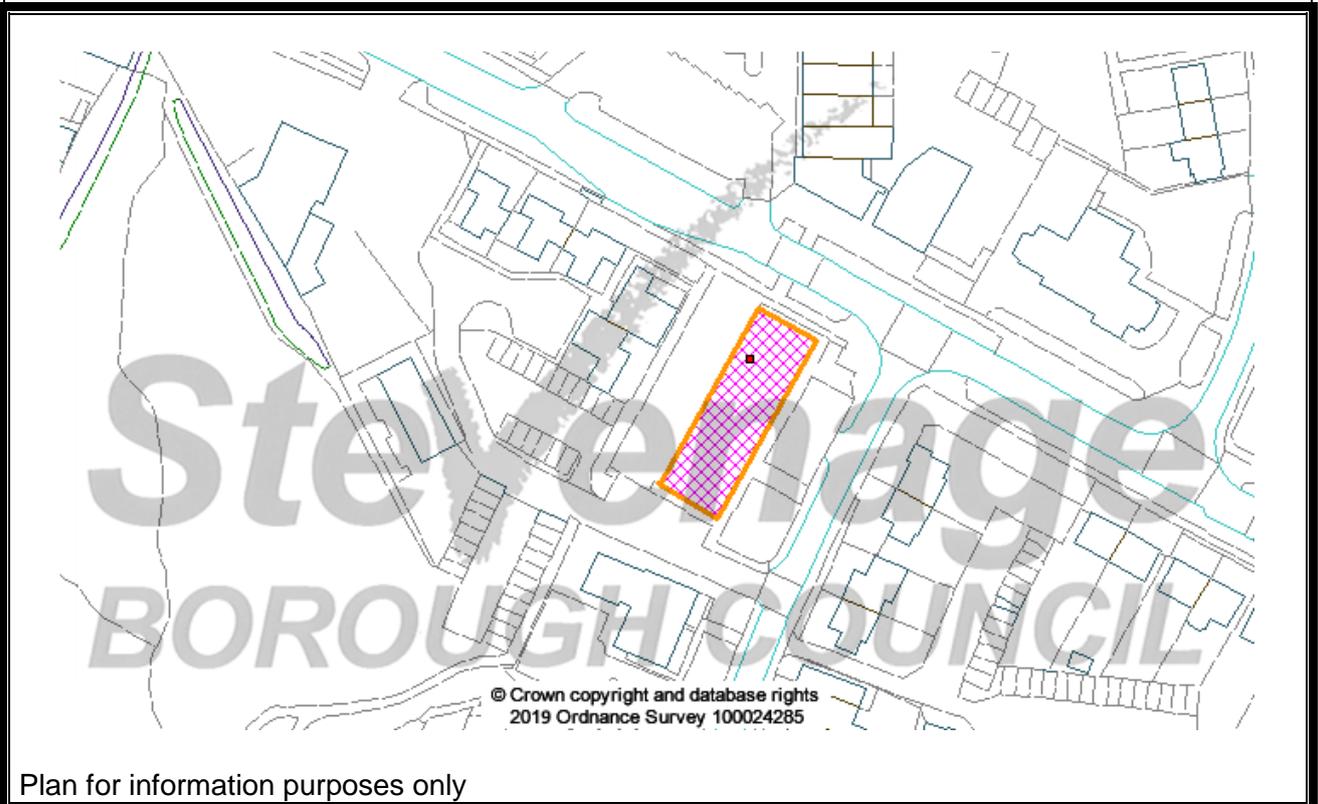


Meeting:	Planning and Development Committee	Agenda Item:
Date:	13 July 2021	
Author:	Tom Gabriel	01438 242755
Lead Officer:	Zayd Al-Jawad	01438 242257
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Application No:	21/00624/FP
Location:	Gladstone Court, Spring Drive, Stevenage, Hertfordshire SG2 8AY
Proposal:	Installation of new sprinkler tank and pump equipment within roof plant room and new sprinkler drop pipe on the south east elevation of the building down to a ground storey fire brigade inlet box.
Drawing Nos.:	CD-C392-Gladstone Court-01 Rev P1; -02 Rev P1; -03 Rev P2; -04 Rev P2; -10 Rev P1; CD_C392_Gladstone_05 Rev P1; and _06 Rev P1.
Applicant:	Stevenage Borough Council
Date Valid:	2 June 2021
Recommendation:	GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION



1. SITE DESCRIPTION

- 1.1 The application site comprises a six storey block of flats at the junction of Spring Drive and Broadwater Crescent, owned by Stevenage Borough Council. The site is

adjoined to the west by the car park for the flats and some bungalows; to the south by a single storey medical centre; and to the east and north by Spring Drive and Broadwater Crescent respectively. On the opposite side of Spring Drive are two storey dwellings while on the opposite side of Broadwater Crescent are a mix of single and two storey buildings. The application site is within Roebuck Ward and is within a Conservation Area.

2. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

- 2.1 19/00151/FP Replacement balconies. Granted 18.04.2019
- 2.2 11/00325/FP Change of use of amenity shrub area to hardstand to facilitate the erection of 3no. mobility scooter storage sheds. Granted 05.07.2011
- 2.3 11/00425/COND Discharge of condition 3 (Landscaping) attached to planning permission reference number 11/00325/FP. Discharged 14.09.2011
- 2.4 01/00477/PATELE Installation of six pole mounted antennae, four telecommunications dishes and ten equipment cabinets on roof top. Prior approval not required 13.09.2001

3. THE CURRENT APPLICATION

- 3.1 Planning permission is sought for the installation of a new sprinkler tank and pump equipment within the roof plant room and a new sprinkler drop pipe on the south east elevation of the building down to a ground storey fire brigade inlet box. The drop pipe would be a 50mm diameter steel pipe to a new surface mounted fire brigade inlet cabinet on the south east elevation of the building. The cabinet would be 595mm high, 395mm wide and 295mm deep. It would be 600mm above ground level.
- 3.2 The purpose of the application is to ensure the building complies with BS9251 – the standard for fire sprinklers.
- 3.3 The application comes before Committee for consideration as the applicant is Stevenage Borough Council.

4. PUBLIC REPRESENTATIONS

- 4.1 This planning application has been publicised by way of a site notice and neighbour notification letter. One letter has been received with the following comments:

Marymead Surgery, 18 Spring Drive, Stevenage

- We have no objections or concerns to the work;
 - When work was previously carried out at Gladstone Court, scaffolding lorries severely hampered access to the surgery, which could have caused issues for ambulance access;
 - The scaffolders should be made aware of this issue in order to stop this happening again. On- street parking should perhaps be prevented while scaffolding is unloaded.
- 4.2 Please note that these are not a verbatim of the comments received. Full copies of the comments received against this application can be viewed on the Council's website.

5. CONSULTATIONS

5.1 Hertfordshire Building Control

- 5.1.1 The scheme will be subject to a Building Regulation Application and the works will be carried out in accordance with BS9251 together with consultation with the Fire Authority.

5.2 Council's Environmental Health Section

- 5.2.1 I have no comments to make.

5.3 Council's Conservation and Historic Advisor

- 5.3.1 Gladstone Court is a circa 1950s / 1960s brick-built block of Independent Living Scheme flats. Due to its height (compared to surrounding development), it is a focal point within the Broadwater (Marymead) Conservation Area and is located opposite the 'neighbourhood centre' for the Marymead area of Broadwater.
- 5.3.2 The Conservation Area was designated in 2007 as a good example of one of Stevenage's Mark 1 'New Town' neighbourhoods. Conservation Areas are defined as "areas of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance".
- 5.3.3 The proposed addition of a 50mm sprinkler drop pipe and fire brigade inlet box on the south-east elevation of Gladstone Court will represent a very minor visual change to this elevation. As such, the proposals are considered to preserve the significance of the Broadwater (Marymead) Conservation Area in line with National and Local Plan Policy. No objection.

6. RELEVANT PLANNING POLICIES

6.1 Background to the development plan

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 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 with which Members are fully familiar, is a material consideration to be taken into account in determining this application.

6.3 Planning Practice Guidance

The PPG contains guidance supplementing the NPPF and with which Members are fully familiar. The PPG is a material consideration to be taken into account together with the National Design Guide (2019) which has the same status as the PPG.

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

Policy SP1: Presumption in favour of sustainable development;
Policy SP8: Good Design;
Policy SP13: The Historic Environment;
Policy GD1: High Quality Design;
Policy NH10: Conservation Areas.

6.5 Supplementary Planning Document

Broadwater Conservation Area Management Plan SPD (2012)
Council's Design Guide SPD (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 floor space of a development. This proposal is not CIL liable.

7. APPRAISAL

- 7.1 The determining issues in this application relate to the impact of the development upon the character and appearance of the building and the area and whether it would preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the Broadwater (Marymead) Conservation Area, and the impact of the proposal upon the amenities of the neighbouring properties.

7.2 Impact on the Character and Appearance of the Area and the Conservation Area

- 7.2.1 The application site comprises a six storey block of flats in a prominent location at the junction of Spring Drive and Broadwater Crescent. It is a focal point of the Broadwater (Marymead) Conservation Area. The majority of the proposed works (the installation of the new sprinkler tank and the pump equipment) would be internal and would accordingly not impact upon the external appearance of the building.
- 7.2.2 The new sprinkler drop pipe and the fire brigade inlet box at ground floor level would be limited additions to the building and would accordingly have a very minor impact upon the character and appearance of the building and would preserve the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. The visual impact of the proposed development would be acceptable as advised by the Council's Conservation and Historic Advisor.

7.3 Impact upon Neighbouring Amenities

- 7.3.1 The proposed development would not have any adverse impacts upon the amenities of the occupiers of the block of flats or those of the surrounding dwellings as a result of its limited nature.

7.4 Other Considerations

- 7.4.1 The comments from the doctor's surgery adjacent to the site regarding the blocking of the vehicular access to the surgery by scaffolding lorries are noted. Given that Stevenage Borough Council does not have jurisdiction over the highway, it is considered the most appropriate way to address this is through the use of an informative advising the applicant of this issue.

Human Rights and Equalities

- 7.4.2 Consideration has been given to Articles 1 and 8 of the First Protocol of the European Convention on Human Rights. It is not considered that the decision would result in a violation of any person's rights under the Convention.
- 7.4.3 When considering proposals placed before Members it is important that they are fully aware of and have themselves rigorously considered the equalities implications of the decision that they are taking.
- 7.4.4 Rigorous consideration will ensure that proper appreciation of any potential impact of that decision on the Council's obligations under the Public Sector Equalities Duty. As a minimum this requires decision makers to read and carefully consider the content of any Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA) produced by officers.
- 7.4.5 The Equalities Act 2010 requires the Council when exercising its functions to have due regard to the need to (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other conduct prohibited under the Act; (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it and (c) foster good relations between persons who share protected characteristics under the Equality Act and persons who do not share it. The protected characteristics under the Equality Act are: age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion and belief; sex and sexual orientation.
- 7.4.6 It is not considered the proposal would impact on person(s) with protected characteristics as detailed in the Equalities Act.

8. CONCLUSIONS

- 8.1 The proposed development would not have any adverse impacts upon the character and appearance of the building, would preserve the character and appearance of the Broadwater (Marymead) Conservation Area and would not have any adverse amenity impacts either as a result of its limited nature.
- 8.2 It is concluded the proposed development accords with the Policies specified in the adopted Local Plan (2019), the Council's Design Guide SPD (2009), the Broadwater Conservation Area Management Plan SPD (2012), the NPPF (2019) and the PPG (2014).

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

9.1 That planning permission be GRANTED subject to the following conditions:-

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

CD-C392-Gladstone Court-01 Rev P1; -02 Rev P1; -03 Rev P2; -04 Rev P2; -10 Rev P1; CD_C392_Gladstone_05 Rev P1; and _06 Rev P1.

REASON:- For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning

2 The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

REASON:- To comply with the requirements of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004).

3 The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall be on the approved plans to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority.

REASON:- To ensure the development has an acceptable appearance.

Pro-active statement

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

INFORMATIVES

1 The applicant is advised that consideration must be given to not blocking the emergency vehicular access to the adjacent Marymead Surgery, 18 Spring Drive, Stevenage during the development.

10. 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 – Design Guide adopted October 2009, Broadwater Conservation Area Management Plan adopted July 2012.

3. Stevenage Borough Local Plan 2011-2031 adopted 2019.

4. Responses to consultations with statutory undertakers and other interested parties referred to in this report.

5. Central Government advice contained in the National Planning Policy Framework February 2019 and Planning Policy Guidance March 2014.