual amenities of the area.

- 6 All planting, seeding or turfing comprised in the approved details of landscaping shall be carried out in the first planting and seeding seasons following the first occupation of the building(s) or the completion of the development whichever is the sooner.

REASON:- To ensure the proper completion of the soft landscaping in the interests of visual amenity.

- 7 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 similar size and species, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

REASON:- To ensure the maintenance of the approved landscaping scheme in the interests of visual amenity.

- 8 No development shall commence until a revised Construction Management Traffic Plan has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Thereafter, the construction of the development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved Plan. The Construction Traffic Management Plan shall address the following:-
- (i) Phasing of the development of the site, including all highway works
 - (ii) Construction vehicle numbers, type, routing;
 - (iii) Traffic and pedestrian management requirements;
 - (iv) Construction and storage compounds (including areas designated for car parking);
 - (v) Siting and details of wheel washing facilities;
 - (vi) Cleaning of site entrances, site tracks and the adjacent public highway;
 - (vii) Timing of construction activities to avoid school pick up/drop off times;
 - (viii) Provision of sufficient on-site parking prior to commencement of construction activities;
 - (ix) Hoarding, fencing, gates and any necessary footway closures.
- REASON:-** To minimise the impact of construction vehicles and to maintain the amenity of the local area.
- 9 No drainage system relying on infiltration shall be constructed without the prior written approval of the Local Planning Authority. This drainage system shall thereafter be implemented in accordance with the approved details.
- REASON:-** To ensure that the site does not pose any further risk to human health or the water environment by demonstrating that the requirements of the approved verification plan have been met and that remediation of the site is complete.
- 10 No piling using penetrative methods shall take place other than in accordance with a piling scheme which has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The piling scheme shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.
- REASON:-** To ensure that the proposed office building does not harm ground water resources. Some piling techniques can cause preferential pathways for contaminants to migrate to groundwater and cause pollution. A piling risk assessment and appropriate mitigation measures should be submitted with consideration of the EA guidance.
- 11 A scheme for managing any borehole installed for the investigation of soils, groundwater or geotechnical purposes shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The scheme shall provide details of how redundant boreholes are to be decommissioned and how any boreholes that need to be retained, post-development, for monitoring purposes will be secured, protected and inspected. The scheme as approved shall be implemented prior to the occupation of the permitted development.
- REASON:-** To ensure that redundant boreholes are safe and secure and does not cause pollution or loss of water supplies.

12 The development permitted by this planning permission shall be carried out in accordance with the Flood Risk Assessment & Drainage Strategy, produced by WYG Engineering, Job No. A114385-1, dated 14 April 2020:

1. Limiting the surface water run-off generated by the critical storm events so that it will not exceed the surface water run-off rate of 6 l/s up to and including the 1 in 100 year event plus 40% of climate change event.
2. The surface water run-off from the site will discharge into the existing Thames Water sewer.
3. Providing storage to ensure no increase in surface water run-off volumes for all rainfall events up to and including the 1 in 100 year + climate change event providing a minimum of 294m³ (or such storage volume agreed with the LLFA) of total storage volume in SuDS features, permeable paved areas and attenuation tank.

The drainage scheme shall be fully implemented prior to occupation and subsequently in accordance with the timing/phasing arrangements embodied within the scheme, or within any other period as may subsequently be agreed, in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

REASON:- To prevent flooding by ensuring the satisfactory disposal of and storage of surface water from the site and to reduce the risk of flooding to the proposed development and future occupants.

13 No development shall place until a detailed surface water drainage scheme for the site based on the principles as set out in condition 12, has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The scheme shall subsequently be implemented in accordance with the approved details before the development is occupied. The surface water drainage scheme shall include

1. Shallow infiltration testing to be carried out to BRE Digest 365 standards to determine feasibility of discharging via infiltration in accordance with the discharge hierarchy.
2. Confirmation of Thames Water agreement that they have capacity in their network to accept the proposed flows and volumes from the development.
3. A final detailed drainage plan including the location and provided storage volumes of all SuDS features, pipe runs, invert levels, flow control structure and discharge points. If areas are to be designated for informal flooding, these should also be shown on a detailed site plan with its volume and depth.
4. Detailed, updated post development calculations/modelling in relation to surface water for all rainfall events up to and including the 1 in 100 year + 40% climate change event. This should include a total discharge rate of 6 l/s. Appropriate half drain down times for all infiltration features and the attenuation tank should be identified.
5. Detailed engineered drawings of the proposed SuDS features including cross section drawings, their size, volume, depth and any inlet and outlet features including any connecting pipe runs. This should include details regarding the connection into the existing surface water sewer.
6. Final exceedance flow paths for surface water for events greater than the 1 in 100 year including climate change allowance identified on the drawing.
7. Final detailed management plan to secure the operation of the scheme throughout its life.

REASON:- To prevent the increase risk of flooding both on and off site.

- 14 Prior to the commencement of development the scheme for the protection of the existing trees (other than those the removal of which have been approved as part of this permission) shall be implemented in accordance with the details specified in the Arboricultural Impact Assessment (Prepared by WYG, document reference:- A114385 revision P4, dated 09/04/2020) and shall be retained during the construction phase of the development. Within the fenced off areas, there shall be no alteration to the ground levels and they shall be kept clear of vehicles, materials, surplus soils, temporary buildings and machinery.

REASON:- To prevent any trees to be retained are damaged, destroyed or uprooted during the construction phase of development.

- 15 Prior to the occupation of the development hereby permitted, a strategy for the siting and maintenance of permanent nesting and roosting boxes within the façade and roof ledges of built structure and/or trees shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Nesting and roosting boxes shall be provided in accordance with the approved strategy prior to occupation of the bus interchange building.

REASON:- To ensure that the development contributes to improving the ecology and biodiversity of the area

- 16 All areas of hedges, scrub or similar vegetation where birds may nest which are to be removed as part of the development within each phase(s), are to be cleared outside the bird-nesting season (March - August inclusive) or if clearance during the bird-nesting season cannot reasonably be avoided, a suitably qualified ecologist will check the areas to be removed immediately prior to clearance and advise whether nesting birds are present. If active nests are recorded, no vegetation clearance or other works that may disturb active nests shall proceed until all young have fledged the nest.

REASON:- Nesting birds are protected from disturbance under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (As amended).

- 17 No demolition, construction or maintenance activities audible at the boundary and no deliveries of construction and demolition materials shall be undertaken outside the hours 07:30 hours to 18:30 hours Mondays to Fridays, 08:30 hours to 13.00 hours on Saturdays and shall not operate on a Sunday or Bank Holiday.

REASON:- To ensure the demolition of the existing buildings and the construction and maintenance of the development does not prejudice the amenities of occupiers of nearby premises due to noise pollution.

- 18 If during construction of the development hereby permitted contamination that has not been previously identified has been found to be present in a particular area of the development, then no further development in that phase (unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority) shall be carried out until the developer has submitted a remediation strategy specifically for the previously unidentified contamination to the Local Planning Authority detailing how it shall be dealt with and obtained written approved from the Local Planning Authority. The remediation strategy shall be implemented as approved.

REASON:- To safeguard human health and ground water.

- 19 Prior to the first occupation and/or use of the development hereby permitted a scheme for the parking of cycles including details of the design, level and siting of the proposed parking shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved scheme shall be fully implemented before the development is first occupied or brought into use and thereafter retained for that purpose.

REASON:- To ensure the provision of adequate cycle parking that meets the needs of the proposed development and in the interests of encouraging the use of sustainable modes of transport.

20 No demolition/development shall take place/commence until an Archaeological Scheme of Investigation has been submitted to and approved by the local planning authority in writing. The scheme shall include an assessment of archaeological significance and research questions; and:

1. The programme and methodology of site investigation and recording'
2. The programme and methodology of site investigation and recording as suggested by the evaluation;
3. The programme for post investigation assessment;
4. Provision to be made for analysis of the site investigation and recording;
5. Provision to be made for publication and dissemination of the analysis and records of the site investigation;
6. Provision to be made for archive deposition of the analysis and records of the site investigation;
7. Nomination of a competent person or persons/organisation to undertake the works set out within the Archaeological Written Scheme of Investigation.

REASON:- To ensure the preservation of potential remains of the site following archaeological investigation.

21 The demolition/development shall take place/commence in accordance with the programme or archaeological works set out in the Written Scheme of Investigation approved under condition 20

REASON:- To ensure the preservation of potential remains of the site following archaeological investigation.

22 The development shall not be occupied/used until the site investigation and post investigation assessment has been completed in accordance with the programme set out in the Written Scheme of Investigation approved under condition 20 and the provision made for analysis and publication where appropriate.

REASON:- To ensure the preservation of potential remains of the site following archaeological investigation.

23 The energy efficiency and sustainability measures as detailed in the Design and Access Statement 18-014- Stevenage Bus Interchange Date 06 February 2020 Rev: P3 shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details prior to the first occupation of development. These measures shall thereafter be maintained in accordance with the manufacturer's specifications and permanently retained accordingly.

REASON:- To ensure the development is adaptable to climate change.

24 Prior to the use of the development hereby permitted, the vehicular access(es) shall be provided and thereafter retained at the position shown on the approved plan drawing number A114385-1_35_12_801 P01 Stage 3 VISIBILITY SPLAYS. Arrangement shall be made for surface water drainage to be intercepted and disposed of separately so that it does not discharge from or onto the highway carriageway.

REASON:- To ensure satisfactory access into the site and avoid carriage of extraneous material or surface water from or onto the highway carriageway.

25 Prior to the commencement of the development hereby permitted visibility splays shall be provided in full accordance with the details indicated on the approved plan number A114385-1_1_35_12_801 P01 Stage 3 VISIBILITY SPLAYS. The splay shall thereafter be maintained at all times free from any obstruction between 600mm and 2m above the level of the adjacent highway carriageway.

- REASON:-** To ensure construction of a satisfactory development and in the interests of highway safety.
- 26 Prior to the first occupation/use of the development, a Car Parking Management Plan relating to public car parking (displaced by the proposed bus station), shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. It shall include the following:-
- i. Details of car parking allocation and distribution;
 - ii. Operational details, and integration with other Stevenage Borough Council managed car parks within the town centre area;
 - iii. Monitoring required of the Car Park Management Plan shall be fully implemented before the development is first occupied or brought into use, in accordance with a timeframe agreed by the Local Planning Authority, and thereafter retained for this purpose.
- REASON:-** In the interests of highway safety and to ensure sufficient available off-street car parking.
- 27 Prior to the first occupation of the development hereby permitted vehicular and pedestrian (and cyclist) access to and egress from the adjoining highway shall be limited to the access(es) shown on drawing number STV-SGP-Z0-ZZ-DR-A-1000-P6 PROPOSED SITE PLAN only. Any other access(es) or egresses shall be permanently closed, and the footway and highway verge shall be reinstated in accordance with a detailed scheme to be agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority, concurrently with the bringing into use of the new access.
- REASON:-** To ensure construction of a satisfactory development and in the interests of highway safety and amenity.
- 28 Prior to the commencement of development, plans should be submitted to the Local Planning Authority, in consultation with the Highway Authority illustrating the proposed new highway boundary(ies) and/or land for dedication which shall be marked out on site prior to commencement of construction of any part of the development fronting the highway.
- REASON:-** To prevent unauthorised structures being erected within the highway boundary.
- 29 No development shall commence until such time as a Stopping Up Order to remove all highway rights over the land which is designated as public highway within the application boundary has been granted and all highway rights over the aforementioned land have been successfully removed.
- REASON:-** To ensure construction of a satisfactory development.
- 30 Prior to first use of the bus station, a bus priority scheme on Lytton Way shall be implemented to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority, in consultations with the Highways Authority and in accordance with the scheme as illustrated on drawing number TS001-Part 1 Rev C and TS001-Part 2 Rev C.
- REASON:-** To ensure construction of a satisfactory development and in the interests of highway safety.
- 31 Prior to the commencement of development, the scheme as illustrated on drawing number LONRD/03A to introduce parking restrictions and a turning head on London Road shall be implemented and retained thereafter available for that specific use.
- REASON:-** To ensure construction of a satisfactory development and in the interests of highway safety.
- 32 Prior to first use of the bus station, the CCTV cameras as detailed in drawing number STV-WYG-Z0-00-DR-E-960002 P01 shall be implemented in accordance with the

approved details. The CCTV system shall thereafter be permanently maintained and retained accordingly.

REASON:- In order to design out crime and to protect the public from crime.

- 33 Within one month of the commencement of works a Site Waste Management Plan (SWMP) addendum shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, detailing actual waste arising's and how the waste is managed (i.e. re-used, recycled or sent off site for treatment or disposal) and where it is sent to. Further updates should be provided throughout the life of the development at an interim of two months or sooner should the level of waste be considered significant by the developer.

REASON:- In order to reduce the level of waste generated during the demolition and construction phases of development and to recycle all waste materials where possible.

Pro-active statement

Planning permission has been granted for this proposal. The Council acted pro-actively through positive engagement with the applicant at the pre-application stage and during the determination process which lead 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.

INFORMATIVES

Hertfordshire Highways

AN1) Storage of materials: The applicant is advised that the storage of materials associated with the construction of this development should be provided within the site on land which is not public highway, and the use of such areas must not interfere with the public highway. If this is not possible, authorisation should be sought from the Highway Authority before construction works commence. Further information is available via the website:

<https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/highways-roads-and-pavements/business-anddeveloper-information/development-management/highways-development-management.aspx>

AN2) Obstruction of public highway land: It is an offence under section 137 of the Highways Act 1980 for any person, without lawful authority or excuse, in any way to wilfully obstruct the free passage along a highway or public right of way. If this development is likely to result in the public highway or public right of way network becoming routinely blocked (fully or partly) the applicant must contact the Highway Authority to obtain their permission and requirements before construction works commence. Further information is available via the website:

<https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/highways-roads-and-pavements/business-anddeveloper-information/development-management/highways-development-management.aspx>

AN3) Road Deposits: It is an offence under section 148 of the Highways Act 1980 to deposit mud or other debris on the public highway, and section 149 of the same Act gives the Highway Authority powers to remove such material at the expense of the party responsible. Therefore, best practical means shall be taken at all times to ensure that all vehicles leaving the site during construction of the development are in a condition such as not to emit dust or deposit mud, slurry or other debris on the highway. Further information is available via the website:

<https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/highways-roads-and-pavements/business-anddeveloper-information/development-management/highways-development-management.aspx>

AN4) Construction standards for works within the highway: The applicant is advised that in order to comply with this permission it will be necessary for the developer of the site to enter into an agreement with Hertfordshire County Council as Highway Authority under Section 278 of the Highways Act 1980 to ensure the satisfactory completion of the access and associated road improvements. The construction of such works must be undertaken to the satisfaction and specification of the Highway Authority, and by a contractor who is authorised to work in the public highway. 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-anddeveloper-information/development-management/highways-development-management.aspx>

Thames Water

There are also public sewers crossing or close to the development, therefore, in order to protect the public sewers and to ensure Thames Water can gain access for future repair and maintenance, approval should be sought from Thames Water where the erection of a building would be over the line of, or would come within 3m of a public sewer.

A Groundwater Risk Management Permit from Thames Water will be required for discharging ground water into a public sewer. Any discharge made without a permit is deemed illegal and may result in prosecution under the provisions of the Water Industry Act 1991. We expect the developer to demonstrate what measures they will undertake to minimise groundwater discharges into the public sewer. Permit enquiries should be directed to Thames Water's Risk Management Team by telephoning 0203 577 9483 or by emailing wwqriskmanagement@thameswater.co.uk. Application forms should be completed online via www.thameswater.co.uk/wastewaterquality.

Environment Agency

The developer should follow the risk management framework provided in CLR11, Model Procedures of Land Contamination, when dealing with land affected by contamination. The applicant should refer to the following sources of information and advice in dealing with land affected by contamination, especially with respect to protection of the groundwater beneath the site:

- Gov.UK – The Environment Agency's approach to Groundwater protection (2017), Technical Guidance Paper, including CLR 11 and GPLC and use MCERTS accredited methods for testing soils at the site;
- NPPF – Land affected by contamination;
- BS5930:2015 Code of practice for site investigations;
- BS10175:2011 A2:2017 Code of practice for investigation of potentially contaminated sites;
- BS ISO 5667-22:2010 Water quality, sampling, Guidance on the design and installation of groundwater monitoring points;
- BS ISO 5667-11:2009 Water quality, sampling, Guidance on sampling of groundwater's (A minimum of 3 groundwater monitoring boreholes are required to establish the groundwater levels, flow patterns and groundwater quality, more monitoring locations may be required to establish the conceptual model).

Community Infrastructure Levy

Stevenage Borough Council adopted a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Charging Schedule at Full Council on 27 January 2020 and started implementing CIL on 01 April 2020. This application may be liable for CIL payments and you are advised to contact the CIL Team for clarification with regard to this. If your development is CIL liable, even if you are granted an exemption from the levy, please be advised that it is a requirement under Regulation 67 of The Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 (as amended) that CIL Form 6 (Commencement Notice) must be completed, returned and acknowledged by Stevenage Borough Council before building works start. Failure to do so will mean you risk losing the right to payment by instalments and a surcharge will be imposed. NB. please note that a Commencement Notice is not required for residential extensions if relief has been granted. Stevenage's adopted CIL Charging Schedule and further details of CIL can be found on the Council's webpages at www.stevenage.gov.uk/CIL or by contacting the Council's CIL Team at CIL@Stevenage.gov.uk.

13 BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

1. The application file, forms, plans and supporting documents having the reference number relating to this item.
2. Stevenage Borough Council Supplementary Planning Documents – Parking Provision adopted January 2012 and Stevenage Design Guide adopted October 2009.
3. Stevenage Borough Local Plan 2011 – 2031 adopted 2019.
4. Hertfordshire County Council's Local Transport Plan 4 adopted May 2019.
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 February 2019 and Planning Policy Guidance March 2014.