

Planning Committee

Supplemental Agenda

Meeting date	21st December 2021
Officer	James Chettleburgh
Agenda Item	2
Proposal	<p>Full planning permission for the erection of 390 dwellings (including 117 affordable dwellings and 4 self-build plots), a cricket pitch and/or football pitches with temporary community shop (Use Class E/F2), public open space and amenity space (including children's play), associated landscaping and ecological enhancements, internal highways, parking, footpaths, cycleways, drainage, utilities, service infrastructure, acoustic bunding and fencing, improvements to existing access routes across A1(M) via Six Hills Way, Bessemer Drive, Redcar Drive and Meadway (including a new underpass at Meadway and associated accommodation/engineering works) and highway improvements along Chadwell Road.</p> <p>Outline planning permission for up to 1,110 dwelling units (including 30% affordable housing and self-build plots), principal employment area (up to 10,000 sq.m Use Class E(g) space), a residential care home (up to 72 beds) and up to 400sq.m Use Class E space, a mixed use local centre (Use Class C3 and up to 900 sq.m of Use Class E/F2 Space), a neighbourhood square (including mobility hub and up to 150 sq.m of Use E/F2 Space), a primary school (up to 3FE), a mobility hub with flexible community workspace adjacent to the Meadway underpass, a pavilion and mobility hub adjacent to the cricket and/or football pitches, public open space and amenity space (including children's play), sport facilities (including informal multi-use games area), associated landscaping and ecological enhancement works, acoustic bunding and fencing, internal highways, parking, footpaths, cycleways, drainage, utilities, service infrastructure and future connections into safeguarded land in North Hertfordshire, and a new car park and pavilion at Meadway Playing Fields (with some matters reserved). This application is accompanied by an Environmental Statement.</p>
Reference	21/00356/FPM
ADDENDUM INFORMATION	

The Planning Committee is requested to note the following amendments and updates to the committee report.

4. Public Representations

The Greens and Great Wymondley Residents' Association

- 4.1 Comments received in support of the application providing height and density constraints are taken into consideration. On behalf of the associated and supported by CASE and their geographic model, evidence was given at the public inquiry against the proposal to build at least 5,000 houses in West Stevenage some 16 years ago on the grounds that it was wrong to build high rise flats on the highest ground, under the flight path into London / Luton Airport and that there were more suitable sites adjoining in the North Herts area for such development, matters which were accepted by the inspector in his report.
- 4.2 Support for the application is subject to an increase in the number of small 2 bedroom terraced houses and an increase of self-build plots. It is known from experience that there is a huge demand for both these types of housing, particularly from young couples seeking to start a family and who cannot possibly afford the very high process for existing houses in the locality.
- 4.3 As a general comment, the association adds that the requirement to provide other facilities such as care homes must be based on known demand, not Marxist command theory. The association also adds that its purpose is to seek a reduction in the number and speed of vehicles, particularly rush hour rat run traffic, along the lands. The association considers the most effective way would be to provide a new "Stevenage Gate" link road from the A602 Wymondley By Pass linking into Stevenage via the new underpass, and nothing should be done or built, to prejudice this proposal.

Hitchin Forum

- 4.4 Following comments made on this application and watching the meeting on Thursday evening, there are a few questions, and if possible posed to the developers, before a decision is reached. These are:-
- Much was made of the boundary along Kitching Lane, forming the edge of the development. However, they are outline and NHDC proposed to build on the other side of the Lane, so surely any views will only be temporary?
 - How much will the housing cost buyers, at current rates?;
 - How much will tenants have to pay Housing Associations for their rental of affordable homes at current rates?;
 - Where will buyers and tenants come from?, Stevenage or further afield?;
 - Why aren't all the houses being fitted with heat pumps?;
 - What sort of heat pumps are proposed?, the Forum is advised that community wider ground source heat pumps, based on boreholes, are likely to be more efficient;
 - Are the two underpasses adequate, being the only access to the site?;
 - Will the existing road network in Stevenage support the additional cars?;
 - What is Thames Water's remaining concern over the development?, in their letter dated 6 December 2021, they state that the existing foul water network infrastructure is unable to accommodate the needs of this proposal. This sounds as if it could be a serious brake on the development.

5. Consultations

5.16 NHS East and North Hertfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group

Comments received 20th December 2021

- 5.16.1 East & North Herts Clinical Commissioning Group has considered this planning application. Should this development of 1,500 dwellings go ahead, based on an average occupancy of 2.4 occupants per unit it will create circa 3,600 new patient registrations. The proposed care home of up to 70 beds would create an additional 70 patient registrations. Total 3,670.

Persimmon – 602 Dwellings

- 5.16.2 This development of 602 dwellings, based on the CCG planning response use of an average occupancy of 2.4 per dwelling across the development would result in approximately 1,444.8 additional residents/patient registrations.

- 5.16.3 **However, to be noted:** *The current projected housing mix suggests an occupancy of 4 for 2 bed dwellings and likely the same (or possibly more in reality) for 3 bed and 4 bed dwellings. In some instances, occupancy of the 4 bed dwellings is suggested as being 6 persons. Therefore, is possible that based on the current forecast of 29 x 1 bed dwellings & 573 x 2, 3 & 4 bedroom dwellings would, in actuality, give rise to a potential:*

29 x 1 bed @ 2 occupants = 58

573 x 2, 3 and 4 bed @ 4 occupants = 2,292

Total: 2,350 (more if 6 occupants in the 4 bed dwellings)

- 5.16.4 Below is the calculation based on the number of dwellings proposed on the basis of 2.4 occupants which the CCG contends is entirely justified on the basis of the aforementioned point:

602 dwellings x 2.4 average occupants = 1,444.8

1,444.8/2,000 = 0.7224 of a GP (based on a ratio of 2,000 patients per 1 GP and 199m² as set out in the NHS England "Premises Principles of Best Practice Part 1 Procurement & Development")

0.7224 x 199m² = 143.7576 m² of additional space required

143.7576 m² x £5,410 (build costs including land, fit out and fees) = £777,728.616

£777,728.616/602 = £1,291.908 (rounded to £1,292.00 per dwelling)

- 5.16.5 The GMS S106 request if approached from a totality perspective is therefore 602 x £1,292.00 per dwelling = £777,784.00

Phase 1 – 156 dwellings

156 dwellings x 2.4 average occupants = 374.4

374.4/2,000 = 0.1872 of a GP (based on a ratio of 2,000 patients per 1 GP and 199m² as set out in the NHS England "Premises Principles of Best Practice Part 1 Procurement & Development")

0.1872 x 199m² = 37.2528 m² of additional space required

37.2528 m² x £5,410 (build costs including land, fit out and fees) = £201,537.648

£201,537.648/156 = £1,291.908 (rounded to £1,292.00 per dwelling)

- 5.16.6 The GMS S106 request for this/Phase 1 is therefore 156 x £1,292.00 = £201,552.00 Trigger points that the CCG request for Phase 1 are for 50% on occupancy of the 50th dwelling and the remaining 50% on occupancy of the 100th dwelling.

Phase - Outline - 446 dwellings

446 dwellings x 2.4 average occupants = 1,070.4
1,070.4/2,000 = 0.5352 of a GP (based on a ratio of 2,000 patients per 1 GP and 199m² as set out in the NHS England "Premises Principles of Best Practice Part 1 Procurement & Development")
0.5352 x 199m² = 106.5048 m² of additional space required
106.5048 m² x £5,410 (build costs including land, fit out and fees) = £576,190.968
£576,190.968/446 = £1,291.908 (rounded to £1,292.00 per dwelling)

- 5.16.7 The GMS S106 request for this/Phase – Outline is therefore 446 x £1,292.00 = £576,232.00. Trigger points that the CCG request for Phase - Outline are for 50% on occupancy of the 150th dwelling and the remaining 50% on occupancy of the 300th dwelling.

Taylor Wimpey – 898 Dwellings

- 5.16.8 This development of 898 dwellings, based on the CCG planning response use of an average occupancy of 2.4 per dwelling across the development would result in approximately 2,155.2 additional residents/patient registrations.

- 5.16.9 **However, to be noted as with Persimmon:** *The 2,155.2 is not the likely increase. The current projected housing mix suggests an occupancy of 4 for 2 bed dwellings and likely the same (or possibly more in reality) for 3 bed and 4 bed dwellings. In some instances, occupancy of the 4 bed dwellings is suggested as being 6 persons. Therefore, is possible that based on the current forecast of 86 x 1 bed dwellings & 812 x 2, 3 & 4 bedroom dwellings would, in actuality, give rise to a potential:*

*86 x 1 bed @ 2 occupants = 172
812 x 2, 3 and 4 bed @ 4 occupants = 3,248
Total: 3,420 (more if 6 occupants in the 4 bed dwellings)*

- 5.16.10 Below is the calculation based on the number of dwellings proposed on the basis of 2.4 occupants which the CCG contends is entirely justified on the basis of the aforementioned point:

898 dwellings x 2.4 average occupants = 2,155.2
2,155.2/2,000 = 1.0776 of a GP (based on a ratio of 2,000 patients per 1 GP and 199m² as set out in the NHS England "Premises Principles of Best Practice Part 1 Procurement & Development")
1.0776 x 199m² = 214.4424 m² of additional space required
214.4424 m² x £5,410 (build costs including land, fit out and fees) = £1,160,133.384
£1,160,133.384/898 = £1,291.908 (rounded to £1,292.00 per dwelling)

- 5.16.11 The GMS S106 request if approached from a totality perspective is therefore 898 x £1,292.00 per dwelling = £1,160,216.00

Phase 1 – 234 dwellings

234 dwellings x 2.4 average occupants = 561.6
561.6/2,000 = 0.2808 of a GP (based on a ratio of 2,000 patients per 1 GP and 199m² as set out in the NHS England "Premises Principles of Best Practice Part 1 Procurement & Development")
0.2808 x 199m² = 55.8792 m² of additional space required
55.8792 m² x £5,410 (build costs including land, fit out and fees) = £302,306.472

$£302,306.472/234 = £1,291.908$ (rounded to £1,292.00 per dwelling)

5.16.12 The GMS S106 request for this/Phase 1 is therefore $234 \times £1,292.00 = £302,328.00$. Trigger points that the CCG request for Phase 1 are for 50% on occupancy of the 75th dwelling and the remaining 50% on occupancy of the 150th dwelling.

Phase - Outline - 664 dwellings

664 dwellings x 2.4 average occupants = 1,593.6
 $1,593.6/2,000 = 0.7968$ of a GP (based on a ratio of 2,000 patients per 1 GP and 199m² as set out in the NHS England "Premises Principles of Best Practice Part 1 Procurement & Development")
 $0.7968 \times 199\text{m}^2 = 158.5632 \text{m}^2$ of additional space required
 $158.5632 \text{m}^2 \times £5,410$ (build costs including land, fit out and fees) = £857,826.912
 $£857,826.912/664 = £1,291.908$ (rounded to £1,292.00 per dwelling)

5.16.13 The GMS S106 request for this/Phase – Outline is therefore $664 \times £1,292.00 = £857,888.00$. Trigger points that the CCG request for Phase - Outline are for 50% on occupancy of the 150th dwelling and the remaining 50% on occupancy of the 300th dwelling.

5.16.14 The possible alternative consideration to a S106 contribution would be for there to be a Primary Care GP presence on the site itself. It may be that it would not be required until some point when the dwellings under the outline phases are being built. It is not possible to be prescriptive with many unknowns at this juncture. The calculation for the whole 1,500 dwelling development is:

1,500 dwellings x 2.4 average occupants = 3,600 new patient registrations
 $3,600/2,000 = 1.80$ of a GP (based on a ratio of 2,000 patients per 1 GP and 199m² as set out in the NHS England "Premises Principles of Best Practice Part 1 Procurement & Development")
 $1.80 \times 199\text{m}^2 = 358.20 \text{m}^2$ of additional space required
 $358.20 \text{m}^2 \times £5,410$ (build costs including land, fit out and fees) = £1,927,862.00
 $£1,937,862.00/1,500 = £1,291.908$ (rounded to £1,292.00 per dwelling)

5.16.15 The GMS S106 request for the whole would be $1,500 \times £1,292.00 = \underline{\underline{£1,938,000.00}}$. As per above the indication is that circa 358.20 m² would be needed to make an on-site presence viable. This can be subject to discussion in due course if it is considered an appropriate option. If this option is not a viable solution to the patient increase arising from this development as determined by the CCG, as the Commissioner, then the S106 contributions would be expected from the developers as ultimately being the only source of funding for a CCG premises project or projects.

5.16.16 Despite premises constraints GP Practices are not allowed to close their lists to new registrations without consultation with, and permission from, the East and North Herts Clinical Commissioning Group. We expect applications for closed lists to increase as new developments in the area go live. Even when surgeries are significantly constrained East and North Herts CCG and NHS England would not wish an individual patient to be denied access to their nearest GP surgery. It is therefore important that new housing contributes financially towards healthcare infrastructure. Patient lists are closed only in exceptional circumstances and often only as a temporary measure.

5.16.17 When new dwellings and registrations are planned the preferred option is to find a way to absorb those significant demands upon surgeries by providing additional capacity e.g. by re-configuring/extending existing or relocating the premises to

provide sufficient space to increase resources and clinical services and thus keep the patient lists open. Developers' contributions under these circumstances is considered fair, reasonable and necessary.

5.16.18 Patients are at liberty to choose which GP practice to register with providing they live within the practice boundary and the CCG nor NHS England can prescribe which surgery patients should attend. However, the majority of patients choose to register with the surgery closest and/or most easily accessible to their home for the following reasons; quickest journey, non-car dependent (public transport or walking distance), parking provision if a car journey is necessary, easy access during surgery hours, especially for families with young children and for older adults.

5.16.19 For several years, East and North Herts CCG, in accordance with national direction, has commissioned a number of additional services from general practice. This aspect of the general practice work is now due to increase substantially. Namely, the NHS Long Term Plan set out a requirement for practices to form Primary Care Networks (PCNs) effective from 1 July 2019. NHS England agreed an Enhanced Service to support the formation of PCNs, additional workforce and service delivery models for the ensuing 5 years.

5.16.20 In East and North Herts CCG there are 12 PCNs across the 6 localities; each covering a population of between circa 30,000 and 76,000 patients. These PCNs are expected to deliver services at scale for its registered population whilst working collaboratively with acute, community, voluntary and social care services in order to ensure an integrated approach to birth to grave patient care. The 2 PCNs (Stevenage North & Stevenage South) that cover Stevenage currently have a combined patient registration list of 112,469 and rising. The indication from this development & others in and around Stevenage is that number will rise very significantly in the months and years to come. However, the aforementioned calculations are based solely on the impact of this development, based on the number of dwellings proposed and does not take into account other development proposals in the area.

5.16.21 For the above reasons in the absence of a viable on-site provision the S.106 contribution is requested to make this scheme favourable to NHS England and East and North Herts Clinical Commissioning Group.

5.16.22 East and North Herts Clinical Commissioning Group propose to focus the GMS S106 monies on a project/projects involving the Symonds Green Health Centre, the Stanmore Medical Group which has 4 sites and/or The King George Group which has 2 sites. This would be in the shape of re configuration and refurbishment, expansion or possibly relocation. As 1 premises becomes constrained and has no capacity patients will likely domino to the next nearest.

5.16.23 An advantage to an extension in these pandemic times is that in line with the direction of travel, practices need to be future proofed and areas identified that can be isolated from the main practice area for obvious reasons. NHS England and the East and North Herts Clinical Commissioning Group reserve the right to apply for S106 money retrospectively and the right to amend and request that this be reflected in any S106 agreement.

5.16.24 As well as the importance of a S.106 contribution for GMS, it is also vital to consider the impact of developments and additional residents on community and mental healthcare as occupiers of the development will access a variety of healthcare. Based on recent cost impact forecasting calculations, the potential cost impact of these developments going ahead on community and mental healthcare would be as follows:

Mental Health costs:

5.16.25 The development of 1,500 residential units x £201.75 = £302,625.00 – the monies to be focussed on the provision of centralised services from the proposed Stevenage Healthcare Hub. Stevenage Borough Council are aware of this intention and the imminent engagement with Hertfordshire Partnership University NHS Foundation Trust in design stage. This hub would provide the mental health services for patients arising from this development.

Community Healthcare costs:

5.16.26 The development of 1,500 residential units x £182.03 = £273,045.00 - the monies to be focussed on the provision of centralised services from the proposed Stevenage Healthcare Hub. Stevenage Borough Council are aware of this intention and the imminent engagement with Hertfordshire Community Trust in design stage. This hub would provide the community health services for patients arising from this development.

5.16.27 Both these projects rely on S106 funding being made available as ultimately the only source of funding even if temporary/bridging funding is secured to invest upfront to get the projects underway.

5.16.28 Total Mental Health and Community Costs requested for the development = **£575,670.00**. There is no application for Acute S106 which would usually be at £2,214.46 per dwelling. The CCG is keen to continue to work with Stevenage Borough Council as well as the developer to ensure that patients access to healthcare isn't compromised by this development, or indeed, other developments. In terms of identifying a project in full at this stage the following points must be considered:

5.16.29 All projects are subject to Full Business Case approval by the CCG and NHS England.

- A commercial arrangement has to be agreed between the landowner, developer and end user based on a compliant design specification and demonstrate value for money.
- All planning applications and responses are in the public domain; identifying a project before any design work starts and funding is discussed, agreed and secured may raise public expectation and indicate a promise of improvements and increased capacity, which are subject to both above points. Securing developers contributions to all aspects of healthcare or a viable alternative of a presence on site is vital.
- A project identified and costed in response to the planning application may not meet the objectives of the current strategies or could have significantly increased in cost, especially if there has been any significant time lapse from the date of the response to the date of implementation of the planning consent.

5.16.30 At the time of responding to planning applications it is unclear when the development may be delivered, even if the site is listed in the Local plan and features on the housing trajectory for the local authority or indeed if permission will be granted. But should this development, as with any other, materialise, it will have an impact on healthcare provision in the area and must be mitigated by legally securing developers' contributions.

5.16.31 Subject to certainty that healthcare will form part of the development if preferred by the CCG and/or developers' contributions will be secured towards all aspects of healthcare East & North Herts Clinical Commissioning Group does not raise an objection to the proposed development.

5.20 Natural England

Comments received 16th December 2021

- 5.21.1 Natural England normally seeks the agreement of mitigation measures prior to the grant of planning permission. Given that we have no ‘in principle’ objection to this site, that it is allocated within Stevenage Borough Local Plan and in the interests of pragmatism and expediency we would be willing to agree to a suitably worded condition in order to mitigate for the potential impacts of increased recreational pressure on Knebworth Woods SSSI. We welcome your suggestion of a condition requiring mitigation in relation to the SSSI to be agreed and approved between Natural England and Stevenage Borough Council prior to first occupation.
- 5.21.2 Provided that Stevenage Borough Council can reasonably secure commitment to mitigation through this means, Natural England is willing to withdraw our holding objection. Note, however, that we consider this approach acceptable for this site only based on the specifics of the case.
- 5.21.3 As discussed in our meeting on the 14th of December 2021, we believe that there has been some misinterpretation of our advice relating to the AONB extension. The paragraph is standard wording intended to draw your attention to the fact that a boundary realignment for the AONB is being considered in this region. The first paragraph is explicit that **“this assessment process does not confer any additional planning protection”** beyond considerations of natural beauty, setting of the AONB or any local landscape designations where applicable.
- 5.21.4 The second paragraph which makes reference to ‘great weight’ relates to a later stage of the process that is not yet applicable and indeed may never be applicable. The paragraph is intended to be advisory and did not form part of our objection.

7.3 Affordable housing and Section 106 Planning obligations

Stevenage Borough Council	Financial Contribution
Biodiversity Enhancements	Approximate financial contribution of £2,458,524.00. (Based on the originally submitted scheme)
Community Green and cricket pavilion	To be determined and agreed by the Assistant Director of Planning and Regulation in consultation with the Chair
Meadway Sports Pitches and Pavilion	£400,000 (only payable if not paid to the Council pursuant to an easement)
Hertfordshire County Council	
Primary Education – Towards the new primary school.	Transfer of 3 hectares (ha) of land and a financial contribution of £14,093,513 or, for the developers to deliver the primary school (to a HCC agreed specification and

	standards) and to transfer the school to HCC.
Highway Mitigation measures	See paragraph 7.3.30 onwards
Sports England	
<u>Indoor Sport</u>	
- Sport Hall	£692,083.00
- Swimming Pool (Replacement Facility)	£756,731.00
- Rinks of an Indoor Bowls Centre	£18,691.00
<u>Outdoor Sport</u>	
- Football Pitches/Rugby Union Pitches/Hockey Pitches and 3G artificial grass pitches	£311,815.00
- Changing Room Provision	£346,473.00
	The financial contributions sought are approximate based on the housing mix for Phase 1 and the indicative housing mix for Phases 2 to 4.
Total (Approximately and subject to agreement of unknown contributions to be agreed by the Assistant Director of Planning and Regulation in consultation with the Chair)	£2,526,063.00
NHS and CCG	
If the proposed on-site GP surgery is not required, then a financial contribution in-lieu would be sought.	Approximate financial contribution - £3,414,864.00 £1,938,000.00
NOTE:- All financial obligations would be index linked.	

[Amended Paragraphs based on NHS CCG comments]

7.3.15 Following correspondence with the NHS CCG, they have advised that as a possible alternative to the financial obligation would be for the delivery of a Primary Care GP facility within the site. In terms of a facility itself, there would be a requirement to provide circa 358.20m² in order for an on-site presence to be viable. The scheme has been devised to accommodate approximately 400m² of floorspace at ground floor level of the Care Home building or within the local centre. This new facility would be secured as part of any legal agreement if the Council is minded to grant planning permission. However, should the GP surgery no longer be required to be provided on-site by the NHS, then a financial contribution in lieu would be required. The NHS CCG have advised this contribution would be approximately £1,938,000.00 (based on current projected dwelling mixes) where monies would go towards project/projects involving the Symonds Green Health Centre, the Stanmore Medical Group which has 4 sites and/or The King George Group which has 2 sites. This would be in the shape of re-configuration and refurbishment, expansion or possibly relocation. However, the relevant formula would be inserted into the S.106 agreement, specifically for the outline phases of development and the housing mix provided is only indicative.

7.3.16 In regards to the financial contribution of **£575,670.00** for Acute, Mental Health and Community as requested by the NHS, whilst the applicant does not dispute there is a need to support and finance these fundamental services; the financial contribution which has been sought does not accord with Regulation 122 of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) 2010 (as amended). For reference, Regulation 122 states:-

A planning obligation may only constitute a reason for granting planning permission for the development if the obligation is –

- (a) necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms;
- (b) directly related to the development; and
- (c) fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development.

[The above is to be read in conjunction with paragraphs 7.3.17 to 7.3.19 of the Planning Committee Report which do not require amendments].

Questions Raised since the Planning and Development Committee held on the 16th December 2021.

Delivery of the proposed bus service and how this will be enforced?

Following discussions with Hertfordshire County Council as Highways Authority, they have advised that once the S106 money is deposited (Please refer to Section 7.3 of the Planning Committee Report), HCC would go out to tender from their approved list of operators. HCC wouldn't normally do this until the road layout has been finalised. In this case, there are still questions to be resolved about the Phase 1 turning area. HCC think also that the number of occupations in Phase 1 before the bus service begins also needs to be agreed, although ideally, should be as soon as possible, and this would be through the S106 process. HCC also advise that further discussions are necessary in terms of the exact financial contribution for the bus service.

The bus service should be secured through the S106 agreement. From their response, HCC do note Arriva as an operator with respect to bus vouchers, but it could equally be another operator. HCC have also discussed all the elements of the bus service provision as contained in their response with their bus planner and HCC came up with a draft timetable, based on a 20 minute frequency. HCC are confident that an operator would wish to tender for this work.

Delivery of Local Health Services and how this will be enforced?

The NHS CCG have advised that they would consider the provision of an on-site GP Practice which would be required as part of this development. As such, this facility would be secured as part of the S.106 agreement including agreed triggers for delivery. However, if the NHS CCG have made it very clear to officers that they require flexibility as they may consider at a later date that the on-site GP provision is not viable for example, and at that juncture, they would require a financial contribution in lieu with appropriate triggers to be agreed accordingly.

Given the above, it is recommended delegated powers be given to the Assistant Director of Planning and Regulation in consultation with the Chair of Planning Committee to negotiate and secure the relevant obligations in order to deliver on-site / fund off-site GP provision.

Delivery and maintenance of the Community Green / Cricket Pitch and its function?

The developer is currently offering the Community Green to Stevenage Borough Council to manage and maintain this space. However, the final details of this Community Green needs to be finalised which includes the landscaping and play strategy for this space. Once this has been agreed, the Council's Parks and Amenities Department will be able to calculate a financial contribution for maintaining this space for a period of time which would subsequently be secured as part of the Section 106 agreement. The legal agreement will also include a mechanism to transfer the Community Green over to the Borough Council.

The aforementioned process is very similar to the Country Park proposal which forms part of the North Stevenage development. This includes a calculated financial obligation along with mechanisms to transfer the Park over to the Borough Council.

With regards to the Community Green itself, as requested by Sport England and the Council's Parks and Amenities Section, the Community Green is to be multi-functional and could also be used, for example, junior football which can be accommodated in the outfield area.

Delivery of the primary school (including interim arrangements) and is the school a sufficient size to accommodate the development?

Following discussions with Hertfordshire County Council's (HCC) Growth and Infrastructure Unit (GIU), the primary pupil yield for the Stevenage West development has been calculated using the Hertfordshire Demographic Model and is based on the development mix information and build trajectory which has been provided. The Hertfordshire Demographic Model is HCCs established method of projecting and calculating the populace likely to arise from new developments.

The Model operates based on 2011 census data tabulated by dwelling size (number of bedrooms), type and tenure for All Households and Migrant Households customised outputs. The Model allows for the population likely to be resident in a new development to change with time and for the overall population to conform to an age structure in line with the wider community.

The Model provides HCC with the necessary baseline evidence to support a request for planning obligations through the appropriate mechanism. It ensures that HCC is able to meet the statutory CIL tests in respect of planning obligations, namely: that they are *necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms, directly related to the development, and fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind*.

The modelled yields are calibrated against observed yields from recent new developments in Hertfordshire, which have been assessed as part of a recent, detailed, pupil yield survey (further information on the Hertfordshire County Council Pupil Yield Survey is available at the following link – [PUPIL YIELD METHODOLOGY \(hertfordshire.gov.uk\)](https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/pupil-yield-methodology)). This ensures that the Model is based on the most up-to-date information and means that the Model adheres to paragraph 8 of the DfE Guidance (***Securing developer contributions for education***, November 2019):

'Pupil yield factors should be based on up-to-date evidence from recent local housing developments, so you can forecast the education needs for each phase and type of education provision arising from new development.'
([Securing developer contributions for education \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/824812/securing-developer-contributions-for-education)).

A Guide to the Hertfordshire Demographic Model, which sets out further information and details, can be found at the following link – [guide-to-the-demographic-model-2019.pdf \(hertfordshire.gov.uk\)](https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/guide-to-the-demographic-model-2019.pdf). HCC is therefore content with the calculations resulting in 3FE of provision being required at Stevenage West and consider that this level of provision is sufficient to mitigate the development.

In regards to the second question – the interim primary education arrangements. The previous text HCC provided covers this issue (Please see underlined and in bold the pertinent part).

*The delivery of the new primary school as part of the Stevenage West development is required to be opened as early as possible due to the site location, some distance from existing Stevenage primary schools. However, given that it takes time for developments to be built-out and for the dwellings in them to be constructed and occupied the initial primary pupil yield likely to arise from the development will be relatively low. **There is currently some, limited, existing capacity at those primary schools nearest to the Stevenage West development. Therefore, in advance of the new school opening on-site it is currently anticipated that the low levels of initial primary pupil yield arising from the Stevenage West development can be accommodated within the limited existing capacity at the primary schools nearest to the Stevenage West development.***

The forecast for the primary schools closest to the Stevenage West development is below:

5.1 Stevenage North West										
School Code	School Name	Places Available 2021-22	Actuals			Forecast				
			2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26
2109	Letchmore Infants' and Nursery School	90	88	89	87					
2110	Fairlands Primary School	90	88	90	76					
2169	Broom Barns Community Primary School	30	29	30	30					
2188	Bedwell Primary School	45	25	29	29					
2406	Woolenwick Infant and Nursery School	60	60	59	60					
3018	Graveley Primary School	16	16	16	10					
3369	St Nicholas CofE (VA) Primary School and Nursery	30	30	30	29					
3977	Saint Vincent de Paul Catholic Primary School	60	55	59	57					
Total Year R Pupil Demand			391	402	378	378	376	364	346	365
Total Year R Places Available		421				421	421	421	421	421
Surplus or Shortage of Year R Places (No.)						43	45	57	75	56
Surplus or Shortage of Year R Places (%)						10.2%	10.7%	13.5%	17.8%	13.3%
Surplus or Shortage of Year R Places (FE)						1.4	1.5	1.9	2.5	1.9

HCC considers capacity across primary planning areas rather than individual schools. Therefore, whilst there may be insufficient capacity within a specific school there can be spare capacity across the wider primary planning area.

The relevant forecast (Stevenage North West) shows that across the primary planning area there will be some limited capacity in the interim period before the on-site primary school is open. This allows the small amount of primary yield arising from this development in the initial phases to be mitigated (e.g. it is forecast that there will be 43 reception places in 2021-22, 45 reception places in 2022-2023, 57 reception places in 2023-24, 75 reception places in 2024-25, 56 reception places in 2025-26).

It is also useful to note that residents may be objecting as they consider that there is insufficient capacity in existing schools at the moment. The forecasts above also show that across the primary planning area there will be more capacity in the future (than now), at the point that development commences, the houses are built and primary education mitigation is required.

Pedestrian underpasses at Meadway / Bessemer Drive

The lighting strategy for the underpasses is only indicative, so detailed requirements for the underpass lighting will be secured by condition. In addition, the management, maintenance and delivery (including the responsible authority) of the lighting strategy would be secured as part of the S.106 agreement.

Questions raised by Hitchin Forum

Generally, officers do not respond to individual letters or comments against a particular application. This is due to the volume of responses which are received on a daily basis against a number of applications which are determined by the Council. However, it is appreciated may wish to see answers to the questions which have been raised by Hitchin Forum. So these are set out in detail below:-

Much was made of the boundary along Kitching Lane, forming the edge of the development. However, they are outline and NHDC proposed to build on the other side of the Lane, so surely any views will only be temporary?

The proposed planting which is to be established within the development site is to be permanent and would be managed and maintained by a Private Management Company. In the event development does come forward within North Hertfordshire, this would be subject to a separate planning application and would have to be assessed in line with planning policies at the time, including any policies which require the delivery of high quality landscaping and public realm.

Notwithstanding the above, until such an application does come forward as part of North Hertfordshire Council's Local Plan, this application before the Council has to be determined on its own merit in line with the adopted Local Plan and policies set out in the NPPF (2021) and associated Planning Practice Guidance (including the National Design Guide)

How much will the housing cost buyers, at current rates?

This is not a material planning consideration, but as confirmed by the developers, it will be market-led with pricing being competitive and comparable for the location.

How much will tenants have to pay Housing Associations for their rental of affordable homes at current rates?

This is not a material planning consideration as it will be market led. The houses will be constructed by the developers and transferred to for example a Housing Association or the Borough Council. The rents themselves would be limited to 80% of Market Value in line with the NPPF. However, the Council is seeking to allow a clause to be added in S.106 agreement to allow either a Housing Association or the Borough Council if it ascertains the site, to also delivery Social Rented properties as well (see paragraph 7.3.4 of the Committee Report for further details on affordable housing).

Where will buyers and tenants come from?, Stevenage or further afield?

With regards to buyers of tenancies, this is now a material planning consideration and is again down to the market. The developers advise that from experience, the majority of purchasers are from a 10 mile radius for private dwellings. In terms of the affordable units, potential tenants or owners of these units are generally taken from the Borough Council's Housing Needs Register and there will be requirement in the S.106 Agreement to reflect this.

Why aren't all the houses being fitted with heat pumps?

All houses will respond to the relevant building regulations of the day and a range of options are set out in the applicants submitted Energy Statement. There are no planning requirements to 'control' the fittings – however, the developers have confirmed that they are both committed to using heat or ground source pumps or Solar PV or a mix, to reduce their emissions, as set out in Taylor Wimpey's corporate position in their Sustainability Strategy (2021). All of Persimmon's houses built post 2025 will have heat pumps and a decision is still to be made whether all houses including those built before 2025 will have a heat pump.

What sort of heat pumps are proposed?, the Forum is advised that community wider ground source heat pumps, based on boreholes, are likely to be more efficient.

The developers have advised that either Air Source Heat Pumps and / or Ground Source Heat pumps can be used. The developers, as set out in their Energy Statement which accompanies the planning application, is devised to be flexible with a number of options, which could potentially include a community wider heat pump solution.

Are the two underpasses adequate, being the only access to the site?

The two underpasses have been modelled by the developers transport consultant which has been assessed by Hertfordshire County Council as Highways Authority. As detailed in the Committee Report with a copy of the Highways Authority's comments available to view online, they consider the access arrangement to serve this development is adequate and acceptable in highways terms.

Will the existing road network in Stevenage support the additional cars?

The development proposal has been modelled by the applicants Transport Consultant which includes the use of the County Council's COMET model. Following the modelling work which was undertaken, subsequent on and off-site highway improvement works (including a suite of active travel financial obligations) are to be provided (set out in detail in Section 7.7 of the Committee Report) as identified by Hertfordshire County Council as Highways Authority and Highways England as the National Highways body. With the agreed mitigation measures put in place, the development is considered to be acceptable in highways terms in regards to its impact on the road network.

What is Thames Water's remaining concern over the development?, in their letter dated 6 December 2021, they state that the existing foul water network infrastructure is unable to accommodate the needs of this proposal. This sounds as if it could be a serious brake on the development.

As this is an allocated housing site Thames Water will have factored the increase into their growth structure. There are also statutory duties to provide the necessary infrastructure to accommodate the scheme. This isn't uncommon and developers will provide the necessary funding to accommodate this, as well as any necessary temporary solutions required.

In addition to the above, Thames Water have suggested a condition (Condition 85 – Foul Water) be imposed if planning permission were to be granted. This is to ensure that suitable foul drainage systems are delivered before occupation of each phase of development.

General Updates

Hertfordshire County Council as Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA)

At the time of publishing this addendum report, the LLFA have not provided any formal comments on the amended drainage strategy. The Case Officer at the LLFA has advised they are on annual leave until January 2022, so no comments will be received by the time this application is determined by the Planning and Development Committee. Given this and as advised in paragraph 7.10.45 of the Committee Report, if the Council is minded to grant planning permission, that delegated powers are given to the Assistant Director of Planning and Regulatory and the Chairman of the Planning Committee that in the event the LLFA do provide comments on the revised strategy with a suggested list of conditions, then these conditions would be imposed accordingly before any planning permission is issued by the Council. However, if the LLFA raise a substantive objection to the amended drainage strategy which has been submitted and this cannot be resolved, then it is recommended that this application is referred back to the Planning and Development Committee for its decision.

9. Recommendations (amendment)

- 9.1 That outline **and full** planning permission be GRANTED subject to the applicant having first entered into a S106 agreement to secure/provide contributions towards:-