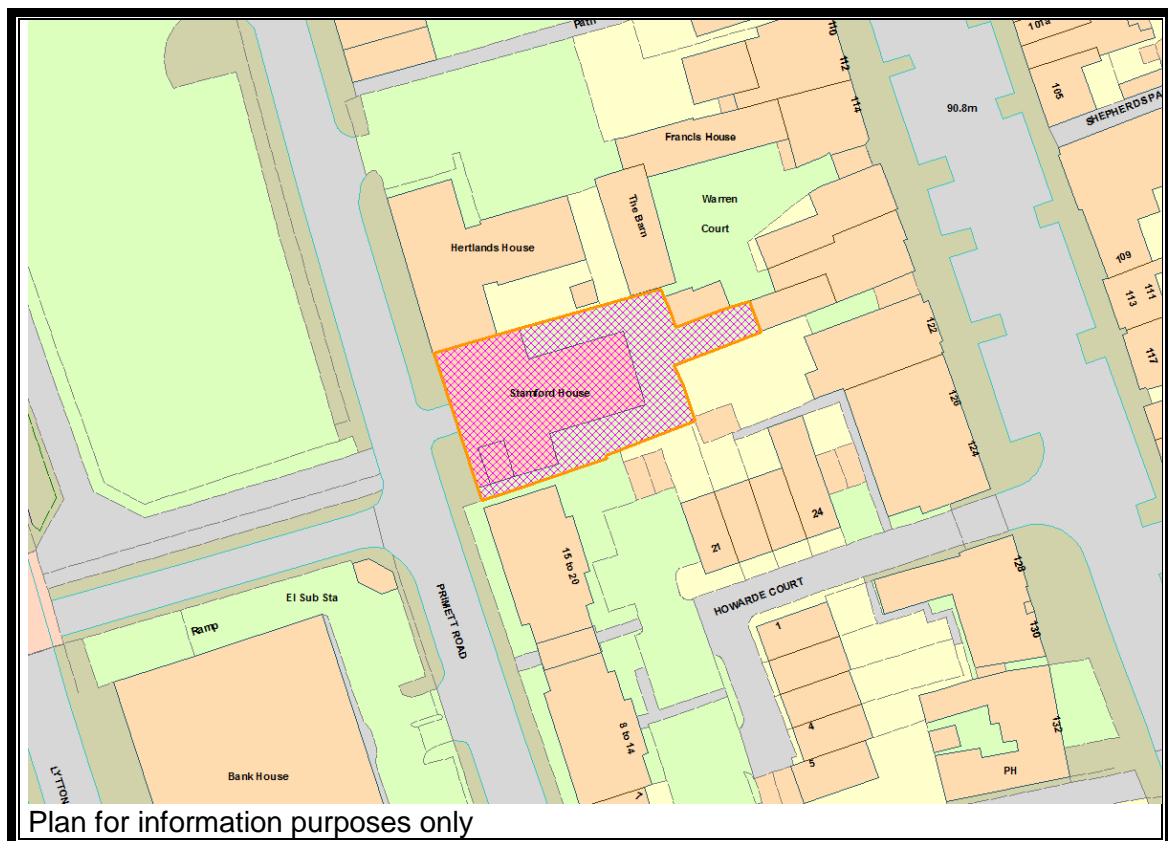


Meeting: Planning and Development Agenda Item:
Committee
Date: 26 May 2022
Author: Thomas Frankland-Wells
Lead Officer: Zayd Al-Jawad
Contact Officer: Thomas Frankland-Wells

Application No:	21/01366/FPM
Location:	Stamford House, Primett Road, Stevenage
Proposal:	Extension to roof, with alterations to openings and materials, to facilitate conversion of existing office building to 11 residential apartments.
Drawing Nos.:	2132- 001; 2132- 002; 2132- 003; 2132- 004B; 2132- 005B; 2132- 006B; 2132- 007B;
Applicant:	Mr Howell
Date Valid:	29 December 2021
Recommendation:	GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION



1.0 SITE DESCRIPTION

- 1.1 The site is an irregularly-shaped plot of land extending to approximately 700m² and located between Primett Road and the High Street. A three storey building takes up the majority of the site, with undercroft parking at ground floor level and two floors of offices above.
- 1.2 The site is located within the Old Town High Street Conservation Area and Area of Archaeological Significance but is otherwise not covered by any relevant Local Plan designations. In terms of environmental constraints, it is located in Flood Zone 1 (lowest risk).
- 1.3 Land uses surrounding the site are mixed, with a combination of offices and flats fronting Primett Road and array of typical town centre uses fronting the High Street to the east.

2.0 RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

- 2.1 2/0330/96 - Three storey office extension and car parking.
- 2.2 12/00566/FP - Creation of ground floor shower room and second floor balcony, with additional rooflights.
- 2.3 17/00776/FP - Ground floor extension, replacement of first floor balcony, covering of external fire escape stairs, installation of 1 no. roof light and internal alterations.
- 2.4 20/00519/CPA - Prior approval for change of use from offices (Use Class B1) to 8no. residential flats (Use Class C3)
- 2.5 21/00548/CPA - Conversion of existing office building into 8no residential flats

3.0 THE CURRENT APPLICATION

- 3.1 The application seeks full planning permission for the extension and alteration of the building to facilitate a change of use from offices to 11no. flats.

- 3.2 The extensions and alterations would involve:

- the removal of the existing blue louvered façade and its replacement with a more traditional material palette comprising red brick and black timber weatherboard;
- a 900mm upward extension across the entirety of the footprint of the building;
- the erection of an overhanging gabled forward projection, measuring 5.3m x 0.7m x 8.9m (w x d x h);
- the erection of three flat-roofed front dormers, each measuring 3.2m x 1.3m x 2.3m (w x d x h);
- an extension to the existing stair core, measuring 5.4m x 11.2m (w x d), to provide for bin and cycle stores; and,
- the replacement of an area of hardstanding in the east of the site within a communal amenity area measuring 50m².

- 3.2 Below is a schedule of the proposed accommodation.

Unit	Floor	Occupancy	Internal Area	External Area
1	1	2b / 3p	80 m ²	-
2	1	3b / 4p	100 m ²	-
3	1	2b / 4p	70 m ²	-
4	1	2b / 3p	68 m ²	-
5	2	2b / 3p	80 m ²	-

6	2	3b / 4p	100 m ²	-
7	2	2b / 4p	70 m ²	-
8	2	2b / 3p	68 m ²	-
9	3	1b / 2p	64 m ²	6 m ²
10	3	2b / 4p	73 m ²	18 m ²
11	3	3b / 5p	98 m ²	-
Communal Garden		-	-	54 m ²

3.3 This application comes before the Planning and Development Committee because it is a major residential scheme.

4.0 PUBLIC REPRESENTATIONS

4.1 The application has been publicised by neighbour letters, the posting of site notices, and an advertisement in the local newspaper.

4.2 One letter of objection was received, which reads as follows:

4.2.1 I've reviewed the planning application documents with regards to the proposed roof extension, and addition of residential flats of Stamford House, Primett Road.

4.2.2 I have serious concerns about the impact of the lost of our privacy. Comparing to the previous planning application of 21/00548/CPA of just 8 flats, there are now more windows on the Right Side elevation (was only 5 as per existing office layout, now 12) from which the potential Stamford house residents could view towards our house. In addition, all windows are proposed to be "Angled" flank window facing in the same direction, this would jeopardise our privacy even further, as Stamford House residents would tend to look out in that direction only. We would have to have the curtains closed all day in our master bedroom on the 2nd floor, living room on the 1st floor, and kitchen on the ground floor, this significantly reduces natural light source entering into our house, and is detrimental to our health.

4.2.3 In the 21_01366_FPM-PLANNING_DESIGN_AND_ACCESS_STATEMENT_1_-669057.pdf, section 8.2 page 18, I strongly disagree the statement that privacy is retained for all neighbouring occupier. In fact, there is no consideration at all for the privacy of houses No. 21 to 24 of Howarde Court. In Figure 18, photo showing a view toward Apartment No 15 to 20 only, and no photos have been taken towards our house. I have attached a photo (Copy of the photograph can be viewed with full details of the objection on the Council's website) from our 2nd floor, a view toward the right side elevation of Stamford House, you can clearly see that any additional windows and flats of Stamford House would have significant impact to our privacy.

4.2.4 Please also see the aerial view attached (Copy of the aerial view can be viewed as part of the objection on the Council's website), I would like to point out that the distance from our house, and the distance from No15 -20 to the Stamford House's right side elevation is the same, how can this report completely ignore ours !!!

4.2.5 Should the planning be approved, I seek compensation to the lost of our privacy, and reduction of natural light source as mentioned above.

4.2.6 Following amendments to the proposed design, the application was again publicised by neighbour letters. Any representations received in response to this later round of consultation will be published as an update and reported verbally to the Committee.

5.0 CONSULTATIONS

5.1 UK Power Networks

- 5.1.1 We refer to the planning application for the above site. The proposed development is in close proximity to our substation, and we have the following observations:
- 5.1.2 If the proposed works are located within 6m of the substation, then they are notifiable under the Party Wall etc. Act 1996. The applicant should provide details of the proposed works and liaise with the company to ensure that appropriate protective measures and mitigation solutions are agreed in accordance with the Act. The applicant would need to be responsible for any costs associated with any appropriate measures required. Any party wall notice should be served on UK Power Networks at its registered office: UK Power Networks, Newington House, 237 Southwark Bridge Road, London SE1 6NP.
- 5.1.3 Our engineering guidelines state that the distance between a dwelling of two or more stories with living or bedroom windows overlooking a distribution substation should be a minimum of ten metres if the transformer is outdoor, seven metres if the transformer has a GRP surrounding or one metre if the transformer is enclosed in a brick building. It is a recognised fact that transformers emit a low level hum which can cause annoyance to nearby properties. This noise is mainly airborne in origin and is more noticeable during the summer months when people tend to spend more time in their gardens and sleep with open windows.
- 5.1.4 A problem can also occur when footings of building are too close to substation structures. Vibration from the transformer can be transmitted through the ground and into the walls of the adjacent buildings. This, you can imagine can be very annoying.

5.2 Thames Water

- 5.2.1 Thames Water have no comments to make at this time in regards to the above planning application.

5.3 Affinity Water

- 5.3.1 No response received. Any comments received will be published as an update and reported verbally to the Committee.

5.4 Herts Fire and Rescue Water Officer

- 5.4.1 We have no comment to make, as there is an existing hydrant within 90m of the entrance of this building so no further requirement for any additional hydrants.

5.5 Hertfordshire Constabulary Crime Prevention Design Service

- 5.5.1 Thank you for inviting me to comment on this planning application. I have studied the documents on the Councils planning website and have the following comments to make;

- 5.5.2 I am disappointed that the applicant appears to have forgotten to describe how they intend to deal with the issues of crime, disorder, and the fear of crime as per both the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the Stevenage Local Plan. With regards to the NPPF there is no mention of Section 8 Promoting healthy and safe communities whatsoever in the Design and Access Statement (DAS). Although the applicant mentions several of the policies from the Local Plan SP2 Sustainable Development in Stevenage and IT5 Parking and Access, again there is no mention of dealing with the issues of crime etc. Having checked on the website www.police.uk for the crime figures for the period January to December 2021, using the area of Primett Road and Games Yard bounded by the High Street and the A602, there were 106 recorded crime reports of these 53 were recorded as Antisocial Behaviour (ASB) and there were two vehicle crimes and one theft of a cycle. The rest were a mixture of assaults and criminal damage.

- 5.5.3 I have substantive concerns regarding the proposed cycle storage provision. Local Policy IT5 Parking and Access states at item 7 Secure Cycle Storage in contrast the DAS cites s11.3 A cycle store for at least 12 cycles is proposed adjacent to the refuse store for occupiers and visitors to the development. The plans show the store having double doors fitted and that these are behind the entrance, which consists of electric gates and a pedestrian access. However, this does not demonstrate how these are to be secured. Therefore, I cant see how these fit into the Secure Cycle Storage as per the requirements of Policy IT5 there is insufficient detail, and the applicant expects the reader to assume that these would be secured.
- 5.5.4 I have substantive concerns about the claims that this application is a sustainable development as there are no mentions of any provisions for charging both electric vehicles and cycles etc. this is a growth area, which the Government are committed to under Climate Change. There is also new building regulation issued regarding charging points.
- 5.5.5 Given the concerns raised above these could all be mitigated by the applicant contacting the Police Crime Prevention Design Service with a view to seeking to achieve the Police preferred minimum security standard that is Secured by Design (SBD). Not only is this proven to reduce crime and disorder but also research done by Professor Ken Pease in 2009 has shown that by achieving SBD accreditation the carbon footprint of the scheme will be reduced.
- 5.5.6 The Police Crime Prevention Design Service are not able to fully support this application at present. However, if the applicant were to contact us with a view to seeking to achieve SBD accreditation, then this position would change. I would therefore ask that, should this be granted permission, an Informative added to the condition to the effect of;
- 5.5.7 Prior to construction the applicant will contact the Hertfordshire Constabulary CPDS with a view to seeking to achieve accreditation to the Police preferred minimum security standard that is Secured by Design.
- 5.5.8 Reason: To ensure that the development is compliant with both National and Local Planning Policies, in addition, this will also demonstrate the discharge of obligations under Approved Document Q Security of Building Regulations.

5.6 HCC Highways

5.6.1 Proposal

5.6.1.1 AMENDED PROPOSAL

Extension to roof, with alterations to openings and materials, to facilitate conversion of existing office building to 11 residential apartments as amplified by drawings received on 11th April 2022

5.6.2 Decision

5.6.2.1 Notice is given under article 18 of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 that the Hertfordshire County Council as Highway Authority does not wish to restrict the grant of permission subject to the following condition

5.6.2.2 No development shall commence until a Construction Management Plan has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Thereafter the construction of the development shall only be carried out in accordance with the approved Plan. The Construction Management Plan and shall include details of:

- a. Construction vehicle numbers, type, routing from the A1(M);

- b. Access arrangements to the site;
- c. Traffic management requirements
- d. Construction and storage compounds (including areas designated for car parking, loading/unloading and turning areas);
- e. Siting and details of wheel washing facilities;
- f. Cleaning of site entrances, site tracks and the adjacent public highway;
- g. Timing of construction activities (including delivery times and removal of waste) and to avoid school pick up/drop off times;
- h. Provision of sufficient on-site parking prior to commencement of construction activities;
- i. Post construction restoration/reinstatement of the working areas and temporary access to the public highway;
- j. where works cannot be contained wholly within the site a plan should be submitted showing the site layout on the highway including extent of hoarding, pedestrian routes and remaining road width for vehicle movements.

5.6.2.3 Reason: In order to protect highway safety and the amenity of other users of the public highway and rights of way in accordance with Policies 5, 12, 17 and 22 of Hertfordshire's Local Transport Plan

5.6.3 Vehicle Access

5.6.3.1 The site is located along Primett Road that is designated as a local access road that is subject to a speed limit restricted to 30 mph.

5.6.4 Highway Impact

5.6.4.1 The scale of residential development on transport and highway impact would lead to a similar number of vehicular trips than the present use. The traffic generation from the development would not alter significantly considering the sustainability of the site being located within the old town that has transport hubs which would not have a detrimental impact on highway safety.

5.6.5 Parking Information

5.6.5.1 The proposal is to provide 11 flats the existing vehicle parking is to be retained and further 12 spaces for cycle parking provision with ancillary storage for bins.

5.6.6 CONSTRUCTION TRAFFIC

5.6.6.1 Concerns by HCC over the impact of the construction traffic travelling to the site have resulted in a planning condition being recommended to prepare a Construction Traffic Management Plan.

5.6.7 POLICY REVIEW ; NATIONAL AND LOCAL POLICIES:

5.6.7.1 The applicant has provided evidence of consideration of the following policy documents in their Transport Assessment [TA]:

5.6.7.2 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF);

5.6.7.3 The government's National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) advocates that the planning policies and decisions should consider whether:

- “the opportunities for sustainable transport modes have been taken up depending on the nature and location of the site, to reduce the need for major transport infrastructure;
- safe and suitable access to the site can be achieved for all people;

- Improvements can be undertaken within the transport network that cost effectively limit the significant impacts of the development. Development should only be prevented or refused on transport grounds where the residual cumulative impacts of development are severe.”
- Similarly, the County’s Local Transport Plan’s (LTP4) prime focus is to tackle congestion, providing safe and accessible transportation routes. It also establishes that it is essential to integrate land use and transport to create a sustainable community that can be fully utilised without the need of vehicular transport.

5.6.7.4 Local

5.6.7.5 Stevenage Draft Local Plan, 2016 (2011 – 2031)

5.6.7.6 Stevenage Strategic Transport Strategy (2031)

5.6.7.7 Stevenage Borough Local Plan 2011-2031

5.6.7.8 National Planning Practice Guidance: Travel Plans, Transport Assessments and Statements in Decision Taking;

5.6.7.9 Hertfordshire County Council’s (HCC) ‘Local Transport Plan 4 2018 – 2031;

5.6.7.10 HCC Active Travel Strategy (2013)

5.6.7.11 HCC Rail Strategy (2016)

5.6.7.12 HCC Bus and Intalink Strategy (2011)

5.6.7.13 The policy review is considered appropriate for the purposes of this planning application.

5.6.8 Conclusion

5.6.8.1 Hertfordshire County Council as Highway Authority considers that the amended plans in reference to the development is unlikely to result in a material increase or change in character of traffic in the vicinity of the site and therefore has no objection to this change of use, subject to the above planning condition.

5.7 HCC Growth and Infrastructure

5.7.1 Hertfordshire County Council’s Growth & Infrastructure Unit do not have any comments to make in relation to financial contributions required by the Toolkit, as this development is situated within your CIL zone and does not fall within any of the CIL Reg123 exclusions. Notwithstanding this, we reserve the right to seek Community Infrastructure Levy contributions towards the provision of infrastructure as outlined in your R123 List through the appropriate channels.

5.7.2 We therefore have no further comment on behalf of these services, although you may be contacted separately from our Highways Department.

5.8 HCC Waste and Minerals Unit

5.8.1 No response received. Any comments received will be published as an update and reported verbally to the Committee.

5.9 SBC Environmental Health

5.9.1 Noise

- 5.9.1.1 I have reviewed the submitted “Stamford House, Primett Road, Planning Noise Assessment”, Report Reference RK3174/20439/Rev 1, Dated 10/12/2021, by Spectrum Acoustic Consultants. Appropriate noise monitoring has been undertaken (identifying traffic noise and mechanical noise from restaurants and take aways) and design criteria selected. Noise mitigation measures were found to be required.
- 5.9.1.2 Mechanical ventilation is proposed. Section 5.2 of the Report identifies mitigation in the form of enhanced glazing to Flat 10 (due to the large glazed area); elsewhere standard glazing. I recommend a Condition below:-
- 5.9.2 Recommendation
- 5.9.2.1 Prior to the first occupation of the development, the noise mitigation measures detailed in Section 5.2 of “Stamford House, Primett Road, Planning Noise Assessment” Report Reference RK3174/20439/Rev1, Dated 10/12/2021 by Spectrum Acoustic Consultants shall be implemented. The measures shall be maintained thereafter.
- 5.9.2.2 Reason: To protect the residential amenity of future residents

5.10 Wood Group UK (Flood Risk and Drainage Consultant)

- 5.10.1 No response received. Any comments received will be published as an update and reported verbally to the Committee.

5.11 BEAMS (Heritage Consultant)

- 5.11.1 Stamford House is a late 20th century office building fronting Primett Road, it has a distinctive blue glazed louvered façade, with brickwork to the rear and side elevations.
- 5.11.2 The application site lies within the Stevenage Old Town Conservation Area – an area of special architectural or historic interest, the character and appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance. The conservation area includes buildings fronting the historic High Street and plots to the rear, many of which have been part redeveloped in the mid to late 20th century with new buildings fronting Primett Road.
- 5.11.3 Stamford House sits reasonably unobtrusively between the buildings either side which are of brick construction and the eaves / ridge height / roof pitch along this stretch of Primett Road is fairly consistent.
- 5.11.4 The proposed elevations have been amended. The elevation facing Primett Road has a contemporary design with brickwork / dark framed glazed openings and an overhanging gabled element. Three box dormers are introduced into the roof, and although large, they are set back behind a brick parapet and the pitched roof form can still be discerned.
- 5.11.5 The amended scheme relates better to the buildings either side and will preserve the character and appearance of the Stevenage Old Town Conservation Area in accordance with national and local plan policy, no objection.

5.12 NHS East and North Hertfordshire CCG

- 5.12.1 There is not and will not be any application for S106 or CIL in relation to health/this application. That means nothing for Primary Care/GP, Community Health, Mental Health or Acute.

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 (adopted 2019)
- 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 July 2021. 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.

6.2.2 Since November 2018, housing delivery has been measured against the Housing Delivery Test (HDT) as set out by the Government planning policy and guidance. The results of the HDT dictate whether a local planning authority should be subject to consequences to help increase their housing delivery. Where an authority's HDT score is less than 85% of its housing requirement, the Council must incorporate a 20% buffer into its housing supply calculations in line with paragraph 73 of the NPPF. Where an authority's score is below 75%, the Council will be subject to the HDT's most severe penalty and must apply the presumption in favour of sustainable development. The latest HDT results, published by the Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) (now the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities) in January 2022, identifies that Stevenage delivered 79% of its housing requirement in 2021. This is above the 75% target, but still less than 85%. Consequently, Stevenage Borough Council must include the 20% buffer in its 5 year housing land supply calculations, which it already does.

6.2.3 The Council also has to prepare an Action Plan to show how it is responding to the challenge of ensuring more homes are delivered in the Borough. It will have to be prepared in accordance with Planning Practice Guidance and analyse the reasons for under-delivery of new homes against the Government's requirements. It also has to set out clear actions on how to improve housing delivery. Consequently, Stevenage Borough Council is considering its position in relation to preparing an action plan to enhance housing supply on deliverable sites.

6.2.4 In terms of 5 year land supply, the Council recently published the Five Year Land Supply Update (May 2022) which reveals that Stevenage has a 5.91 year supply of housing. A copy of the statement is found on:
<https://www.stevenage.gov.uk/documents/planning-policy/monitoring/five-year-housing-land-supply-update-may-2022.pdf>

6.2.5 The Council will also be commencing preliminary work into a potential review of its Local Plan, last adopted in May 2019. This is to ensure the policies within the Local Plan are up to date in accordance with the NPPF as well as ensuring the Council is delivering a sufficient supply of housing and employment.

6.3 Planning Practice Guidance

- 6.3.1 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 (2021) which has the same status as the PPG.

6.4 Stevenage Borough Local Plan

SP1 Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
SP2 Sustainable Development in Stevenage
SP5 Infrastructure
SP6 Sustainable Transport
SP7 High Quality Homes
SP8 Good Design
SP9 Healthy Communities
SP11 Climate Change, Flooding and Pollution
SP12 Green Infrastructure and the Natural Environment
SP13 The Historic Environment
EC7 Employment Development on Unallocated Sites
IT4 Transport Assessments and Travel Plans
IT5 Parking and Access
IT6 Sustainable Transport
HO5 Windfall Sites
HO7 Affordable Housing Targets
HO9 Housing Types and Sizes
HO11 Accessible and Adaptable Housing
GD1 High Quality Design
FP1 Climate Change
FP2 Flood Risk in Flood Zone 1
FP5 Contaminated Land
FP7 Pollution
FP8 Pollution Sensitive Uses
NH9 Areas of Archaeological Significance
NH10 Conservation Areas

6.5 Supplementary Planning Documents

Parking Provision and Sustainable Transport SPD (2020)
Developer Contributions SPD (2021)
The impact of Development on Biodiversity SPD (2020)
Old Town High Street Conservation Area Management Plan (2012)
Design Guide SPD (2009)

6.6 Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

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. The proposal would be liable for CIL, charged at a rate of £100/m².

7 APPRAISAL

- 7.1.1 The main issues for consideration in this case are: its acceptability in land use policy terms; affordable housing; the mix of dwelling sizes; the standard of the proposed accommodation; the impact on heritage assets; design and other visual considerations; the impact on the amenities of neighbouring landowners; and the impact on highway safety and parking.

7.1.2 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that all planning applications must be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

7.2 Land Use Policy Considerations

Assessment against the Council's housing policies

7.2.1 The application proposes housing, which would be provided at the expense of existing office space, on a site not allocated in the Local Plan for any specific purpose. Given that the site is accessible and the building on it is of a relatively modern construction, the quality of the office space it provides is assumed to be good. The building is however understood to have been vacant for some time, following the departure of DocCentics (a software company specialising in digital communications) to other premises within Stevenage.

7.2.2 Paragraph 119 of the NPPF 2021 states that planning decisions should promote an effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses, while safeguarding and improving the environment and ensuring safe and healthy living conditions. Paragraph 120 goes on to say that they should promote and support the development of under-utilised land and buildings, especially if this would help to meet identified needs for housing where land supply is constrained and available sites could be used more effectively.

7.2.3 Paragraph 123 states that local planning authorities should also take a positive approach to applications for alternative uses of land which is currently developed but not allocated for a specific purpose in plans, where this would help to meet identified development needs. In particular, they should support proposals to use retail and employment land for homes in areas of high housing demand, provided this would not undermine key economic sectors or sites or the vitality and viability of town centres, and would be compatible with other policies in the Framework.

7.2.4 Policy SP7 of the Local Plan 2019 sets out the strategic objective of providing at least 7,600 new homes within Stevenage Borough between 2011 and 2031. Some of these homes are expected to be delivered on windfall sites i.e. sites that are not specifically allocated for housing within the Plan.

7.2.5 Policy HO5 sets out the criteria for housing development on such sites. It states that planning permission will be granted where:

- a) The site is on previously developed land or is a small, underused urban site;
- b) There is good access to local facilities;
- c) There will be no detrimental impact on the environment and the surrounding properties;
- d) Proposals will not prejudice our ability to deliver residential development on allocated sites; and,
- e) The proposed development would not overburden existing infrastructure.

7.2.6 With the above in mind, it can be said that the site is on previously developed land as defined in Annex 2 to the NPPF. It also benefits from good access to local facilities, being in close proximity to the High Street, which is the historic economic centre of Stevenage. The proposal would not prejudice the delivery of residential development on allocated sites, given the scale of the proposal and the fact that there are no allocated housing sites in the immediate vicinity. It would also not overburden existing infrastructure, given that it would be CIL liable and the purpose of the CIL payment is to mitigate infrastructure impacts¹.

¹ NHS East and North Herts CCG and HCC Growth and Infrastructure have confirmed that the development would not impact healthcare or education infrastructure to the extent that developer contributions are required.

- 7.2.7 Consideration of the impact on the environment and surrounding properties is slightly more complex, since surrounding properties would be impacted by the development. However, these impacts arise from the design of the development rather than being an inevitable consequence of the use of the land for residential purposes. Indeed the use of land surrounding the site is mixed, including a significant proportion of existing housing. Therefore, strictly from a land use perspective, it is considered that developing the site for housing would not have a detrimental impact on the environment or surrounding properties. The specific impacts on surrounding properties that arise from the design of the development are considered later in this report.
- 7.2.8 Having regard to the above, the proposal is considered to accord with Policy HO5 of the Local Plan 2019, insofar as it relates to the use of land for housing. It is also considered to accord with Policy SP7 because it would contribute to meeting the housing targets set by the policy.
- 7.2.9 Policy HO9 of the Local Plan 2019 states that Planning permission for residential schemes will be granted where:
- a. An appropriate range of market and affordable housing types and sizes are provided taking into account:
 - i. Structural imbalances in the existing housing stock;
 - ii. The housing needs of the Borough, as informed by up-to-date and relevant evidence;
 - iii. The location and accessibility of the application site; and
 - iv. Recent completions, existing permissions and sites in the five-year land supply;
 - b. The resultant scheme would provide a density and character of development appropriate to its location and surroundings. Significantly higher densities should be achieved in easily accessible locations; and
 - c. Aspirational homes are provided in appropriate locations including, but not necessarily limited to:
 - i. New neighbourhoods to the north, west and south-east of the town;
 - ii. Suitable suburban, edge-of-town sites;
 - iii. The town centre, Old Town and other highly accessible locations; and
 - iv. Other appropriate sites where aspirational homes would complement the prevailing character
- 7.2.10 The proposed development would provide a single one-bed unit, seven two-bedroom units, and three three-bed units. This is considered to be an appropriate range of sizes given the existing imbalance in the Borough's housing stock, which is weighted heavily towards dwellings with three or more bedrooms. It is also considered to be well-suited to the form and location of the development i.e. a flatted development on the periphery of the Old Town High Street Shopping Area.
- 7.2.11 Likewise, the density and character of the development is considered to be appropriate to the site's surroundings, which contains a number of other medium density housing developments, both flatted and otherwise. The site is considered to be relatively accessible and therefore able to sustain this type of development.
- 7.2.12 Having regard to the above, the proposal is considered to accord with Policy HO9 of the Local Plan 2019, which requires residential developments to provide a range of housing types and sizes to meet the Borough's needs.

Loss of employment

- 7.2.13 Turning away from the provision of housing and on to the loss of office space that it would entail, Policy EC7 of the Local Plan 2019 seeks to limit the change of use of unallocated employment land. It states that planning permission for the loss of employment land on sites not allocated for any specific purpose will be granted where:
- i. There is sufficient suitable employment land available elsewhere;
 - ii. The proposals provide overriding benefits against other objectives or policies in the plan; or,
 - iii. It can be demonstrated that a unit has been unsuccessfully marketed for its existing use, or has remained vacant, over a considerable period of time.
- 7.2.14 The proposal is not considered to meet any of the above criteria. While it is understood that the unit has been vacant for some time and has been unsuccessfully marketed for office use, the applicant has not put forward satisfactory evidence to demonstrate compliance with Policy EC7. And, while the development would provide benefits in terms of the delivery of housing, these cannot be said to be overriding benefits, especially since the most up-to-date evidence suggests adequate supply of land for housing within the Borough.
- 7.2.15 Having regard to the above, the proposal is considered to be contrary to Policy EC7 of the Local Plan 2019, which generally seeks to protect unallocated employment sites.
- 7.2.16 However, the planning history is a material consideration and it is noted that the site benefits from prior approval for the change of use of the building to eight flats (application reference 21/00548/CPA). This approval is extant and is considered to be a realistic fallback position for the applicant. It is therefore highly material to the current application, since it effectively means that the applicant already has permission for the loss of the office space and the introduction of housing as its replacement, albeit at a lower density than is now proposed and without requiring any extensions to the building.
- 7.2.17 With this in mind, it would be manifestly unreasonable to object, in land use policy terms, to the loss of the office space on the site and its replacement with housing, despite the apparent conflict with Policy EC7. On this basis, the proposed development is considered to be acceptable in principle.

7.3 Affordable Housing and Section 106

- 7.3.1 Policy HO7 of the Local Plan 2019 seeks to maximise the provision of affordable housing in residential developments. It requires 25% of the total number of units to be provided as affordable units for schemes on previously developed land.
- 7.3.2 The Policy goes on to state that where these targets are not met, planning permission will only be granted if:
- a. Developers robustly demonstrate that the target cannot be achieved due to site-specific constraints resulting in higher than normal costs, which affect its viability; or
 - b. Meeting the requirements would demonstrably and significantly compromise other policy objectives.
- 7.3.3 In this case, the proposed development would not provide any affordable housing. The developer has not demonstrated that the target cannot be achieved due to viability constraints, nor is it considered that meeting the requirements would significantly and demonstrably compromise other policy objectives. The proposal is therefore considered to be contrary to Policy HO7 of the Local Plan 2019.
- 7.3.4 However, the planning history of the site is considered to be highly material to this issue, since there is an extant approval to deliver eight units on the site, none of which would be affordable. Given that the current proposal would result in only three additional units versus

this extant approval and an application for three units would not ordinarily trigger a requirement for affordable housing, it is considered that it would be unreasonable to object to the current proposal on the basis of a lack of affordable housing.

7.3.5 In terms of other obligations, no financial contributions towards education or healthcare are sought for the scheme. However, in accordance with the Developer Contributions SPD, an employment and apprenticeship strategy is sought, with the following terms:

- to attempt to employ Stevenage residents in 5% to 10% of on-site construction jobs and to pay a one-off sum of £4,000 per job shortfall; and,
- to attempt to employ one Stevenage resident or student as an apprentice for every ten on-site construction jobs (up to a maximum of ten apprenticeships) and to pay of one-off sum of £2,250/£1,250 per placement.

7.3.6 The applicant has agreed to these obligations and it is recommended that any resolution to grant planning permission be subject to the completion of this agreement.

7.4 Standard of Accommodation

7.4.1 Paragraph 130 of the NPPF states that planning decisions should ensure that developments create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users. Accordingly, Policy GD1 of the Local Plan requires new residential developments to meet the nationally described space standard and to provide for the amenities of future occupants. Policy FP8 of the Local Plan states that Planning permission for pollution sensitive uses will be granted where they will not be subjected to unacceptably high levels of pollution exposure from either existing, or proposed, pollution generating uses.

7.4.2 Under the current proposal, flats 3, 4, 7 and 8 would not provide the amount of built-in storage space required by the standard. However, they would exceed the standard in terms of floor area and occupants would therefore have sufficient space to provide free-standing storage to meet their needs. In all other respects the proposed development would meet or exceed the standard.

7.4.3 Beyond space standards, the proposed development is considered to be of a good quality in terms of the living conditions of future occupants. They would enjoy a reasonable degree of privacy due to the orientation of the building and positioning of the windows, noting that the medium density form of surrounding development does afford a degree of mutual overlooking between neighbours. In terms of natural light, the majority of the proposed units (eight out of eleven total) would be dual aspect and all would receive direct sunlight for a significant portion of the day.

7.4.4 In terms of noise, the applicant has submitted an acoustic assessment that recognises a number of nearby noise sources, including traffic on the A602 and plant associated with the food outlets fronting the High Street. The report recommends a system of mechanical ventilation and improved performance glazing for flat 10 (due to the high ratio of glazing to room volume in this unit). These measures are considered to be acceptable, however they do not take into account the amended proposal, where flat 11 also features a high proportion of glazing. It is therefore recommended that an addendum to the acoustic assessment be secured by condition to ensure appropriate noise mitigation for this unit. The Council's Environmental Health Department have no objections to the proposal, subject to the recommended conditions.

7.4.5 Turning to outdoor amenity space, Chapter 5.2 of the Design Guide SPD states that all dwellings, including flats, should have private open space. The only exception to this is where flats are developed in very central locations, where public open space is easily accessible and higher densities are required. In flatted developments, where private open

space is required, the Council will normally aim to achieve a minimum useable communal area of 50 square metres for schemes up to 5 units, plus an additional 10 square metres per additional unit over 5.

- 7.4.6 Under the current proposal, flats 9 and 10 would benefit from roof terraces, measuring 6m² and 18m² respectively, while the remaining flats would benefit from use of a communal garden measuring 50m². Although this is lower than the ideal level of provision expressed in the SPD, it is considered to be appropriate given the relatively central location of the site and its physical constraints (with much of the site already covered by the existing building and undercroft parking).
- 7.4.7 Having regard to the above, it is considered that the proposed development would offer a good standard of accommodation, subject to the condition requiring appropriate noise mitigation for flat 11. In this respect, the proposal is considered to accord with Policy GD1 of the Local Plan 2019.

7.5 Heritage Assets

- 7.5.1 The site is located within the Old Town High Street Conservation Area. It does not contain any listed buildings, nor are there any within the immediate vicinity such that they would be likely to be affected by the proposal, although it is recognised that the wider Conservation Area does contain a number of listed buildings, those closest to the site being 132 High Street (Marquis of Lorne), 112 High Street (Sala Thong) and 123 High Street (Misya Meze and Grill).
- 7.5.2 Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (as amended) states that in exercising any functions under the Planning Acts with respect to buildings or other land in a conservation area, special attention should be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character and appearance of that area.
- 7.5.3 Paragraphs 199 to 201 of the NPPF 2021 set out national policy for considering potential impacts on heritage assets, stating that great weight should be given to the conservation of designated heritage assets, irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss, or less than substantial harm. Both the listed application property and the Old Town High Street Conservation Area are designated heritage assets.
- 7.5.4 Paragraph 200 goes on to state that any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification.
- 7.5.5 Paragraph 202 states that where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.
- 7.5.6 Policy NH10 of the Local Plan states that development proposals affecting a conservation area should have regard to the relevant conservation area management plan SPD.
- 7.5.7 The significance of the Old Town High Street Conservation Area is as the economic centre of a settlement that grew around the Great North Road from the medieval period onwards. The presence of a significant number of listed buildings ensures that the zone around the application site maintains its historic character.
- 7.5.8 Primett Road has a distinctly contemporary character and the existing building on the application site, although located within the conservation area, is likewise contemporary in its appearance. Its most distinctive feature is a blue louvered façade, behind which sits an otherwise fairly typical late 20th century low-rise office building.

- 7.5.9 A full description of the proposed works is set out at paragraph 3.2 of this report.
- 7.5.10 As noted above, the proposal would involve the removal of the blue louvres and their replacement with a more typical façade made up of red brick and black painted timber weatherboard, featuring an overhanging gabled front projection. These elements are considered to reflect and respond positively to the buildings to either side of the site. While box dormers are also proposed to the front elevation, these would be set back and therefore not as readily appreciable from street level as the other features.
- 7.5.11 In terms of height, the existing building sits at approximately the same level as its immediate southern neighbour. This height would increase as part of the proposal but only to the point where it would match the height of the building immediately to the north. It is therefore considered that the proposed building would continue to sit comfortably amidst its neighbours on Primett Road.
- 7.5.12 In terms of layout, the proposal would not result in any significant visual changes, since the only new built form would be contained within the existing building footprint.
- 7.5.13 The Council's heritage consultant has advised that following the amendments to the scheme, the development will preserve the character and appearance of the Old Town High Street Conservation Area, in accordance with national and local policy. On this basis, the consultant has no objection to the application.
- 7.5.14 Having regard to the above, and noting that the building would not be readily appreciable in views from the High Street itself, it is considered that the proposed development would preserve the character and appearance of the Old Town High Street Conservation Area. It follows that the development would not result in any harm to the significance of this asset and in this respect, the proposal is considered to accord with Policy NH10 of the Local Plan 2019.

7.6 Design and Other Visual Considerations

- 7.6.1 Paragraph 127 of the NPPF 2021 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.
- 7.6.2 Paragraph 134 goes on to say that development that is not well designed should be refused, especially where it fails to reflect local design policies and government guidance on design, taking into account any local design guidance and supplementary planning documents such as design guides and codes. Conversely, significant weight should be given to:
- development which reflects local design policies and government guidance on design, taking into account any local design guidance and supplementary planning documents such as design guides and codes; and/or
 - outstanding or innovative designs which promote high levels of sustainability, or help raise the standard of design more generally in an area, so long as they fit in with the overall form and layout of their surroundings.
- 7.6.3 Policy SP8 of the Local Plan requires new development to achieve the highest standards of design and sustainability. Policy GD1 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.

- 7.6.4 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.
- 7.6.5 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.
- 7.6.6 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.
- 7.6.7 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.
- 7.6.8 A full description of the proposed works is set out at paragraph 3.2 of this report.
- 7.6.9 As noted above, it is considered that the building as proposed would sit comfortably within its surroundings in terms of height and would respond positively to surrounding buildings in terms of its form and the treatment of the elevations. As a consequence, it is considered that the development would preserve the character and appearance of the area.
- 7.6.10 Given that the proposal would result in limited additional built form being introduced to the site and all of that which is proposed would be located within the existing footprint, the development is not considered to give rise to any other material visual or design considerations beyond those already considered.

7.7 Neighbouring Amenities

- 7.7.1 Policy FP7 of the Local Plan requires all development proposals to minimise, and where possible, reduce air, water, light and noise pollution. Planning permission will be granted when it can be demonstrated that the development will not have unacceptable impacts on general amenity and the tranquillity of the wider area. Policies GD1 and HO5 also require that developments do not have an adverse impact on neighbouring uses or the surrounding area.
- 7.7.2 In this case, the principal neighbouring properties to be considered are the residential properties to the south of the site i.e. 15 to 24 Howarde Court.
- 7.7.3 It is noted that an objection has been received from a resident of Howarde Court, which cites loss of privacy and loss of natural light as reasons for objecting. It is further noted that this objection was made on the basis of the scheme as originally submitted and that consultation on the amended scheme is ongoing.
- 7.7.4 The existing southern elevation (facing Howarde Court) features five windows which, at the closest point, are located approximately 14m from the rear elevation of 21 Howarde Court and approximately 4m from the boundary of this property. As the objection correctly points out, the proposal would see the number of windows in this elevation increase to twelve.
- 7.7.5 However, under the amended proposal, six of these windows (those closest to 21 Howarde Court) would be obscure glazed and fixed shut. They would also no longer be angled towards 21 Howarde Court, instead being set flush with the elevation.
- 7.7.6 It must be recognised that some views over Howarde Court, in particular the rear gardens of 21 to 24 Howarde Court, would still be possible from the proposed development. However, the amendments to the scheme have significantly reduced the number of unobscured windows, changed their orientation and increased their distance from the affected properties. It is considered that the resultant views would be approximately equivalent to those possible from the existing lawful use of the site as an office and the extant prior approval scheme for residential change of use, both of which entail a degree of overlooking.
- 7.7.7 Having regard to this, and noting that the typical relationship between buildings in the surrounding area affords a degree of mutual overlooking, it is considered that the proposed development, as amended, would have an acceptable impact on the privacy of neighbouring occupiers.
- 7.7.8 Turning to natural light, it is acknowledged that the proposed development would result in some overshadowing of the rear gardens of 21 to 24 Howarde Court. However, given that the site is located to the north-west of these properties, any such overshadowing would be limited to the evenings. It would also be limited in its extent, given that the height of the building would increase by only 900mm. It is therefore considered that the proposed development would not result in undue loss of natural light for neighbouring occupiers.
- 7.7.9 In terms of overbearing appearance, again it is noted that the proposed new built form would be located wholly within the existing footprint of the building, comprising a modest 900mm upward extension. It is therefore considered that the proposed development would not appear overbearing when viewed from neighbouring properties.
- 7.7.10 In terms of noise, it is considered that the proposed development would not give rise to any noise over and above that which would ordinarily be expected from a residential development. Within an area that contains a significant amount of housing, this is considered to be appropriate. Any impacts of construction noise would be mitigated by way of a construction environmental management plan, which would be secured by condition.

7.7.11 Having regard to the above, it is considered that the proposed development would not have any undue adverse impacts on the amenities of neighbouring occupiers. In this respect, the proposal is considered to accord with Policy FP7 of the Local Plan 2019.

7.8 Parking

7.8.1 Car Parking

7.8.2 Policy IT5 of the Local Plan requires development proposals to comply with the parking standards set out in the Stevenage Borough Council Parking Provision and Sustainable Transport SPD 2020. According to these standards, 1 car parking space should be provided per one-bed flat, and 1.5 spaces should be provided per two- and three-bed flat. For the current proposal, this results in a requirement for 16 car parking spaces.

7.8.3 However, the site is located within Residential Parking Accessibility Zone 1, which means the number of car parking spaces can be reduced to between 25% and 50% of the usual requirement. Applying this to the current proposal results in a requirement for between four and eight car parking spaces.

7.8.4 The application in fact proposed eight parking spaces. While this is above the suggested level, it is considered appropriate, noting the limited availability of on-street car parking on Primett Road.

7.8.5 Disabled Parking

7.8.6 The Parking Provision and Sustainable Transport SPD requires 5% of all car parking spaces to be provided for disabled motorists. In this case, this would amount to less than one space.

7.8.7 Ordinarily, one space would nevertheless be requested. However, given that none of the proposed flats would be suitable for disabled occupants (accommodation at first floor level and above, with no step-free access), it would not be reasonable to seek disabled car parking spaces. It should also be noted that the prior approval fallback scheme would not provide any disabled car parking, so the current proposal would have no greater impact in this regard.

7.8.8 Electric Vehicle Charging Points

7.8.9 The Council is committed to supporting the transition to electric vehicles. Accordingly, development proposals are expected to adhere to the following principles:

- All new car parking should be designed to fulfil a Passive Electrical Vehicle Charging Point standard. This will mean that the underlying infrastructure is provided for connection to the electricity network but it will need to be activated through the installation of a charge point to be used in the future as technologies evolve and uptake increases.
- The blend of access to charging points provided within new developments (i.e. public, restricted access, open access, shared) should be determined having regard to a travel plan.
- A minimum of 20% of new parking on a site should have access to an active EV charging point.
- A flexible approach to the requirement for speed of charging will be taken due to the pace of change of this technology. Ultra-fast charging points will become expected at short term, non-residential parking spaces as technology improves to make the use of electric vehicles more efficient.

- 7.8.10 The proposed development would provide all of the proposed car parking spaces with active charging points. This exceeds the requirements of the SPD and is considered to be appropriate.
- 7.8.11 Motorcycle Parking
- 7.8.12 The Parking Provision and Sustainable Transport SPD requires applicants to allow for around 5% of the total stock of publicly accessible vehicle parking spaces to be for motorcycle use. The proposed development would not provide any motorcycle parking spaces, which is considered to be acceptable given the low level of car parking (5% of the total would amount to less than one space).
- 7.8.13 Cycle Parking
- 7.8.14 The standard for cycle parking is for 1 space per one-bed unit, 2 spaces per two-bed unit and 3 spaces per three-bed unit. This amounts to a total requirement for 24 cycle parking spaces to serve the development.
- 7.8.15 The submitted site layout shows the provision of 24 cycle parking spaces in the form of Sheffield stands located adjacent to the site entrance, alongside the bin store and stair core. The siting of the stands and the overall level of provision is considered to be acceptable.
- 7.8.16 Overall
- 7.8.17 Having regard to the above, the proposal is considered to accord with the requirements of the Parking Provision and Sustainable Transport SPD in terms of the overall level of car parking, facilities for disabled motorists, electric vehicle charging points, motorcycle parking, and cycle parking. Accordingly, the proposal is considered to be in accordance with Policy IT5 of the Local Plan 2019, which requires development proposals to comply with the SPD. It is recommended that conditions be imposed on any grant of planning permission to secure the provision of the various parking spaces and electric vehicle charging infrastructure prior to occupation of the site.

7.9 Highway Safety

- 7.9.1 Policy IT4 of the Local Plan 2019 states that planning permission will be granted where development would not have an adverse impact on highway safety.
- 7.9.2 The proposed development would retain the existing gated access leading off Primett Road. The local highway authority has not raised any objection to this arrangement and it is therefore considered to be acceptable. It should be noted that the traffic generated by the scheme is likely to be lower than the existing lawful use of the site as an office. It would therefore have less impact on the wider highway network.
- 7.9.3 The local highway authority does however raise concerns regarding construction traffic and consequently recommends a condition to secure a construction transport management plan. Such a condition is considered to be appropriate.
- 7.9.4 Having regard to these considerations, as well as the conclusions reached in the previous section regarding the level of car parking (and the consequent low likelihood of overspill car parking), it is considered that the proposed development would not have an adverse impact on highway safety. It follows that the proposal is in accordance with Policy IT4 of the Local Plan 2019.

7.10 Flood Risk and Drainage

- 7.10.1 Policy FP2 of the Local Plan requires applications for major development in Flood Zone 1 to be accompanied by an appropriate flood risk assessment. Given that the site has an area of more than one hectare, a flood risk assessment is required in this case and one has been submitted.
- 7.10.2 The flood risk assessment must demonstrate, as a minimum:
- An estimate of how much surface water runoff the development will generate;
 - Details of existing methods for managing surface water runoff, e.g. drainage to a sewer; and
 - Plans for managing surface water and for making sure there is no increase in the volume of surface water and rate of surface water runoff.
- 7.10.3 Policy FP2 also requires that the use of SuDS is maximised on site so as not to increase flood risk and to reduce flood risk wherever possible.
- 7.10.4 The applicant has not submitted a drainage strategy in support of the application. However, the application notes that surface water will be disposed of via a soakaway. As such, the development seeks to utilise the existing drainage strategy which is already in place serving the vacant office building.
- 7.10.5 At the time of writing this report, the Council's Drainage Advisor had not provided any formal comments on this application. Therefore, if the comments are not received by the time the application is to be determined at Planning and Development Committee, it is recommended 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 Council's Drainage Consultant do provide comments on the 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 Council's Drainage Consultant raises a substantive objection to the application and this cannot be resolved, then it is recommended that the application is referred back to the Planning and Development Committee for its decision.

7.11 Impact on the environment

Land Contamination

- 7.11.1 Policy FP5 of the Local Plan requires development proposals to be supported by an appropriate preliminary risk assessment (PRA), demonstrating that any necessary remediation and subsequent development poses no risk to the population, environment or groundwater bodies.
- 7.11.2 The application site as it exists today is the result of development in the late 1990's. It has been in use as an office since that date and since this is a not a use likely to have contaminated the land, the development is not considered to give rise to any significant risks as a result of contamination. The Council's Environmental Health Department have been consulted on the application and have not raised any concerns in this regard.
- 7.11.3 Having regard to the above, it is considered that the development would not have any unacceptable adverse impacts as a result of land contamination. The proposal is therefore considered to be in accordance with Policy FP5 of the Local Plan 2019.
- 7.11.4 Light pollution
- In terms of light pollution, Policy FP7 of the Local Plan 2019 requires all development proposal should minimise, where possible, reduce....light...pollution. Applications for development where pollution is suspected must contain sufficient information for the

application to make a full assessment on impacts. Planning permission will be granted where it can be demonstrated that the development will not have unacceptable impacts on:

- a. the natural environment, general amenity and the tranquillity of the wider area which includes light pollution;
- b. health and safety of the public; and
- c. The compliance with statutory environmental quality standards.

7.11.5 The application does not provide details of external lighting. However, a condition is recommended to ensure that any external lighting installed at the site is angled so as not to result in any spillage beyond the site boundaries. Subject to this condition, it is considered that any external lighting would not cause nuisance to nearby residential occupiers or have any adverse impact on the wider environment.

7.12 Trees and Landscaping

7.12.1 Paragraph 131 of the NPPF is clear that trees make an important contribution to the character and quality of urban environments, and can also help mitigate and adapt to climate change. Planning decisions should ensure that new streets are tree-lined, that opportunities are taken to incorporate trees elsewhere in developments, that appropriate measures are in place to secure the long-term maintenance of newly-planted trees, and that existing trees are retained wherever possible.

7.12.2 Policy NH5 of the Local Plan states that development proposals will be expected to protect and retain individual trees within development sites and should include new planting where appropriate.

7.12.3 The existing site is entirely developed and does not contain any trees, with the only soft landscaping being a modest area of mixed hedging along the southern boundary. No landscaping details have been submitted with the application and according to the submitted block plan, the only proposed soft landscaping would be a small area of amenity grass within the communal amenity space.

7.12.4 Given the existing condition of the site and its physical constraints, the level of proposed landscaping is considered to be acceptable and no further details are considered to be necessary in this regard.

7.13 Climate Change

7.13.1 Policy FP1 of the Local Plan states that planning permission will be granted for developments that can incorporate measures to address adaptation to climate change. New development, including building extensions, refurbishments and conversions will be encouraged to include measures such as:

- Ways to ensure development is resilient to likely future 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; and
- Using or producing renewable or low carbon energy from a local source.

7.13.2 The application is not supported by an energy strategy and no specific measures have been put forward in terms of adaptation to climate change. It is therefore recommended that a condition be imposed on any grant of permission to secure details of sustainability measures for the scheme.

7.13.3 Subject to the above condition, the proposal is considered to accord with Policy FP1 of the Local Plan 2019.

7.14 Crime Prevention

7.14.1 Policy GD1 of the Local Plan requires developments to create safe environments that design out crime. Hertfordshire Constabulary's Crime Prevention Design Officer was consulted on the application and noted that the application lacks any detailed consideration of crime prevention measures. As a result, the Officer was unable to fully support the application.

7.14.2 In accordance with the Officer's recommendation, the applicant is strongly encouraged to seek Secured by Design accreditation by way of an informative to this effect.

7.15 Developer Obligations and CIL

7.15.1 Stevenage Borough Council adopted a Community Infrastructure Levy Charging Schedule on 1 April 2020. This allows the Council to collect a levy to fund infrastructure projects based on the type, location and floor space of a development, in line with the rates shown in the table below.

Development Type	CIL Rate (£ per square metre)	
	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	

7.15.2 The proposed development would be liable for CIL, which would be chargeable at a rate of £100/m².

7.15.3 The development would not give rise to any requirement for bespoke obligations.

7.16 Biodiversity

7.16.1 The NPPF and accompanying Planning Practice Guidance requires the Council to achieve measurable net gains in biodiversity at development sites across the Borough. To achieve a biodiversity net gain, a development must deliver a minimum of 10% net gain post development, when compared with the pre-development baseline. The Council's recently adopted Biodiversity SPD (2021) requires all major and minor applications other than the following exemptions currently suggested by the Government to demonstrate a net gain in biodiversity:

- i. Permitted development;
- ii. Householder development, including extensions;
- iii. Nationally significant infrastructure, which falls within scope of the Planning Act 2008;
- iv. Some brownfield sites with marginal viability and substantial constraints. It is expected that full details to be set out in secondary legislation, but considerations are likely to include where sites contain a high proportion of derelict land and buildings and only a small percentage of the site is undeveloped, land values are significantly lower than average, and the site does not contain any protected habitats; and
- v. Developments that would not result in measurable loss or degradation of habitat, for instance change of use or alterations to buildings

- 7.16.2 In this case, the application site, which is a brownfield site, is almost entirely developed, with only small areas of mixed hedging and no tree cover. The site therefore offers very limited habitat for species of ecological importance. Furthermore, it is not within close proximity to any statutory or non-statutory designated conservation sites.
- 7.16.3 In light of the above, the proposal is considered to fall within exemption (iv) and it is not necessary to demonstrate a measurable net gain in biodiversity in this instance.

7.17 Other Matters

Air Quality

- 7.17.1 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). Therefore it was not necessary for the application to be supported by an air quality assessment. It is noted that there would be activities which will affect local air quality during demolition of the existing building and construction of the development. These include dust emissions and exhaust emissions from plant, machinery and construction traffic.
- 7.17.2 In order to mitigate the construction phase, details of control of dust emissions shall be approved as part of the Construction Management Plan (CMP) to be secured by condition. The Council's Environmental Health Department has not raised any concerns in terms of air quality.

Fire Safety

- 7.17.3 Fire safety is a material consideration. However, the application does not trigger any requirement for a fire safety statement.
- 7.17.4 The Herts Fire and Rescue Water Officer was consulted on the application. They advised that the existing hydrant would provide sufficient coverage for the site and the proposal would not require any additional hydrants to be installed.

Human Rights and Equalities

- 7.17.5 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.
- 7.17.6 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. 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
- 7.17.7 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.

7.17.8 The proposal would not provide any disabled parking but given the nature of the development, it would not be practicable to do so. Aside from this, it is considered that the proposed development would not impact persons with any of the protected characteristics listed under the Equalities Act.

8 CONCLUSIONS

8.1 The Council is currently able to demonstrate a five year supply of deliverable housing sites (with a 20% buffer) and the Housing Delivery Test indicates that the delivery of housing was 79% of the housing requirement over the previous three years. Therefore, the policies that are most important for determining the application are considered up-to-date and Paragraph 11(d) of the Framework is not engaged.

8.2 The proposed development would provide eleven additional dwellings, making a modest contribution to the aim of boosting housing supply through the redevelopment of sustainable brownfield sites. This is a benefit to the proposal but given the quantum of proposed units and the fact that the supply of land for housing within the Borough is not currently constrained, it only attracts moderate weight in favour of the proposal.

8.3 The development would also benefit the local economy by providing construction jobs and increasing population density on the edge of the High Street Shopping Area. Again, these benefits are considered to be modest and accordingly, they attract moderate weight in favour of the proposal.

8.3 However, the dwellings would be provided at the expense of the existing office use of the site and the applicant has not demonstrated that sufficient alternative employment land is located elsewhere, nor has the site been unsuccessfully marketed for office use. Furthermore, the proposal is not considered to provide overriding benefits against other development plan objectives. The application is therefore considered to be contrary to Policy EC7 of the Local Plan.

8.4 Likewise, the development would not provide any affordable housing, which is required for major residential schemes. The proposal is therefore contrary to Policy HO7 of the Local Plan.

8.5 Ordinarily, these policy conflicts would carry significant weight against the proposal. However, in light of the extant prior approval for the site which would, if implemented, result in the loss of the entirety of the office space and the introduction of eight dwellings with no affordable housing, it is considered that only very limited weight should be attributed.

8.6 In terms of the mix of dwelling sizes, the standard of the proposed accommodation, the impact on the Old Town High Street Conservation Area and visual amenities more generally, the impact on the living conditions of neighbouring occupiers, and the impacts on parking and highway safety, the proposed development is considered to be acceptable. These are neutral matters.

8.7 Having regard to the above, the modest benefits of delivering eleven dwellings are considered to outweigh the very limited adverse impacts relating to affordable housing and the loss of office space. The proposal is therefore considered to be in accordance with the development plan and in the absence of any other material considerations indicating that permission should be refused, it is recommended that the application be approved.

9 RECOMMENDATION

9.1 That planning permission be GRANTED subject to the following conditions and the transfer of the signed S106 legal agreement which has secured and/or provides:

- Employment and Apprenticeship Opportunities

9.2 With 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 obligation detailed above (including triggers where appropriate) as part of the Section 106 Agreement in order to mitigate the developments impact on infrastructure as well as secure the planning benefits which this scheme seeks to deliver. In addition, the imposition of suitable safeguarding conditions, with authority given to the Assistant Director of Planning and Regulation in consultation with the Chair of Planning Committee, to amend or add to the suggested draft conditions set out in this report, prior to the decision notice being issued, where such amendments or additions would be legally sound and most effectively deliver the development that the Planning Committee has resolved to approve.

Conditions

General

1. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: 2132-001; 2132-004B; 2132-005B; 2132-006B; 2132-007B.

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. 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 18:00 hours Mondays to Fridays, 08:00 hours to 13.00 hours on Saturdays and shall not operate on a Sunday or Bank Holiday, unless otherwise agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.

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.

4. Any external lighting installed at the site shall be angled so as to avoid any spillage beyond the site boundaries unless otherwise agreed in writing by the local planning authority.

REASON:- In order to protect the amenities and operations of neighbouring properties, to ensure any external lighting does not prejudice highway safety and in the interests of minimising light pollution.

5. In the event that contamination is found at any time when carrying out the approved development that was not previously identified it must be reported in writing immediately to the local planning authority. An investigation and risk assessment must be undertaken and where remediation is necessary a remediation scheme must be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. Following completion of measures identified in the approved remediation scheme a verification report must be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority.

REASON:- To ensure that the site does not pose any risk to human health and to ensure that the development does not contribute to unacceptable concentrations of pollution posing a risk to public water supply from previously unidentified contamination sources at the development site and to prevent deterioration of groundwater and/or surface water by demonstrating that the requirements of the approved verification plan have been met and that remediation of the site is completed.

Prior to Commencement

6. No development shall take place (including site clearance) until a construction management plan has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Thereafter the construction of the development shall only be carried out in accordance with the approved plan. The construction management plan shall include details of the following:

- a) Construction vehicle numbers, type, routing;
- b) Access arrangements to site;
- c) Traffic and pedestrian management requirements;
- d) Construction and storage compounds (including areas designated for car parking, loading / unloading and turning areas);
- e) Siting and details of wheel washing facilities;
- f) Cleaning of site entrances, site tracks and the adjacent public highway;
- g) Timing of construction activities (including delivery times and removal of waste) and to avoid school pick up/drop off times;
- h) Provision of sufficient on-site parking prior to commencement of construction activities;
- i) Post construction restoration/reinstatement of the working areas and temporary access to the public highway;
- j) Where works cannot be contained wholly within the site, a plan should be submitted showing the site layout on the highway including extent of hoarding, pedestrian routes and remaining road width for vehicle movements;
- k) A Site Waste Management Plan including mechanisms to deal with environmental impacts such as air quality and dust control measures, noise and vibration restriction measures, light and odour and predicted and latterly actual waste arisings and how this is to be managed and where it is sent to.
- l) Dust control measures during demolition and construction from plant and machinery, and vehicles.

REASON:- In order to protect highway safety and the amenity of other users of the public highway and rights of way, in the interests of amenities of neighbouring properties, to ensure suitable, safe and satisfactory planning and development, in order to reduce the level of waste generated during groundworks and construction phases of development and to recycle all waste materials where possible.

7. No development shall take place (excluding demolition and site clearance) until a detailed surface water drainage scheme for the site has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The drainage strategy should demonstrate the surface water run-off generated up to and including 1 in 100 year + climate change critical storm will not exceed the run-off from the undeveloped site following the corresponding rainfall event. The scheme shall subsequently be implemented in accordance with the approved details before the development is completed.

- 1) Detailed infiltration tests conducted to BRE Digest 365 standards and geotechnical investigations to confirm the feasibility of discharge via infiltration and groundwater levels on site.
- 2) 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.

- 3) Final post-development network calculations for all storm events up to and including the 1 in 100 year + 40% climate change event with half drain down times.
- 4) Exceedance flow paths for surface water for events greater than the 1 in 100 year including climate change allowance.
- 5) Final detailed management plan to include arrangements for adoption and any other arrangements to secure the operation of the scheme throughout its lifetime.

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

Prior to Work above Slab Level

8. No development shall take place above slab level until a schedule and samples of the materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces and hard landscaping of the development hereby permitted have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details and permanently retained as such thereafter.

REASON:- To ensure the development has a high quality appearance.

9. No development shall take place above slab level until details of the refuse stores as shown on the approved plans have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved refuse stores shall then be installed in full prior to beneficial occupation of the development and permanently retained as such thereafter.

REASON:- To ensure the proper disposal of waste for the lifetime of the development

10. No development shall take place above slab level until details of the cycle parking stands as shown on the approved plans have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved cycle stands shall then be installed in full prior to beneficial occupation of the development and permanently retained as such thereafter.

REASON:- To ensure adequate secure and covered cycle parking provision is available at all times to promote sustainable modes of transport.

11. No development shall take place above slab level until details of the specification and siting of the active electric vehicle charging points (EVCP) have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved EVCPs shall be installed in full prior to beneficial occupation of the development and permanently retained as such thereafter.

REASON:- To ensure adequate provision of active EVCPs within in the development and for all types of drivers is available at all times to promote sustainable modes of transport.

12. No development shall take place above slab level until an addendum to the submitted noise assessment, taking into account the amendments to flat 11, has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. Any recommended measures in the approved addendum shall then be implemented in full prior to beneficial occupation of the development and permanently maintained thereafter unless otherwise agreed in writing by the local planning authority.

REASON:- To ensure satisfactory living conditions for future occupants of the development.

Prior to Occupation/Completion

13. Prior to occupation of the development an updated Travel Plan shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. No part of the development shall be occupied until implementation of the approved Travel Plan. Those parts of the approved Travel Plan that are identified therein as being capable of implementation after occupation shall be implemented in accordance with the timetable contained therein and shall continue to be implemented as long as any part of the development is occupied.

REASON:- To ensure that sustainable travel options associated with the development are promoted and maximised.

14. Prior to the first occupation of the development hereby permitted a visibility splay shall be provided in full accordance with the details indicated on the approved drawing number 18081_001 Rev A. The splay shall thereafter be retained at all times free from any obstruction between 600mm and 2m above the level of the adjacent highway carriageway.

REASON:- To ensure that the level of visibility for pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles is satisfactory in the interests of highway safety.

15. Prior to the first occupation of the development hereby permitted the proposed access arrangements, on-site car and cycle parking, and turning areas shall be implemented in accordance with the approved plans and retained thereafter available for that specific use.

REASON:- To ensure construction of a satisfactory development and in the interests of highway safety.

16. Prior to the first occupation of the development, the noise mitigation measures detailed in Section 5.2 of "Stamford House, Primett Road, Planning Noise Assessment" Report Reference RK3174/20439/Rev1, Dated 10/12/2021 by Spectrum Acoustic Consultants shall be implemented in full. The measures shall be permanently maintained thereafter unless otherwise agreed in writing by the local planning authority.

REASON:- To ensure satisfactory living conditions for occupants of the development.

17. Prior to the first occupation of the development hereby permitted the proposed communal outdoor amenity space shall be implemented in accordance with the approved plans and retained thereafter available for that specific use.

REASON:- To ensure construction of a satisfactory development and in the interests of the living conditions of future occupants.

18. Upon completion of the drainage works for the site and in accordance with the timing/phasing arrangement, a management and maintenance plan for the SuDS features and drainage network must be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall include:

1. Provision of a complete set of as built drawings for site drainage.
2. Maintenance and operational activities.
3. Arrangements for adoption and any other measures to secure the operation of the scheme throughout its lifetime.

REASON:- To prevent flooding by ensuring the satisfactory storage of/disposal of surface water from the site.

Informatives

1. 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 County Council website at:

<https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/highways-roads-and-pavements/business-and-developer-information/business-licences/business-licences.aspx>

or by telephoning 0300 1234047.

2. 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 County Council website at:

<https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/highways-roads-and-pavements/business-and-developer-information/business-licences/business-licences.aspx>

or by telephoning 0300 1234047.

3. It is an offence under section 148 of the Highways Act 1980 to deposit compost, dung or other material for dressing land, or any rubbish on a made up carriageway, or any or other debris on a highway to the interruption of any highway user. 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 and use thereafter are in a condition such as not to emit dust or deposit mud, slurry or other debris on the highway. Further information is available by telephoning 0300 1234047.

4. The proposed development should achieve Secured by Design (SBD) accreditation in order for it to comply with current Building Regulations. The Police Crime Prevention Design Advisor can be contracted by telephone on 01707 355227

5. Building Regulations

To obtain advice regarding current Building Regulations please contact Hertfordshire Building Control Ltd. by emailing us at building.control@hertfordshirebc.co.uk or phoning us on 01438 879990.

To make a building regulations application please apply through our website portal at <https://www.hertfordshirebc.co.uk/contact-us/> payment can be made online or by phoning the above number after the application has been uploaded. Please phone Hertfordshire Building Control for fees guidance on 01438 879990.

Hertfordshire Building Control can also be contacted by post at Hertfordshire Building Control Ltd, 4th Floor, Campus West, Welwyn Garden City, Hertfordshire, AL8 6BX.

Once a building regulations application has been deposited with relevant drawings and fee building work may commence. You will be advised in their acknowledgement letter of the work stages we need to inspect but in most instances these are usually:

Excavation for foundations
Damp proof course
Concrete oversite

Insulation
Drains (when laid or tested)
Floor and Roof construction
Work relating to fire safety
Work affecting access and facilities for disabled people
Completion

Please phone Hertfordshire Building Control on 01438 879990 before 10.00am to ensure a same day inspection (Mon - Fri).

6. 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.

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 (paragraph 38) and in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015.

10. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

1. The application file, forms, plans and supporting documents having the reference number relating to this item.
2. The Stevenage Local Plan 2011-2031.
4. Stevenage Borough Council Supplementary Planning Documents – Parking Provision and Sustainable Transport SPD (2020); Developer Contributions SPD (2021); The impact of Development on Biodiversity SPD (2020); Design Guide SPD (2009).
5. Hertfordshire County Council Local Transport Plan LTP4 2018-2031
6. Central Government advice contained in the National Planning Policy Framework July 2021 and the National Planning Practice Guidance.
7. Responses to consultations with statutory undertakers and other interested parties referred to in this report.