

Public Document Pack



PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Date: Thursday, 4 June 2026
Time: 6.30pm,
Location: Council Chamber
Contact: Gemma O'Donnell (01438) 242216
committees@stevenage.gov.uk

Members: Councillors: Claire Parris (Chair), Nigel Williams (Vice-Chair), Julie Ashley-Wren, Forhad Chowdhury, Peter Clark, Lynda Guy, Rob Henry, Ellie Plater, Doug Bainbridge CC, Jody Hanafin, Jackie Hollywell and Peter Wilkins

AGENDA

PART 1

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

2. MINUTES FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING

To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the previous meeting held on 07 April 2026
5 – 14

3. TERMS OF REFERENCE - PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

To note the updated Terms of Reference (TORs) for the Planning and Development Committee
15 – 17

4. 26/00197/FP - 37 CHANCELLORS ROAD

To consider an application for planning permission for the change of use from dwelling Class (C3) to dwelling Class (C2) for the care of children and young adults up to the age of 25.
17 – 36

5. 26/00216/FP - 33 JULIANS ROAD

To consider an application for planning permission for the change of use of the previously approved 6no. dwellinghouses (Use Class C3) to 6no. five-bedroom Houses of Multiple Occupation (Use Class C4)
37 – 64

6. 25/00907/FPM - MANOR VIEW

To consider an application for planning permission for the demolition of the existing

vacant care home (Class C2) building and erection of 10 no. dwellings (Class C3) and associated landscaping, car parks and access arrangements
65 – 102

7. 26/00093/FP - GARAGE SITE BETWEEN 29-31 BROADVIEW

To consider an application for planning permission for the demolition of the existing vacant garage block and the erection of 7no. three-bedroom dwellings
103 – 132

8. 26/00250/FP - NORTH END OF THE FAIRLANDS VALLEY PARK FAIRLANDS WAY

To consider an application for planning permission for the installation of a public sculpture. This would comprise a Roman Legionary, a large-scale public sculpture intended for Stevenage as part of the Public Art Commission 2025
133 – 146

9. INFORMATION REPORT - DELEGATED DECISIONS

To note a report on decisions taken by the Assistant Director Planning and Regulatory in accordance with his delegated authority.
147 – 149

10. INFORMATION REPORT - APPEALS/CALLED IN APPLICATIONS

To note a report on decisions taken by the Assistant Director Planning and Regulatory in accordance with his delegated authority.
151 – 152

11. URGENT PART I BUSINESS

To consider any Part I Business accepted by the Chair as urgent.

12. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

To consider the following motions that:

1. Under Section 100(A) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as described in paragraphs 1-7 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act as amended by Local Government (Access to information) (Variation) Order 2006.
2. That Members consider the reasons for the following reports (if any) being in Part II and determine whether or not maintaining the exemption from disclosure of the information contained therein outweighs the public interest in disclosure.

13. HMO REPORT 2025/26 UPDATE

To note the Planning report on the legal status of Houses of Multiple Occupation (HMO) in Stevenage

14. URGENT PART II BUSINESS

To consider any Part II Business accepted by the Chair as urgent.

Agenda Published 26th May 2026

This page is intentionally left blank

STEVENAGE BOROUGH COUNCIL

PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MINUTES

Date: Tuesday, 7 April 2026

Time: 6.30pm

Place: Council Chamber

Present: Councillors: Claire Parris (Chair), Carolina Veres (Vice-Chair), Julie Ashley-Wren, Stephen Booth, Kamal Choudhury, Forhad Chowdhury, Peter Clark, Lynda Guy and Ellie Plater

Start / End Start Time: 18:30

Time: End Time: 19:45

1 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Robert Boyle, Rob Henry and Nigel Williams.

2 **MINUTES FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

The Minutes of the meeting of the Planning & Development Committee held on 12 March 2026 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

3 **24/00451/FPM - ABBEYFIELD 2 POUND AVENUE**

The Committee considered an application for the demolition of an existing vacant care home and the erection of 15 flats on land at the bottom of Pound Avenue, adjacent to Astonia Lodge and nearby residential dwellings.

The Planning Officer presented the site location, photographs of the existing building, surrounding area, and proposed elevations. The proposed development was described as slightly taller than No. 4 Pound Avenue but lower than Astonia Lodge. Floor plans, parking provision (5 spaces), cycle storage, and waste arrangements were outlined. CGI images were also shown to illustrate the proposed scheme.

The Committee was advised that the site constituted previously developed land in a sustainable location with good access to services and transport links. The principle of residential development was considered acceptable and compliant with relevant planning policies.

The design, scale, and massing were considered acceptable within a varied streetscape. The use of appropriate materials and architectural features was expected to enhance the appearance of the currently derelict site.

The Committee noted concerns regarding overlooking and proximity to neighbouring

properties. Separation distances of 19–22 metres were considered acceptable in an urban context. Conditions were proposed requiring obscure glazing to protect privacy. While the building represented an increase in scale, no significant harm to outlook was identified.

It was noted that one flat fell below nationally described space standards; however, this was balanced by larger bedroom provision and was considered acceptable overall.

The proposal included 5 parking spaces, below policy requirements (9 spaces). This was identified as a policy conflict. However, the site was considered highly sustainable, and a recent appeal decision was noted where lack of parking did not justify refusal. Highways officers raised no objections on safety grounds. Members discussed concerns about overspill parking and local congestion. Revised cycle storage provision (21 spaces) was accepted following earlier concerns, with secure and accessible facilities proposed.

The Local Lead Flood Authority raised no objections subject to conditions, and an acceptable drainage strategy was secured. The scheme could not deliver on-site biodiversity net gain; however, the applicant committed to achieving the required 10% gain off-site through credits. This would be secured by condition. Waste and recycling arrangements were considered acceptable and sustainable construction measures would be secured by condition.

Members raised concerns regarding:

- Lack of affordable housing
- Insufficient parking provision and potential overspill
- Substandard size of one unit
- Loss of care home use

Members also highlighted the benefits of redeveloping a vacant brownfield site and delivering much-needed housing.

Members were informed that policy required 25% affordable housing (4 units). However, the applicant submitted a viability appraisal demonstrating that the scheme was not financially viable with affordable housing or contributions. This was independently reviewed, and both assessments concluded the scheme would result in a deficit. It was therefore accepted that no affordable housing or Section 106 contributions could be secured. The development would remain liable for Community Infrastructure Levy payments.

Concerns regarding the loss of the care home were noted; however, the building had been vacant since 2020 and was no longer viable for that use. Questions were raised regarding parking management, construction impacts, and enforcement of conditions. Officers clarified that would be the responsibility of the relevant local authority.

It was noted that a Construction Management Plan would be required to mitigate impacts, including avoiding school drop-off and pick-up times. Swift bricks and biodiversity enhancements were discussed and would be addressed

via conditions where possible.

The Officer concluded that, although there were policy conflicts (notably lack of affordable housing and parking shortfall), these did not significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits of the scheme. The application was therefore recommended for approval.

A recorded vote* was taken on the application and it was **RESOLVED** that planning permission be GRANTED subject to the conditions set out below and delegated authority be given to the Director of Planning and Regulation in consultation with the Chair of the Planning and Development Committee, to amend or add to the conditions subject to which the permission would be granted, where such amendments or additions would satisfy the relevant national policy tests and would most effectively deliver the development which the Committee has resolved to approve:

1. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: 23069-0000-P1; 23069-0100-P1; 23069-0101-P1; ASC.23.521; 23069-0300-P1; 23069-1100-P3; 23069-1101-P2; 23069-1102-P2; 23069-1300-P4; 23069-1103-P2;
2. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.
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 Monday to Friday and 08:00 hours to 13:00 hours on Saturdays. For the avoidance of doubt, no such activity shall take place on Sundays or Bank Holidays, unless otherwise agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.
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.
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.
6. Any trees or plants comprised within the scheme of landscaping, which within a period of five years from the completion of the development die, are removed or become seriously damaged or diseased shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of similar size and species, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

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

8. The development hereby approved shall be carried out in accordance with the Noise Impact Assessment prepared by IEC Limited, reference IEC/4552/01/AVH dated 08.12.2023 and subsequent Technical Note reference IEC001 dated 01.08.2024 unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

9. At least 50% of the residential units are Category 2: Accessible and Adaptable dwellings.

10. The development will be constructed as per the approved documents including the minimum Finished Floor Level (FFL) of 90.9 mAOD. This is to ensure that the development should be appropriately flood resistant and resilient such that, in the event of a flood, it could be quickly brought back into use without significant refurbishment.

11. The first floor windows in the eastern side elevation of the development hereby approved shall be glazed with obscured glass and shall be fixed so as to be incapable of being opened below a height of 1.7 metres above floor level, and shall be retained in that form thereafter.

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

- a) Construction vehicle numbers, type, routing;
- b) Access arrangements to the site;
- c) Traffic management requirements;
- d) Construction and storage compounds (including areas designated for car parking);
- 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) Phasing Plan.

13. No development shall take place (including site clearance and demolition) until details of tree protection measures for the trees to the south of the application site

and any trees on the site have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The tree protection measures as approved shall be implemented prior to commencement of development and remain in place until the development has been completed. Within the tree protection areas to be fenced off there shall be no alteration to the ground level and they shall be kept clear of vehicles, materials, surplus soil, temporary buildings, plant and machinery.

14. No development shall take place (including site clearance and demolition) until a Site Waste Management Plan (SWMP) for the site has been submitted to the Local Planning Authority and approved in consultation with the Waste Planning Authority. The SWMP should aim to reduce the amount of waste produced on site and should contain information including estimated types and quantities of waste to arise from construction and waste management actions for each waste type. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved SWMP.

15. Prior to the commencement of development, construction drawings of the surface water drainage network, associated sustainable drainage components and flow control mechanisms and a construction method statement shall be submitted and agreed in writing by the local planning authority. The scheme shall then be constructed as per the agreed drawings, method statement, Drainage Strategy and Drawings (Drainage Strategy and Drawing Rev P6, dated 15 December 2025) and remaining in perpetuity for the lifetime of the development unless agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. No alteration to the agreed drainage scheme shall occur without prior written approval from the Local Authority.

16. 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 of the development hereby permitted have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

17. No development shall take place above slab level until details of measures to address adaptation to climate change have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. These measures shall then be implemented and permanently maintained in accordance with the approved details.

18. No development shall take place above slab level until details of the treatment of all boundaries including details of any walls, fences, gates or other means of enclosure shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to the commencement of development. The approved boundary treatments shall be completed before the use hereby permitted is commenced or before the building(s) is occupied.

19. No development shall take place above slab level until there has been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority a scheme of soft and hard landscaping and details of the treatment of all hard surfaces. The scheme shall include details of all existing trees and hedgerows on the land and details showing all trees to be removed, or retained, together with details of all new planting to take place including species, size and method of planting.

20. No development shall take place above slab level until a scheme for the provision of adequate water supplies and fire hydrants, necessary for firefighting purposes at the site, has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall not be occupied until the scheme has been implemented in accordance with the approved details.

21. No development shall take place above slab level until details of integrated swift bricks and bat boxes to be provided within the development have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The development shall then be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

22. Prior to the first occupation of the dwellings hereby permitted the parking provision as shown on the approved plans, shall be constructed, hardsurfaced and made ready for use. Any new areas of hardstanding created, or existing areas which are replaced, shall be constructed in a porous material or provision shall be made for a sustainable urban drainage system (SuDS) to be built into the hardsurfaced areas. Once provided the parking facilities shall be retained in that form and thereafter be used for the parking of vehicles only.

23. Prior to the first occupation of the dwellinghouses hereby permitted, all parking spaces shall be provided with the underlying infrastructure for connection to the electricity network to enable them to be served by an electric vehicle charging point.

24. Prior to the first occupation of the dwellings hereby permitted, the cycle storage as shown on approved plan 23069-1100-P3, for the storage of not less than 20 cycles in a single storey formation shall be implemented accordingly. The cycle storage shall be retained and maintained accordingly during the lifetime of the development.

25. Prior to the first occupation of the dwellings hereby permitted, the waste and recycling storage area as shown on plan 23069-1100-P3 shall be implemented accordingly. The storage shall be retained and maintained accordingly during the lifetime of the development.

26. The development hereby approved shall not be occupied until details of the maintenance and management of the sustainable drainage scheme have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The drainage scheme shall be implemented prior to the first occupation of the development hereby approved and thereafter managed and maintained in accordance with the approved details in perpetuity. The Local Planning Authority shall be granted access to inspect the sustainable drainage scheme for the lifetime of the development. The details of the scheme to be submitted for approval shall include:

- i. a timetable for its implementation.
- ii. details of SuDS feature and connecting drainage structures and maintenance requirement for each aspect including a drawing showing where they are located.
- iii. a management and maintenance plan for the lifetime of the development which shall include the arrangements for adoption by any public body or statutory undertaker, or any other arrangements to secure the operation of the sustainable

drainage scheme throughout its lifetime. This will include the name and contact details of any appointed management company. Hertfordshire County Council

27. Upon completion of the surface water drainage system, including any SuDS features, and prior to the first use of the development; a survey and verification report from an independent surveyor shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The survey and report shall demonstrate that the surface water drainage system has been constructed in accordance with the details approved pursuant to condition 15. Where necessary, details of corrective works to be carried out along with a timetable for their completion, shall be included for approval in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Any corrective works required shall be carried out in accordance with the approved timetable and subsequently re-surveyed with the findings submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

The Council has acted Pro-Actively for the following reason:-

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

***Recorded Vote**

For – Councillors Julie Ashley-Wren, Forhad Chowdhury, Kamal Choudhury, Peter Clark, Lynda Guy, Claire Parris, Ellie Plater, and Carolina Veres

Against – Stephen Booth

Abstentions – 0

Absent – Councillors Robert Boyle, Coleen De Freitas, Akin Elekolusi, Rob Henry & Nigel Williams

4 **26/00112/FPH - 60 UPLANDS STEVENAGE**

The Committee considered an application for the erection of a first-floor side extension at 60 Uplands, located within the Chells Manor Ward. The proposal related to an extension above an existing garage and dining room of a two-storey linked detached property.

Members were advised that the property currently benefitted from a front driveway laid in block paving, providing space for two vehicles. It was noted that the existing garage had internal dimensions of approximately 2.25 metres by 5.02 metres, which

fell below the Council's standard of 3 metres by 6 metres and therefore was not counted as a formal parking space.

The proposed development comprised a first-floor extension to provide a study, storeroom, and ensuite bathroom. Officers advised that the design was proportionate in accordance with relevant Council policies.

Photographs of the site and surrounding context were presented, including front and rear elevations. Members noted the relationship of the property to neighbouring dwellings, including Nos. 59 and 63.

The Committee was informed that the application had been brought before Members because the applicant was a member of staff. Officers confirmed that the proposal was considered acceptable and recommended approval.

In response to a question from Members, officers clarified that the extension was intended solely for use as part of the existing single household. It was confirmed that the development did not involve subdivision or use as separate accommodation.

The Council has acted Pro-Actively for the following reason:-

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

A recorded vote* was taken on the application and it was **RESOLVED** that planning permission be **GRANTED** subject to the conditions set out below:

1. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: Site Location Plan; P1; P2; P3

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

3. The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall match the materials used in the construction of the original building to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority.

***Recorded Vote**

For – Councillors Julie Ashley-Wren, Stephen Booth, Forhad Chowdhury, Peter Clark, Lynda Guy, Claire Parris, Ellie Plater, and Carolina Veres

Against – 0

Abstentions – 0

Absent – Councillors Robert Boyle, Kamal Choudhury, Coleen De Freitas, Akin Elekolusi, Rob Henry & Nigel Williams

Members raised a question regarding an application which was granted planning permission.

Officers advised that planning applications could be determined under delegated powers, and that members were able to make representations or request a call-in only during the statutory consultation period.

Members were advised to review the weekly planning applications list to ensure they were aware of relevant submissions.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Information Report – Delegated Decisions be noted.

6 **INFORMATION REPORT - APPEALS/CALLED IN APPLICATIONS**

It was **RESOLVED** that the Information Report – Appeals / Called In Decisions be noted.

7 **URGENT PART I BUSINESS**

There was no Urgent Part I Business.

8 **EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

It was **RESOLVED**:

1. That under Section 100(A) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as described in paragraphs 1 – 7 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act as amended by Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006.

2. That Members consider the reasons for the following reports being in Part II and determine whether or not maintaining the exemption from disclosure of the information contained therein outweighs the public interest in disclosure.

9 **URGENT PART II BUSINESS**

There was no Urgent Part II Business.

CHAIR

This page is intentionally left blank

PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

1. Membership – 13
2. Quorum - 4
3. Terms of Reference
- 3.1 To advise the Cabinet on the following:
 - (i) Identification of consumer needs for services related to planning and development services and facilities functions of the Committee, and recommendations on the development of services and facilities to meet them, including:

Land use plans and policy, including local plans
Employment and economic development
Development management services

and advising the Leader / Cabinet / Council accordingly;
 - (ii) Management and maintenance of planning and development related facilities and services in item (i), including employment and training facilities and services;
 - (iii) Monitoring and review of performance in relation to the provision and development of planning and development services and facilities, including employment and training facilities and services, whether provided by the Director Planning and Regulation, other Council Service Delivery Units, or outside contractors and advising the Leader/Cabinet/Council accordingly;
 - (iv) The promotion of the economic development of Stevenage, and of specific industrial/commercial land and premises within Stevenage, as to use and development and, where appropriate, about monitoring negotiations for development and redevelopment;
 - (v) Development and encouragement of local businesses, employment and training initiatives, with co-ordination and implementation by the Leader / Cabinet as appropriate.
 - (vi) The allocation and monitoring of grant aid and loans to local employment and training initiatives.
- 3.2 Responsibility for Development Management, including Listed Building Control - determination of planning applications, and enforcement matters under planning regulations.

- 3.3 Responsibility for Building Control - determination of applications under the Building Regulations, and enforcement matters under planning and building legislation.
- 3.4 Responsibility for the determination of Countryside Management and Tree Preservation matters, including the making of Tree Preservation Orders and related matters, and including consultation with appropriate outside bodies.
- 3.5 Matters imposed or permitted by legislation in relation to the functions of the Committee.
- 3.6 Insofar as they are not already referred to in these terms of reference, those relevant powers set out in Schedule 1 of the Local Authorities (Functions and Responsibilities) (England) Regulations as amended (see Table 2 of Part 3 of this Constitution); as clarified by regulations, subject to them being dealt with, as appropriate, by officers under delegated powers. This is to include the making of charges for any approval, licence or registration etc., in relation to the powers referred to.
- 3.7 Insofar as they are not already referred to in these terms of reference, those local choice functions set out at Table 3 of Part 3 of the Council's Constitution.
- 3.8 Any other appropriate matter referred.

Meeting: Planning and Development Committee **Agenda Item:** 1

Date: 4th June 2026

Author: Aliya Muskaan Khalil

Lead Officer: Alex Robinson

Contact Officer: Aliya Muskaan Khalil

Application No : 26/00197/FP

Location : 37 Chancellors Road Stevenage

Proposal : Change of use from dwelling Class (C3) to dwelling Class (C2) for the care of children and young adults up to the age of 25

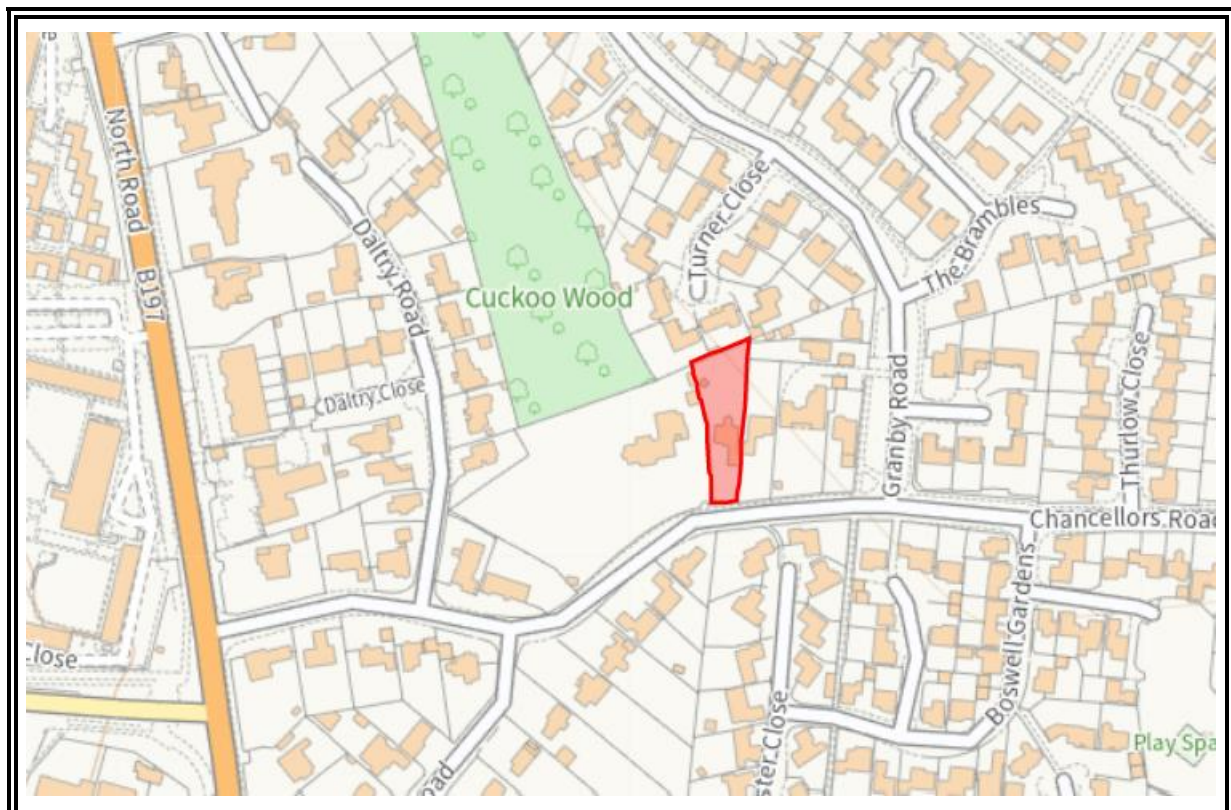
Drawing Nos.: 26007 - 001 including Existing Plan; 26007 - 010;

Applicant : Jeeves Property Ltd

Agent: Mr Joe Reader

Date Valid: 31 March 2026

Recommendation: GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION



1. SITE DESCRIPTION

- 1.1 The application site currently comprises a large four-bedroom detached dwellinghouse on the northern side of Chancellors Road. To the north, east, south, and west are residential dwellings and to the west is the highway of North Road with residential dwellings beyond.

2. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

- 2.1 The site has the following planning history on file:

00/00484/TPTPO - Consent to carry out works to a tree, the subject of a Tree Preservation Order (TPO14, T9). Consent granted for the works to the trees on the 14th of December 2000.

01/00518/TPTPO - Reduction of branches and pruning to two Oaks (T6 and T7) protected by a Tree Preservation Order (TPO14). Consent granted for the works to the trees on the 21st of February 2002.

10/00304/FP - Replacement rear conservatory. This was granted planning permission on the 27th of August 2010.

11/00207/TPTPO - Reduction by 30% of 1no. oak (T9) and 1no. ash tree (G2) protected by tree preservation order 14. The proposed works to the trees was refused on the 25th of May 2011.

17/00440/TPTPO - Thinning of crown to 2no. oak trees (T9 & T10) and 1no. elm tree (G2) protected by TPO 14. Consent granted for the works to the trees on the 24th of August 2017.

18/00689/TPTPO - Reduction of crown by 25% on 1no. oak tree (T7) protected by Tree Preservation Order 14. Consent granted for the works to the trees on the 11th of January 2019.

18/00775/TPTPO - Reduction of crown by 3/4 metres on 2no. oak trees (T9 and T10) and reduction of crown by 2/3 metres on 1no. elm tree (within G2) protected by TPO14. Consent granted for the works to the trees on the 8th of February 2019.

25/00392/TPTPO - Removal of T2: Medlar, T6: Oak, T7: Oak, T9 and T10: Oak, protected by Tree Preservation Order 14. This application was withdrawn on the 5th of June 2025.

3. THE CURRENT APPLICATION

- 3.1 This application seeks planning permission for the change of use from dwelling Class (C3) to dwelling Class (C2) for the care of children and young adults up to the age of 25.
- 3.2 The application comes before the committee as it has been called-in by Councillor Bibby. The Councillor called in this application in terms of impact on the character of the street scene, impact on neighbouring properties and impact on residential amenity.

4. PUBLIC REPRESENTATIONS

- 4.1 Following notification of the application via letters and the erection of site notices, public representations including in the form of petitions have been received from the following properties:

- Chancellors Road: 4; 5; 9; 11; 12; 14; 16; 18; 27; 39; 41; 101; 103; 107; 110; 111; 113; 115; 117; 118; 123; 137.
- Granby Road: 1 Appletree House; 2 Appletree House; 3 Appletree House; 4 Appletree House; 10; 12; 14; 16; 16A; 22; 27; 29; 30; 32; 34; 36; 59; 61; 65; 67; 79; 71.
- Boswell Gardens: 2; 3; 4; 5; 6; 8; 10; 11; 13; 14; 16; 18; 19; 20; 22; 27; 30.
- The Brambles: 2; 3; 5; 6; 8; 9; 11; 13; 14; 18; 21.
- Woodfield Road: Squirrels Drey, 1; 3; 4; 5; 6; 11; 14; 16; 18.
- Foster Close: 2; 3; 5; 6; 7; 10; 11; 12; 15.
- Daltry Road: 5; 11; 9; 15; 19; 20; 21; 28; 30; 32.
- Thurlow Close: 2; 10; 11; 12; 13; 14; 16; 17.
- Morgan Close: 1; 3; 4; 5; 7; 8; 9; 10.
- Wilson Close: 1; 2; 4; 5; 6; 7.
- Turner Close: 2; 3; 4; 6; 7; 9.
- Newbury Close: 1; 3; 5; 6; 8.
- Daltry Close: 1; 3; 4.
- Chouler Gardens: 1; 7.
- Matthews Close: 11; 15.
- Walker Mead: 21.
- Arnold Close: 9.
- Underwood Road: 3.
- Kenmare Close: 1.

4.2 A summary of the comments received are set out below:

- Unsuitable location;
- Cumulative impact and clustering (3 similar facilities within 500 metres);
- Change to the tranquil residential character of the area;
- Increased activity, noise, disturbance, traffic and parking pressures;
- Inclusion of adults aged 18-25;
- Insufficient clarity on management operational arrangements;
- Inappropriate location for people with complex needs;
- Impact on street scene;
- Impact on residential amenity;
- Site security and overlooking concerns;
- Noise disturbances for residential amenities;
- Procedural integrity and reliability of the application;
- Highway safety and visibility;
- Material change of use from C3 to C2;
- Surrounding residents being fearful of young adults with behavioural problems living in the area;
- Lower value the value of properties and make it difficult to sell affect house prices;
- Shortage of aspirational houses;
- Ecology concerns;
- Records of crime at similar facilities.

4.3 The aforementioned is not a verbatim copy of the objections which have been raised. Full copies are available on the Council's website.

5. CONSULTATIONS

- 5.1. Environmental Health – Comments received 12th March 2026: “No noise assessment or mitigation proposals have been submitted and therefore if the Local Planning Authority (LPA) is minded to give consent to the application I recommend that the following [noise and disturbance management plan] condition is used.

I would also encourage the LPA to restrict the number of children/residents that may stay at the property, at any one time, to the number set out in the submitted Planning Statement, i.e. four.”

- 5.2. Hertfordshire County Council Highways – Comments received 25th March 2026: “Notice is given under article 22 of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 that Hertfordshire County Council as Highway Authority does not wish to restrict the grant of permission.” [subject to informatives]
- 5.3. Crime Prevention Design Service – Comments received 2nd of April 2026: “My comments are made from a security, safety and crime prevention perspective only. I do have substantive concerns regarding this application as I do not feel security and crime prevention have been properly considered and therefore I am unable to support this application.”
- 5.4. Environmental Health – Comments received 9th April 2026: “I have reviewed the documents submitted in relation to this application, after my earlier memorandum of 12th March 2026, and they do not materially change my advice offered to the Local Planning Authority (LPA).”
- 5.5. Hertfordshire County Council Highways – Comments received 21st April 2026: “The highway authority considers that; the proposed development is small in scale and would not generate significant number of additional trips to the site that may have unacceptable impacts to the local highway network. So, taking all into account, the highway authority does not wish to object the development.”
- 5.6. Crime Prevention Design Service – Comments received 23rd of April 2026: “The role of the Designing Out Crime Officer within the Secured by Design team is to provide proportionate, risk-based advice aimed at reducing opportunities for crime and anti-social behaviour through good design. Our recommendations are grounded in established best practice and are offered to assist applicants in creating safe and sustainable environments.

While engagement with this advice is not mandatory, it is generally well received and often adopted, in full or in part, by applicants seeking to enhance the overall safety and resilience of their developments. I note the points raised in your response and confirm that no further comment will be made on this occasion.”

6. RELEVANT PLANNING POLICIES

6.1 The Development Plan

6.1.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that planning applications be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. For Stevenage, the statutory development plan comprises the following documents:

- The Stevenage Borough Council Local Plan 2011-2031 (adopted 2019)
- The Hertfordshire Waste Core Strategy & Development Management Policies Development Plan Document 2011-2026 (adopted 2012)
- The Hertfordshire Waste Site Allocations Development Plan Document 2011-2026 (adopted 2014)
- The Hertfordshire Minerals Local Plan Review 2002-2016 (adopted 2007)

6.2 National Planning Policy Framework

6.2.1 The latest revision of the NPPF was published in December 2024. The policies it contains are material considerations which will be taken into account in dealing with applications. Due weight will be given to development plan policies according to their degree of consistency with the NPPF. The NPPF should be read as a whole (including its footnotes and annexes).

6.3 Planning Practice Guidance

6.3.1 The Planning Practice Guidance (“PPG”), with which Members are fully familiar, is an online resource containing guidance supplementing the NPPF. The PPG is a material consideration which should be taken into account in determining planning applications.

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

6.4.1 The Stevenage Borough Local Plan 2011-2031 was adopted in 2019. Weight must be given to the policies it contains according to their degree of consistency with the NPPF (the closer the policies in the plan to the policies in the NPPF, the greater the weight that may be given).

6.4.2. In addition, the council is required to regard the local plan policies most relevant to determining the application as out-of-date because the application involves the provision of housing and the delivery of housing in the borough was substantially below the housing requirement over the last three years. Those policies are:

Policy SP1: Presumption in favour of sustainable development;
Policy SP2: Sustainable development in Stevenage;
Policy SP5: Infrastructure;
Policy SP6: Sustainable transport;
Policy SP7: High quality homes;
Policy SP8: Good design;
Policy SP9: Healthy communities;
Policy SP11: Climate change, flooding and pollution;
Policy SP12: Green infrastructure and the natural environment;
Policy SP13: The historic environment;
Policy IT5: Parking and access;
Policy HO6: Redevelopment of existing homes;
Policy HO10: Sheltered and supported housing;
Policy HC5: New health, social and community facilities;
Policy GD1: High quality design;
Policy FP7: Pollution;

6.4.3 According to the NPPF, the fact that these policies are regarded as out-of-date means that permission should be granted for the proposed development unless: i. the application of policies in the NPPF that protect areas or assets of particular importance provide a strong reason for refusing the development; or ii. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the NPPF taken as a whole, having particular regard to key policies for directing development to sustainable locations, making effective use of land, securing well-designed places and providing affordable homes, individually or in combination.

6.5 Local Plan Review and Update (2024)

- 6.5.1 The council concluded a full review of the plan in 2024, as required by regulation 10A of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended).
- 6.5.2. In response to the review, the council has proposed a partial update of the local plan. Weight must be given to the emerging policies in the partial update according to: a) the stage of preparation of the emerging plan; b) the extent to which there are unresolved objections to the policies; and c) the degree of consistency between the policies and the most recent revision of the NPPF.
- 6.5.3. At the time of writing, the partial update has undergone examination by the Secretary of State, and the major modifications consultation has closed. The partial update is at an advanced stage of preparation, and the council considers the emerging policies within it to have a high degree of consistency with the NPPF. Where relevant, the weight to be given to emerging policies will be set out in the assessment section of this report.

6.6 Supplementary Planning Documents

- 6.6.1 The following supplementary planning documents are relevant to determining the application:
- Parking Provision Supplementary Planning Document (February 2025)

6.7 Community Infrastructure Levy

- 6.7.1 Stevenage Borough Council adopted a Community Infrastructure Levy (“CIL”) 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.

7. APPRAISAL

- 7.1 The main issues in the assessment of the application are the acceptability in land use policy terms, impact on the character and appearance of the surrounding area, impact on residential amenity and car parking provision.
- 7.1.1 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 Principle of Development

7.2 Land Use Policy Considerations

- 7.2.1 Paragraph 61 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (December 2024) sets out that the overall aim should be to meet as much of an area’s identified housing need as possible, including with an appropriate mix of housing types for the local community.
- 7.2.2 The loss of the existing single-family dwelling must be recognised, as this would have a negative impact on general housing supply. It is also important to note that the existing dwelling qualifies as an “aspirational” home, for which there is an identified shortage within the Borough. However, it is considered that the adverse impacts of this loss would be outweighed by the provision of a care home for children, for which there is an identified shortfall, and as such, the proposal is compliant with Policy SP7 overall.

- 7.2.3 Policy HO6 of the adopted Local Plan (2019) states that planning permission for schemes resulting in the change of use or redevelopment of existing homes for non-residential purposes will be granted where:
- a) It would provide a small-scale social, health, community or leisure facility or a small-scale extension to an existing business use in the same building;
 - b) It would not adversely affect the surrounding or adjoining properties; and
 - c) A suitable, alternative non-residential site is not available for the proposed use.
- 7.2.4 The aforementioned policy also states that planning permission for residential schemes resulting in a net loss of housing will be granted where it provides demonstrable benefits against the relevant housing policies of this plan. Policy HO10 of the same document stipulates that planning permission for sheltered and supported housing schemes will be granted where the site is well served by passenger transport, there is good access to local services and facilities, there is an appropriate level of amenity space and car parking provision, and the proposal is appropriate to its locality.
- 7.2.5 Turning to Policy HC5, this states that planning permission for new health, social and community facilities on an unallocated site, would be granted where there is:
- An identified need for the facility;
 - The site is appropriately located in terms of its location and accessibility; and
 - The facility is integrated with existing health, social or community facilities, where appropriate.
- 7.2.6 The proposed development seeks a change of use of the existing property (Use Class C3) to a residential care home (Use Class C2) for up to 4 people aged up to 25. The people would live with carers as a single household, although the carers would not live at the property, working on a shift basis. The property would not be altered internally or externally and would continue to be laid out as a typical dwellinghouse where there is a kitchen, dining room and living room area where the people and carers would interact.
- 7.2.7 The applicant advises that there is a shortfall in spaces in Hertfordshire for local children and they often find themselves placed into care homes many miles from their family. They state that there is “a demand for supported care of children in this area. The existing institutions are failing to cope with the number of local childcare housing needs; this application looks to help alleviate this issue.”
- 7.2.8 In terms of siting and location, the development would be approximately 1km from the Sainsbury’s superstore on Hitchin Road. The Saint John Henry Newman secondary school is within 1km, and Barclay Academy and Thomas Alleyne secondary school is within 2km of the site. Almond Hill Junior School and Woolenwick Infant and Nursery schools are also in close proximity. North Road, which is adjacent to Chancellors Road, is well serviced with public transport and the Lister Hospital is very close by to the north. Given this, the site is well served by alternative forms of transport with good access to local services and facilities.
- 7.2.9 The question of whether the proposal is appropriate to its locality is a broad one and also covers matters of detail (e.g., appearance) as well as matters of principle (i.e., land use). Strictly from a land use perspective, the proposal is considered to be appropriate for its locality because it is, fundamentally, a proposal for a residential use within an established residential area which is not significantly constrained by Local Plan designations or environmental factors. Of course, the proposal would amount to a different type of residential use of the site than the existing use as a single-family dwelling but not to the extent that it would be inherently incompatible with its location.
- 7.2.10 Having regard to the above, despite the loss of a 1no. four-bedroom dwellinghouse, there are benefits of the development which outweigh its loss. In particular, the proposal would provide a fundamental residential facility for children and young persons where there is an identified need for such facilities. The development would also generate additional employment which is also considered to be a benefit as it supports one of the fundamental aims of the NPPF which is to also deliver sustainable economic development. Therefore, it is considered that the principle of the proposed development

in land use policy terms is acceptable subject to its impact on the appearance of the area and on residential amenities. These are assessed in the following sections of this report.

7.3 Impact on Residential / Neighbouring Amenity

- 7.3.1 The proposed development under this application does not consist of or include any external alterations such as new openings (i.e., additional windows and doors being installed) or extensions to the existing property. Therefore, the proposed development would not impact on the level of privacy and outlook currently enjoyed by neighbouring properties over and above the current situation.
- 7.3.2 Turning to noise which could potentially be generated by the development, the Council's Environmental Health Officer has raised no concerns in this regard. Further, 4 people up the age of 25 living in the property would be in line with that expected of a 4-bedroom family dwelling. However, if there are any statutory nuisances generated by the development, such as noise, in the future then the Council's Environmental Health Department under the Environmental Protection Act 1990 have powers to enforce against this. Furthermore, a condition has been imposed as per the recommendation of the Environmental Health Officer for a noise and noise and disturbance management plan to be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to the occupation as a C2 dwellinghouse.
- 7.3.3 Concerns from local residents regarding a C2 dwellinghouse for children and young people with emotional and behavioural difficulties (EBD) and learning disabilities as not being acceptable in this residential area are noted. However, the use of the premises as a home for children has been assessed to be acceptable in this location and it is not considered that a home occupied by 4 children with staff would be materially different to that of a large single family.
- 7.3.4 This viewpoint has been upheld at a recent appeal in November 2023 (APP/F1040/W/23/3319968, 61 Ashby Road, Woodville, Derbyshire) whereby the Inspector found that a detached five-bedroom family home could accommodate a large family which could include adult children or children with additional needs. He went on to conclude that the proposed conversion would not intensify the use of the site beyond that which is already possible and consequently the level, and character, of noise generated on site by residents would not be dissimilar to a scenario that could occur at the existing dwelling, without planning permission. Further, he stated that although there is a difference between the use of a property as a C3 dwellinghouse and a C2 care home, given the scale of the proposal, the appreciable difference with regards to the living conditions of neighbouring occupiers would not be unacceptable. This decision is pertinent to the application which is before the Council in that it would have similar characteristics to that outlined in the aforementioned appeal decision.
- 7.3.5 In regards to the amenities for the clients at the property, there is an existing private garden area to the rear which measures at least 450m², and which is currently enclosed with a mixture of timber fencing. Given this, the living standards for the clients who would reside within the property would be acceptable in this instance.
- 7.3.6 A large number of local residents raised concerns regarding the clustering of a number of care homes within 500m of the application site, such as Oak Lodge, Rectory Lane (approximately 300m to the south-east of the application site), and 25 North Road (approximately 650m to the south-west of the application site). These are functionally separate sites, with no planning connections other than for the use of the site, and are not located on the same street or within the immediate vicinity of the application site.
- 7.3.7 The applicant has provided a statement on 31st of March 2026 (available to view on the public file titled 'Planning Statement'). Page 3 of this document emphasises that the institution will be registered with Ofsted who will carry out a full inspection of the property and assess the risk assessments which have been carried out by the applicant. If they conclude that the property is unsuitable or that children placed in the home will not be safe, then registration is denied, and the home cannot operate. Ofsted will also carry

out regular checks, both announced and unannounced, of the property, staff, and children's welfare and if at any time they find the management of the home to be wanting in any areas, they reserve the right to enforce the closure of the property. This will ensure that the property is managed satisfactorily, and neighbouring amenities are protected from poor management. In addition, the quality of care provided at the site would be governed by a separate regulatory regime under the Department for Education and Ofsted. Government policy requires local planning authorities to a) not attempt to replicate other regulatory regimes and b) assume that those other regimes operate effectively.

- 7.3.8 With those two things in mind, we need to assess the application on the basis that anyone could be managing the site but that whoever that happens to be, they would be regulated effectively by DfE and Ofsted. As such, the identity of the parties involved who would be overseeing this care home is irrelevant to the application from a planning perspective.
- 7.3.9 Concerns from local residents regarding the 'type' of children who would reside at the home are noted, as well as concerns regarding anti-social behaviour. Case Law suggests that anti-social behaviour and fear of crime can be material planning considerations where there is evidential basis for that fear. The Hertfordshire Sufficiency Statement (April) produced by Herts County Council states there are currently 996 children requiring care in Hertfordshire. Of these, 362 are placed outside of Hertfordshire. This is due to a lack of suitable, available places within Hertfordshire. Clearly there is an evidenced need for the proposed development to address the shortfall in places, and whilst 4 spaces would not make a significant improvement in the deficiencies, it nonetheless is a benefit to the proposal and those children and young people requiring care.
- 7.3.10 Anti-social behaviour is not an absolute certainty and can, and does, arise in any residential setting. It should be noted that the applicant has provided additional statements since the initial submission which detail how the property would be regulated by Ofsted and it is further noted that the applicant would work with Herts Police to ensure the property is satisfactorily designed and secured to Police standards.
- 7.3.11 The NSPCC website states that research shows that looked after children tend to have poorer outcomes in education attainment and mental and physical health when compared to children who have not been in, or needed to be in, care. However, when comparing looked after children to other children in need, this is not the case and studies have shown that looked after children have better outcomes than children in need. Other studies have found that most looked after children will say their experiences have been good and it was the right choice for them. Therefore, there is no evidence to say that children in the proposed care home will be any more likely to subscribe to anti-social behaviour than other children. With good care and management, any anti-social behaviour that does arise would be dealt with by the managers and owner of the premises, and the relevant regulatory authorities.
- 7.3.12 Crime data as per the Freedom of Information request under: FOI2026/03383, has been submitted by the applicant as a Supporting Document received on the 15th of May.
- 7.3.13 Herts Police Crime Prevention Design Advisor (CPDA) initially raised concerns with regards to a lack of secure office for staff and no liaison between the applicant and themselves in relation to obtaining Secured By Design. They noted seventy-five crime incidents as a combined statistic for both 25 North Road and 23 Rectory Lane, but the data cannot tell us if that was people passing through or residents causing the disturbance. Of these, 29 were a Missing Persons report as legally required for safeguarding reasons, and 23 Concern of Safety reports. It is confirmed that no crimes has taken place on site as per the Supporting Document.
- 7.3.14 Despite this, the crime data is not an accurate predictor of whether the proposed development would cause harm to residential amenity. It is noted that the CPDA did not raise concerns over the principal of the proposed use nor the operation of the premises

as a children's care home. Following the provision of additional information, the applicant has confirmed that it would be a staffed environment with 24/7 supervision, ensuring continuous oversight of access and activity, including overnight cover, a ground floor office base, allowing staff to monitor entry and exit in real time, controlled access to the property, with staff managed entry at all times (the home will not operate as an open-access environment) installation of window restrictors where appropriate to prevent unauthorised access or egress, use of secure locking systems to external doors and vulnerable access points, consideration of the flat roof area, with operational controls and supervision mitigating any potential misuse, appropriate external lighting to support visibility and natural surveillance and use of SBD-compliant key safes where required for secure access management. This information had been sent to the Designing Out Crime Officer, who raised no objections.

- 7.3.15 It is also important to highlight that the home would operate under the Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015 and would be subject to ongoing oversight by Ofsted and the Placing Authority. This includes strict safeguarding protocols, staffing ratios, and operational controls which extend significantly beyond physical security design measures alone.
- 7.3.16 The safety and security of the property and residents would be monitored 24 hours a day which exceeds that of a normal family home.
- 7.3.17 Many local residents expressed concern that allowing this application could lead to an intensification of use in future or change to other types of institutions covered by a C2 use. A condition has been agreed with the applicant that would restrict the premises to a children's care home for 4 children. Any deviations from this would require planning permission in order that the Council can fully assess the impacts of any change.
- 7.3.18 On balance, it is considered that the unmet needs of Hertfordshire children are significant, and the proposed development would help address the shortfall in demand. Further, being children, there is a need to be located in a sustainable location, close to educational facilities. The site has been assessed to be in such a location which is afforded some weight in favour of the application.
- 7.3.19 The fear of crime and anti-social behaviour are valid concerns and so are accepted as material considerations. However, the applicant has provided details of how the proposed development would be regulated and run by qualified and experienced staff and equipped with modern security arrangements. As such, the substantial benefits of providing suitable and acceptable housing for children in an accessible location outweigh the identified harms, and there is no justifiable reason to warrant the refusal of planning permission.

7.4 Car Parking and Cycle Provision

National Planning Policy Framework and Planning Practice Guidance

- 7.4.1 Chapter 9. (Promoting Sustainable Transport) of the NPPF (2024) sets out a requirement to consider transport issues, which includes parking, at the earliest stages of a development proposal. Paragraph 116 of the NPPF (2024) states "*Development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe.*". Taking this into consideration, paragraph 117 of the NPPF (2024) stipulates that applications for development should:

- a) give priority first to pedestrian and cycle movements, both within the scheme and with neighbouring areas; and second – so far as possible – to facilitating access to high quality public transport, with layouts that maximise the catchment area for bus or other public transport services, and appropriate facilities that encourage public transport use;

- b) address the needs of people with disabilities and reduced mobility in relation to all modes of transport;
- c) create places that are safe, secure and attractive – which minimise the scope for conflicts between pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles, avoid unnecessary street clutter, and respond to local character and design standards;
- d) allow for the efficient delivery of goods, and access by service and emergency vehicles; and
- e) be designed to enable charging of plug-in and other ultra-low emission vehicles in safe, accessible and convenient locations.

7.4.2 Policy IT5 of the local plan requires developments to provide parking in accordance with the council's Parking Provision SPD (2025). Policy SP6 (Sustainable Transport), has been significantly updated in the Local Plan Partial Review and requires, amongst other things, for developments to demonstrate they are in a sustainable location and will promote active travel by non-car modes of transport by providing appropriate cycle parking and prioritise public transport.

7.4.3 The nearest relevant standard associated with the development as set out in the adopted Car Parking Provision SPD (2025) would be "Use Class C2 Residential Institutions".

- a) Institutions/homes with care staff on premises at all times (excluding nursing homes, hospitals, residential schools, colleges or training centres)".

7.4.4 This standard stipulates that 1 space per 5 residents' bed spaces plus 1 space per 2 staff (non-resident) should be provided. The site is not located in a non-residential accessibility zone, although it is on the border of the zone covering North Road and surrounding areas.

7.4.5 Against this requirement, the site is capable of accommodating at least 3 spaces. This has been measured using the HCC Place & Movement Planning and Design Guidance for Hertfordshire Part 4. The front garden amenity has hard standing which would remain in situ, with a width of 5.4 metres and 13 metres in length. Measuring against the maximum sized standard space which is 2.9 metres by 5 metres, this part of the front garden curtilage where Parking Spaces 1, 2, 3 and 4 are labelled can accommodate 2 of these spaces. They have been measured using the maximum standard sized space as they are either obstructed by adjacent parking spaces, trees, or the neighbouring boundary. It is acknowledged that the existing hard standing could accommodate the 5 proposed car parking spaces if the standard measurements were to be used.

7.4.6 As for where the Parking Space 5 is listed, this can also accommodate a 2.9 metre by 5 metre space. In accordance with the Parking SPD, 1 parking space should be provided per 5 residents; this application seeks to house 4 young people.

7.4.7 With regards to staff, Page 14 of the Parking SPD specifies that 1 parking space should be provided per 5 staff. At any one time, there will not be more than 5 staff members on site which would necessitate anymore than one car parking space.

7.4.8 Herts County Council as Highways authority have assessed the application and raised no concerns or objections in relation to access or highway safety as a result of the proposal.

7.4.9 In regards to cycle parking, the Council's Car Parking Standards SPD state that 1 short term space per 20 beds plus 1 long term space per 10 staff on duty should be provided on-site. The private rear garden, and securely gated front curtilage is considered adequate in size for the storage of bicycles. Consequently, sufficient cycle parking would be readily available on-site.

7.4.10 Concerns from local residents regarding the visibility and general highway safety owing to a bend along this part of Chancellors Road are noted. However, the application site is no different and would be the same whether a single-family dwelling with children or a care home with children as no changes are proposed to the existing parking arrangement. HCC Highways raised no concerns in this regard. As such, the application is considered acceptable in this regard as the occupiers would not be any more disadvantaged or at risk than every other property along Chancellors Road.

7.5 Biodiversity, Ecology and Protected Species

7.5.2 Paragraph 13 of Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 sets out that every planning permission granted for the development of land in England shall be deemed to have been granted subject to the 'biodiversity gain condition' requiring development to achieve a net gain of 10% of biodiversity value. There are statutory exemptions and transitional arrangements which mean that the biodiversity gain condition does not apply in some circumstances.

7.5.3 Applicants for planning permission are required to make a statement as to whether the biodiversity gain condition will apply if permission is granted, and, if it does not apply, under which exemption they are applying.

7.5.4 A representation received has raised concerns regarding lack of information on Ecology matters. As the application site is not proposing any operational works as part of this proposal, there are no concerns from the Local Planning Authority regarding Ecology, and similarly, there is no statutory requirement for Biodiversity Net Gain as the site is exempt under the 'de minimis' exemption.

7.6 Other Matters Raised In Representations

7.6.1 Fire safety statement – The application falls short of the threshold for provision of a fire statement as set out under Article 9A of the Development Management Procedure Order. Matters of fire safety therefore fall to the Building Control regime.

7.6.2 Transport assessment – The local plan does not set a local threshold for submission of a transport statement or assessment but instead defers to Hertfordshire County Council as the local highway authority for the majority of the road network in Stevenage. In this instance, HCC has been consulted on the application and has not requested further transport analysis, and the council further notes that the scheme falls short of their indicative thresholds for the submission of a transport assessment (for residential developments, typically 80 units or more).

7.6.3 House prices in future sales are not a material planning consideration and cannot be taken into account in the assessment of this application.

7.6.4 The applicant is not required to submit details of those who would oversee this care home as part of this application as this is to be regulated by Ofsted and the relevant authorities.

7.7 Other Matters

Waste and Recycling

7.7.1 The Design Guide (2025) states, provision should be made within new development for the storage and collection of waste from a site.

| Use | Container | Width | Depth | Height |
|---------------------|-------------------------|-------|-------|--------|
| Garden waste | 240L Brown bin | 580mm | 740mm | 1070mm |
| General refuse | 180L Black bin | 483mm | 710mm | 1070mm |
| Dry Recycling | 60L Blue and Black bags | 490mm | 350mm | 350mm |
| Glass | 23L Green caddy | 320mm | 350mm | 410mm |
| Food waste external | 23L Green caddy | 290mm | 350mm | 420cm |
| Kitchen food waste | 5L Green caddy | 270mm | 200mm | 210mm |

7.7.2 Whilst it is not specifically detailed on the submitted plans, the curtilage surrounding the site can accommodate the required vessels without hindering the car parking provision.

Community Infrastructure Levy

7.7.3 The Council adopted CIL on 1 April 2020 and the CIL Charging Schedule specifies a payment for new floorspace in line with the following rates (plus appropriate indexation):

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

7.8.4 The proposed development would be liable for CIL but would be zero-rated because care homes are defined as falling within the “all other development” category by the charging schedule.

Equality, Diversity and Human Rights

7.8.5 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.

7.8.6 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.

7.8.7 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.

7.8.8 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.

- 7.8.9 Residential dwellings are not considered to be a noise-based use. Accordingly, it is not considered that the development would contravene the Human Rights Act by way of preventing or hindering the right to peaceful enjoyment of a home.
- 7.8.10 The care home would provide living accommodation for children in need, who are protected by the Equalities Act. Further, as a large detached residential dwelling, it would be very easy to adapt internally and externally to accommodate the needs of any disabled children.
- 7.8.11 It is considered that the decision has had regard to this duty. The development would not conflict with either Stevenage Borough Council's Equality Policy or the commitments set out in our Equality Objectives and would support the Council in meeting its statutory equality responsibilities.

8. CONCLUSIONS

- 8.1 The policies considered to be most relevant for determining this application are listed above in Section 6.4.1 and mentioned throughout this report. These are all considered to be consistent with the most recent revision of the NPPF and are therefore considered to be up to date.
- 8.2 The proposed development would result in the delivery of a 4-bedroom care home, which would cater for 4 young people. This would make a modest contribution towards addressing the shortfall in children's care home spaces in Hertfordshire and reduce the number of children being placed outside of Hertfordshire away from their family and friends and education premises to the detriment of the mental health and education.
- 8.3 The loss of the single-family dwelling which is currently on the site is also considered in this application. Although this loss does not conflict with any particular policy, boosting the supply of market dwellings, especially aspirational dwellings, is nonetheless a clear objective of the development plan. This does carry weight against the proposal, although given that only one dwelling would be lost and in view of the Council's housing land supply and housing delivery positions, that weight is limited in comparison to the benefits this proposal can provide to the surrounding area.
- 8.4 It is acknowledged that there is potential anti-social behaviour and fear of crime which are assessed as a material consideration arising from previous experiences in the vicinity. However, measures would be in place to mitigate this based on additional information provided.
- 8.5 The proposal has been assessed to be acceptable in terms of car parking provision, cycle storage, impact on neighbouring and residential amenity and on the collection of waste and recycling.
- 8.6 Upon balance, it is considered that the need to provide suitable, accessible and safe housing in a residential environment for children in care outweighs the harms identified and the proposal is therefore considered to be acceptable.
- 8.7 Accordingly, the proposal is considered to be in accordance with the development plan when read as a whole. In the absence of any other material considerations which indicate that permission should be refused, it is recommended that planning permission be granted.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.1 That planning permission be GRANTED subject to the conditions set out below and delegated authority be given to the Director of Planning and Regulation in consultation with the Chair of the Planning and Development Committee, to amend or add to the conditions subject to which the permission would be granted, where such amendments

or additions would satisfy the relevant national policy tests and would most effectively deliver the development which the Committee has resolved to approve.

SUBJECT TO THE FOLLOWING CONDITIONS/REASONS

- 1 The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans:
26007 - 001 including Existing Plan; 26007 - 010;
REASON:- For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning
- 2 The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.
REASON:- To comply with the requirements of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004).
- 3 The premises shall be used for a residential child care home and for no other purpose, including any other purpose in Use Class C2 of the Schedule to the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended) or in any provision equivalent to that Class in any statutory instrument revoking or re-enacting that order with or without modification. The number of children and young people cared for and resident on the premises shall not exceed four at any one time.
REASON:- In the interests of the amenities of neighbouring properties.
- 4 The premises shall not be occupied before a noise and disturbance management plan has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority which specifies the measures to be taken to control noise and other sources of disturbance associated with residents, staff, and visitors to the premises. Thereafter, the premises shall be operated in full accordance with the approved plan at all times.
REASON:- In the interests of the amenities of neighbouring properties.

The Council has acted Pro-Actively for the following reason:-

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

INFORMATIVE

- 1 **Public Information on Planning Applications**
Warning: all information provided on your planning application is now publicly available. Individuals and organisations offering their services may contact you. The Council does not endorse or approve any builders, surveyors, trades persons or other supplier, and advises householders to obtain quotes/references, and check the legitimacy of any contractor who contacts them before making payment.
- 2 **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.

3 **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, Campus East, Welwyn Garden City, Hertfordshire, AL8 6AE.

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).

4 **Party Wall etc. Act 1996**

Any work that affects a party wall, including foundations dug within 3.0m of a neighbouring building, may be controllable under the Act and may require approval from the adjoining owner(s). Party Wall Act matters are always civil matters and it is neither Stevenage Borough Council's nor Hertfordshire Building Control Ltd's remit to control or enforce Party Wall act matters. Please refer to the Government's explanatory booklet The Party Wall etc. Act 1996, a copy of which is available online at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-party-wall-etc-act-1996-revised-explanatory-booklet>

5 Biodiversity Net Gain

Applications where Biodiversity Net Gain is not required as development is considered De Minimis

The effect of paragraph 13 of Schedule 7A to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 is that planning permission granted for the development of land in England is deemed to have been granted subject to the condition "(the biodiversity gain condition)" that development may not begin unless:

- a) a Biodiversity Gain Plan has been submitted to the planning authority, and
- b) the planning authority has approved the plan.

The planning authority, for the purposes of determining whether to approve a Biodiversity Gain Plan if one is required in respect of this permission would be Stevenage Borough Council.

There are statutory exemptions and transitional arrangements which mean that the biodiversity gain condition does not apply.

Based on the information available this permission is considered to be one which will not require the approval of a biodiversity gain plan before development is begun because the following statutory exemption or transitional arrangement is considered to apply.

1. Development below the de minimis threshold, meaning development which:
 - a) does not impact an onsite priority habitat (a habitat specified in a list published under section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006); and
 - b) impacts less than 25 square metres of onsite habitat that has biodiversity value greater than zero and less than 5 metres in length of onsite linear habitat (as defined in the statutory metric).

Where the local planning authority considers that the permission falls within paragraph 19 of Schedule 7A to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, the permission which has been granted has the effect of requiring or permitting the development to proceed in phases. The modifications in respect of the biodiversity gain condition which are set out in Part 2 of the Biodiversity Gain (Town and Country Planning) (Modifications and Amendments) (England) Regulations 2024 apply.

Biodiversity gain plans are required to be submitted to, and approved by, the planning authority before development may be begun, and, if subject to phased development, before each phase of development may be begun.

If the onsite habitat includes irreplaceable habitat (within the meaning of the Biodiversity Gain Requirements (Irreplaceable Habitat) Regulations 2024) there are additional requirements for the content and approval of Biodiversity Gain Plans. The Biodiversity Gain Plan must include, in addition to information about steps taken or to be taken to minimise any adverse effect of the development on the habitat, information on arrangements for compensation for any impact the development has on the biodiversity of the irreplaceable habitat. The planning authority can only approve a Biodiversity Gain Plan if satisfied that the adverse effect of the development on the biodiversity of the irreplaceable habitat is minimised and appropriate arrangements have been made for the purpose of compensating for any impact which do not include the use of biodiversity credits.

More information can be found in the Planning Practice Guidance online at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/biodiversity-net-gain>

6 Hertfordshire County Council as Highways Authority

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

<http://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/transtreets/highways/> or by telephoning 0300 1234047.

7 Hertfordshire County Council as Highways Authority

Gravel / shingle driveways: Where loose gravel or shingle is used, a suitable measure to prevent material spilling onto the road / footpath / verge must be installed. It is an offence under section 148 of the Highways Act 1980 to deposit debris onto the public highway, and section 149 of the same Act gives the Highway Authority powers to remove such material at the expense of the party responsible. Further information is available by telephoning 0300 1234047.

8 Hertfordshire County Council as Highways Authority

Debris and deposits on the highway: 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.

10. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

1 The application file, forms, plans and supporting documents having the reference number relating to this item. Online copies may be obtained at <https://publicaccess.stevenage.gov.uk/online-applications/>

2 The Stevenage Borough Local Plan 2011-2031 <https://www.stevenage.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy/local-plan>

3 The Stevenage Borough Local Plan Partial Update 2025 <https://www.stevenage.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy/local-plan-partial-update/submission-to-secretary-of-state>

4 Stevenage Borough Council Supplementary Planning Documents: Parking Provision SPD 2025; Design Guidance SPD 2025; Developer Contributions SPD 2025. <https://www.stevenage.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy/planning-library>

5 Hertfordshire County Council Local Transport Plan LTP4 2018-2031 <https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/media-library/documents/about-the-council/consultations/ltp4-local-transport-plan4-complete.pdf>

- 5 Government advice contained in the National Planning Policy Framework 2024 and the Planning Practice Guidance.
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/67aafe8f3b41f783cca46251/NPPF_December_2024.pdf

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/planning-practice-guidance>
- 7 Representations made by statutory consultees and other interested parties referred to in this report. Online copies can be found on Public Access.

This page is intentionally left blank

Meeting: Planning and Development Agenda Item:
Committee

Date: 4 June 2026

Author: Linda Sparrow

Lead Officer: Alex Robinson

Contact Officer: Linda Sparrow

Application No : 26/00216/FP

Location : 33 Julians Road Stevenage

Proposal : Change of use of 6no. dwellinghouses (Use Class C3) to 6no. five-bedroom Houses of Multiple Occupation for up to six-persons each Use Class C4)

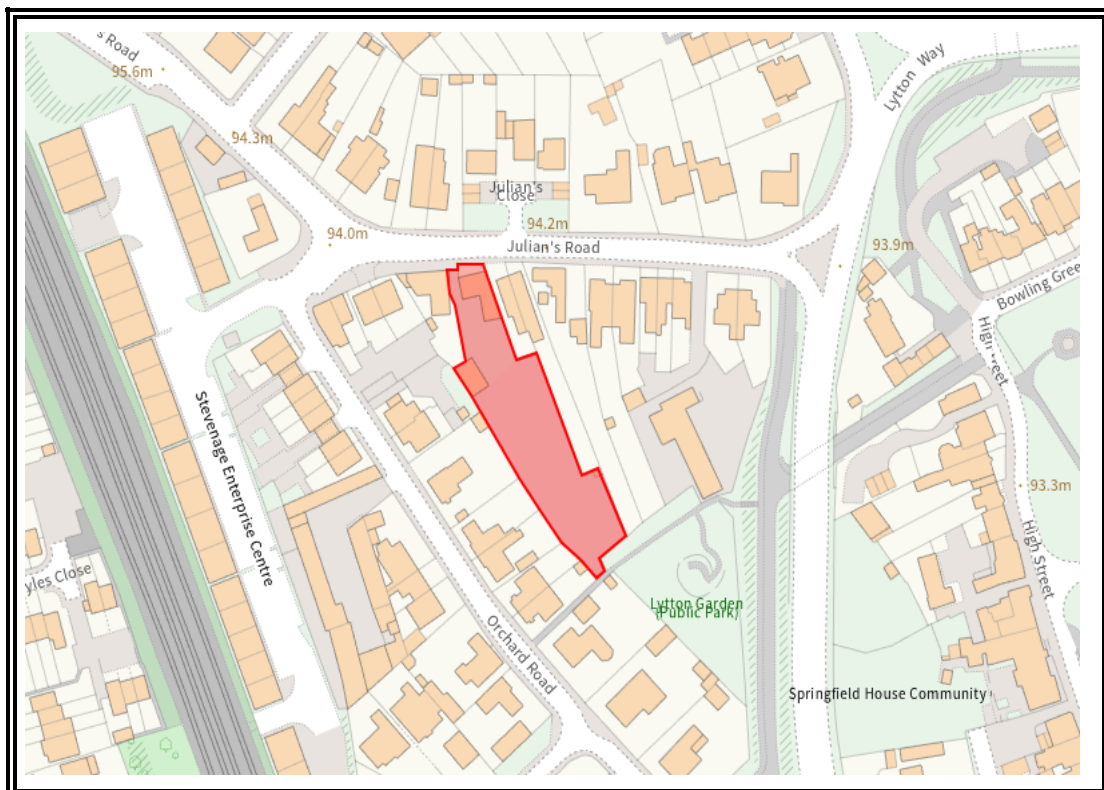
Drawing Nos.: Site Location Plan; 21123-P001-B; 21123-P002-C

Applicant : Mrs R Buddhdev

Agent: Mr Paul Cavill

Date Valid: 9 March 2026

Recommendation: **GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION**



1. SITE DESCRIPTION

- 1.1 The application site is currently under construction with two buildings each comprising 3 dwellings. The dwellings approved were 4no. four bedroom and 2no. three-bedroom dwellings. At the time of writing this report, the external build of the southern building is complete whilst the northern building is still under construction and no parking or landscaping work has commenced, due to the ongoing construction works.
- 1.2 The site also comprises a detached dwelling fronting Julians Road which has been converted to 2no. flats historically, and an office building to the rear of this building.
- 1.3 Prior to the construction described in paragraph 1.1 above, the site previously comprised of an extensive yard area which contained a two-storey L-shaped outbuilding that was partially in use as an office and partially vacant and in a state of disrepair.
- 1.4 The site lies on the southern side of Julians Road, between the junctions with Hitchin Road to the east and Orchard Road to the west. The site is an irregular shape which extends approximately 100 metres from the entrance on Julians Road along the rear gardens of properties in Orchard Road on the western boundary. Although most of the immediate neighbours are residential, there are a number of commercial premises in Orchard Road and a garage to the rear of the gardens behind 15-23 Julians Road.
- 1.5 There are two former public houses (both non-designated heritage assets) in the vicinity, fronting Julians Road, both of which have been converted into residential use. The Rising Sun P.H is now No.35 Julians Road, and The Mallard (formerly The Railway Inn) is now 37a, 37b, and 37c Julians Road and 28 Orchard Road.
- 1.6 Properties in this area are generally large, detached dwellings with unique character and design. Roofs are typically pitched, with some examples of hipped pitches, a variety of gullies and valleys, and crown roofs. Brickwork is general red-multi with a number of buildings also containing smooth painted render in hues of white and cream with some having mock Tudor detailing. Dormer windows at both the front and rear are also a regular feature, as are bay windows, chimneys and street facing gable fronted roof features.

2. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

- 2.1 2/0026/76 Change of use of part first floor to joinery workshop. Refused 07.04.1976.
- 2.2 2/0045/76 Outline application: two storey storage building. Refused 19.08.1976.
- 2.3 2/0279/76 Enforcement notices: change of use of part of first floor for joinery workshop, intensification of use as builders yard. Enforcement notice upheld at appeal 21.1.1977.
- 2.4 2/0350/78 Storage building and covered way: change of use of two room from residential to offices at ground floor and first floor levels. Approved 06.03.1979.
- 2.5 01/00677/FP Change of use from warehouse (B8) to 3 B1 units, erection of front and rear two storey extensions and elevational changes. Granted 29.05.2002.
- 2.6 09/00007/FP Part demolition and re-building of existing flats incorporating single storey extension to offices. Two storey extension to existing building to facilitate use for B1 (office/light industrial purposes) and erection of detached two storey building B1/B8 (light industrial purposes). Alterations to existing access and provision of associated parking facilities. Withdrawn 25.02.2009.

- 2.7 09/00008/CA Conservation Area application for part demolition of rear barn. Withdrawn 25.02.2009.
- 2.8 09/00107/FP Change of use from B8 to B1 (office/light industrial purposes) of site and change of use of part of residential rear garden at 31 Julians Road to B1 use. Part demolition of 33 Julians Road. Refurbishment of northern warehouse and replacement of southern warehouse building. Erection of a single storey building to the rear of the site. Alterations to existing access and provision of associated parking facilities. Refused 16.09.2009, for the following reason:
1. The proposed development would, as a result of the additional commercial floorspace and car parking spaces that would be provided within the curtilage of the site, generate a level of activity that would detract from the amenities of the occupiers of neighbouring residential properties by reason of noise and general disturbance, contrary to policy E7 of the Stevenage District Plan Second Review 1991-2011 and Government guidance contained in Planning Policy Guidance 4: Industrial, commercial development and small firms.
This application was appealed under reference APP/K1935/A/10/2121338/NWF and was dismissed on 10.09.2010.
- 2.9 09/00108/CA Conservation area consent for demolition of rear warehouse building. Granted 16.09.2009.
- 2.10 23/00889/FP Demolition of the existing yard buildings (office and storage) and their replacement with 6 no. dwellings with associated gardens, landscaping, car and cycle parking. Retention of existing residential (2 no. flats) and office building (Class E) to the front of the site (33 Julians Road). Granted 18.01.2024.

3. THE CURRENT APPLICATION

- 3.1 This application seeks planning permission for the change of use of the previously approved 6no. dwellinghouses (Use Class C3) to 6no. five-bedroom Houses of Multiple Occupation (Use Class C4).
- 3.2 The application comes before the Planning Committee as it was called in by a number of Local Councillors.

4. PUBLIC REPRESENTATIONS

- 4.1 Following notification of the application via letters and the erection of site notices, at the time of writing this report 42 public representations have been received from 30 addresses.
- 4.2 A summary of the comments received are set out below:

- Harm to residential amenity;
- Harm to the character and appearance of the area;
- Overconcentration of HMOs in one location;
- Parking pressure and overspill onto the adjacent highway;
- Loss of family housing;
- Increased waste and recycling generation;
- Increased noise and activity levels;
- Overdevelopment of the site;
- Concerns regarding access for emergency vehicles
- Insufficient amenity space;
- Issues relating to sewerage and drainage;

- Need for HMOs acknowledged, but concerns regarding their concentration in one area;
- Lack of need for additional flats/HMOs, with suggestion that existing units are vacant;
- Concerns regarding the applicant's intentions;
- Potential for excessive occupancy (up to 60 persons);
- Alleged breach of the Article 4 Direction relating to HMOs;
- Uncertainty as to whether bedrooms meet HMO standards;
- Concerns that higher occupancy levels could result in a sui generis use rather than Use Class C4;
- Inaccuracies within the submitted Transport Statement;
- Objections based on personal preference regarding change in local population;
- Absence of a submitted fire strategy;
- Overlooking and loss of privacy;
- Concerns regarding safety and security due to transient occupiers;
- Lack of elevation drawings;
- Concerns that the submitted management plan is unenforceable and unsupported by evidence.

4.3 The aforementioned is not a verbatim copy of the objections which have been raised.

5. CONSULTATIONS

5.1. SBC Environmental Health

There is no space standards indicated on the plans which will impact the occupancy. If permission is granted, then it is recommended that an informative is added to bring the licence requirements to the applicants' attention.

5.2. Herts County Council as Highways Authority (HA)

31st March 2026: Recommend that planning permission is refused owing to doubt over implications for highway safety and amenity. The transport statement/design and access statement refer to 18 parking spaces of which 4 are retained for previous uses. 18 spaces are shown on one plan but not the other, please rectify the discrepancy.

23rd April 2026: Recommend that planning permission is refused owing to the proposed parking spaces not conforming to the current minimum size standards; the spaces only measure 4.8m x 2.4m which is the former standard. A revised parking layout and swept path analysis will be required. The proposals for waste and recycling do not include sufficient detail. The term 'euro bins' suggests a substantial four-wheeled structure which would be heavy and difficult for one resident to move on their own. The applicant needs to clarify what sort of receptacles are intended and where. The collection area is not shown on the amended site layout.

13th May 2026: The applicant has now submitted an Amended Site Plan Ref. 21123-P002-C in which the bays are shown to conform with Hertfordshire's P&MP&DG (4.6.11). The LPA as parking authority will determine whether the proposed parking provision accords with its current standards for this location and intended use, including those for secure cycle storage, electric vehicle charging and blue badge holders. Waste & Recycling The Authority notes the provision of a dedicated bin storage area close to the highway boundary and the proposal for bins to be taken to and removed from there on collection days by site management staff rather than residents. Stevenage Borough Environmental Operations Department will confirm whether the revised arrangements conform with their current standards. Accordingly, Hertfordshire County Council as Highway Authority does not wish to restrict the grant of permission. **Page 40**

6. RELEVANT PLANNING POLICIES

6.1 The Development Plan

6.1.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that planning applications be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. For Stevenage, the statutory development plan comprises the following documents:

- The Stevenage Borough Council Local Plan 2011-2031 (adopted 2019)
- The Hertfordshire Waste Core Strategy & Development Management Policies Development Plan Document 2011-2026 (adopted 2012)
- The Hertfordshire Waste Site Allocations Development Plan Document 2011-2026 (adopted 2014)
- The Hertfordshire Minerals Local Plan Review 2002-2016 (adopted 2007)

6.2 National Planning Policy Framework

6.2.1 The latest revision of the NPPF was published in December 2024. The policies it contains are material considerations which will be taken into account in dealing with applications. Due weight will be given to development plan policies according to their degree of consistency with the NPPF.

6.3 Housing Delivery Test and 5-Year Land Supply

6.3.1 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 95%, the authority should prepare an action plan to assess the causes of under delivery and identify actions to increase delivery in future years. 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 79 of the NPPF. This will be in addition to the preparation of an Action Plan. 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 under paragraph 11d) of the NPPF. The latest HDT results published by the Ministry of Housing, Communities, and Local Government (MHCLG) in December 2024 identifies that Stevenage delivered 38% of its housing requirement.

6.3.2 The Council, based on its HDT score is currently subject to the most severe penalty under paragraph 11(d) of the NPPF (2024). For reference, as this policy is now engaged, it means Local Plan policies would be classed as out-of-date. Consequently, Stevenage Borough Council must apply the presumption in favour of sustainable development in its decision making and give great weight towards the need to deliver housing. The Council must also apply a 20% buffer in its 5-year housing supply calculations, and it also has to produce an Action Plan in order to boost housing delivery.

6.3.3 On the 21st May 2024, the Council published its 5 Year Land Supply Update May 2024. This identifies that the Council can demonstrate a Housing Supply of **5.59 years** for the period 01 April 2024 to 31 March 2029, using the *Liverpool* methodology (spreads the delivery of historic undersupply of housing equally across the remainder of the Local Plan period) and guidance from the NPPF and Planning Practice Guidance. The 5-year land supply includes a 20% buffer.

6.3.4 However, the Revised Housing Technical Paper (June 2025) identifies that the Council's Housing Supply is at **5.49 years**, but this has yet to be confirmed through an Examination in Public (EiP) and is therefore not formally adopted at this time.

6.4 Planning Practice Guidance

6.4.1 The Planning Practice Guidance ("PPG"), with which Members are fully familiar, is an online resource containing guidance supplementing the NPPF. The PPG is a material consideration which should be taken into account in determining planning applications.

6.5 National Design Guide

6.5.1 The National Design Guide 2021 is Government guidance on the characteristics of well-designed places and demonstrates what good design means in practice. It has the same status as the PPG and should similarly be taken into account when determining planning applications.

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

6.6.1 The Stevenage Borough Local Plan 2011-2031 was adopted in 2019. Weight must be given to the policies it contains according to their degree of consistency with the NPPF (the closer the policies in the plan to the policies in the NPPF, the greater the weight that may be given).

6.6.2 In addition, the council is required to regard the local plan policies most relevant to determining the application as out-of-date because the application involves the provision of housing and the delivery of housing in the borough was substantially below the housing requirement over the last three years. Those policies are:

Policy SP1: Climate Change
Policy SP2: Sustainable development in Stevenage;
Policy SP5: Infrastructure;
Policy SP6: Sustainable transport;
Policy SP7: High quality homes;
Policy SP8: Good design;
Policy IT5: Parking and access;
Policy IT6: Sustainable transport;
Policy HO5: Windfall sites;
Policy HO9: House types and sizes;
Policy GD1: High quality design;
Policy FP7: Pollution;
Policy FP8: Pollution sensitive uses;

6.6.3 According to the NPPF, the fact that these policies are regarded as out-of-date means that permission should be granted for the proposed development unless: i. the application of policies in the NPPF that protect areas or assets of particular importance provide a strong reason for refusing the development; or ii. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the NPPF taken as a whole, having particular regard to key policies for directing development to sustainable locations, making effective use of land, securing well-designed places and providing affordable homes, individually or in combination.

6.7 Local Plan Review and Update (2024)

- 6.7.1 The council concluded a full review of the plan in 2024, as required by regulation 10A of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended).
- 6.7.2. In response to the review, the council has proposed a partial update of the local plan. Weight must be given to the emerging policies in the partial update according to: a) the stage of preparation of the emerging plan; b) the extent to which there are unresolved objections to the policies; and c) the degree of consistency between the policies and the most recent revision of the NPPF.
- 6.7.3. At the time of writing, the partial update is undergoing examination by the Secretary of State. Given that the examination has yet to conclude, there remain unresolved objections to a number of emerging policies. The partial update is nonetheless at an advanced stage of preparation, and the council considers the emerging policies within it to have a high degree of consistency with the NPPF. Where relevant, the weight to be given to emerging policies will be set out in the assessment section of this report.

6.8 Supplementary Planning Documents

- 6.8.1 The following supplementary planning documents are relevant to determining the application:
- Parking Provision Supplementary Planning Document (February 2025);
 - Stevenage Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (February 2025);
 - Developer Contributions Supplementary Planning Document (February 2025);

6.9 Community Infrastructure Levy

- 6.9.1 Stevenage Borough Council adopted a Community Infrastructure Levy ("CIL") 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.

7. APPRAISAL

- 7.1 The main issues in the assessment of the application are the principle of development, design and visual impact, impact on residential amenities, car parking, and biodiversity net gain.
- 7.1.1 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 Principle of Development

- 7.2.1 The NPPF (2024) states that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. The NPPF also stipulates that decisions should play an active role in guiding development towards sustainable solutions, but in doing so should take local circumstances into account, to reflect the character, needs and opportunities of each area. In addition, the Framework also sets out that sustainable development needs to be pursued in a positive way and at the heart of the framework is a "presumption in favour of sustainable development". It also states that significant weight should be placed on both the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development.

- 7.2.2 The proposal is for the conversion of the under-construction 6no. dwellings (Use Class C3) into 6no. five-bedroom houses in multiple occupation for a maximum of six occupants each (Use Class C4).
- 7.2.3 Like class C3 dwellinghouses, HMOs are a form of housing and therefore a residential use of land. However, as per the Housing Delivery Test measurement rule book (December 2024), a ratio is applied to (non-student) communal accommodation based on the national average number of adults in all households. The current ratio is 1.9. This has been calculated by dividing the total number of adults living in all households by the total number of households in England. Source data is from the Census 2021 and is prepared by the Office for National Statistics. The ratio will be updated following each Census when the source data is publicly available.
- 7.2.4 Accordingly, each five-bedroom HMO is treated as 2.6 dwellings (five bedrooms divided by 1.9). This means the proposed development would result in an equivalent of 15.6 dwellings which would be a net increase of 9.6 dwellings over the under-construction development and an increase of 15.6 dwellings over the original site.
- 7.2.5 Policy SP7 of the adopted local plan sets a strategic target of 7,600 homes to be provided within the borough over the plan period from 2011 to 2031. The emerging partial update of the local plan identifies that 4,956 of these homes remain to be delivered as of 2024. However, the overall target remains unchanged, and the proposed development would make a small but nonetheless positive contribution to meeting this target.
- 7.2.6 The spatial strategy for housing also remains unchanged; much of the planned new housing will be delivered on regeneration sites in the town centre and in urban extensions to the north, west and south-east of the town, with a sizeable minority delivered on smaller housing sites spread throughout the borough. An allowance is also made for residential development coming forward on sites not specifically allocated for any purpose in the local plan, referred to as “windfall” sites.
- 7.2.7 In this case, the application site is not designated for any particular purpose in the local plan. The proposed development is therefore treated as windfall development and is subject to Policy HO5, which sets out criteria such development must satisfy. The proposal satisfies these criteria insofar as they relate to land use: the site is previously developed land (as defined by annex 2 to the NPPF); it enjoys good access to shops, schools and other local facilities necessary for day-to-day living; and the proposed development would not prejudice the delivery of housing on any allocated housing sites.
- 7.2.8 Policy HO5 of the adopted local plan sets out various criteria which windfall development must satisfy. Strictly from a land use perspective, the proposal complies with all of these: the site is small, underutilised and located in an urban area; it benefits from good access to local facilities, being within walking distance of local shops, community buildings and public transport services; it would not prejudice the deliverability of nearby allocated sites, since there are none; and in light of the fact that CIL would be payable, there is nothing to indicate that it would overburden infrastructure. The proposal is therefore considered to accord with Policy HO5 of the adopted plan.
- 7.2.9 In the emerging partial update of the local plan, criterion (a) of Policy HO5 is amended to delete the word “small”. This change is made for the sake of consistency with the NPPF, which promotes an effective use of land regardless of its spatial extent. Criteria (b), (c) and (e) are deleted in their entirety to prevent duplication with other local plan policies. The emerging version of the policy carries significant weight, and the proposal is considered to comply with it.

- 7.2.10 The effect of the proposal on housing choice (in terms of the range of housing types and sizes provided in the borough) is also a relevant consideration. To this end, Policy HO9 of the local plan requires residential developments to provide an appropriate mix of housing types and sizes, having regard to existing imbalances in the borough's housing stock and the most up-to-date evidence on housing need. In the partial update of the local plan, a new policy (Policy HO14) is introduced which requires proposals for HMOs to have an acceptable impact on housing supply.
- 7.2.11 The only identified imbalance in the borough's existing stock is a very high proportion of three-bedroom dwellings and terraced dwellings. The proposed development would not address this imbalance but equally would not exacerbate it.
- 7.2.12 As for housing need, the latest evidence is presented in the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) 2023. This does not directly consider the supply of – or need for – HMOs. However, it is well understood that HMOs satisfy a need that would otherwise be fulfilled by one-bedroom affordable housing units. The SHMA 2023 shows that the need for one-bedroom affordable units is marginally higher than the need for other types of housing units. The proposal is consistent with the aim of meeting this identified need.
- 7.2.13 Having regard to the above, the proposal is considered to accord with relevant adopted and emerging land use policies, in particular Policies HO5 and HO9 of the adopted local plan and the emerging Policy HO14. It follows that the development is acceptable in principle.

7.3 Design and visual impact

Policy Background

- 7.3.1 Chapter 12. (Achieving well-designed places) of the NPPF (2024) stipulates that the creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities. Being clear about design expectations, and how these will be tested, is essential for achieving this. So too is effective engagement between applicants, communities, local planning authorities and other interests throughout the process. Where development is not well designed, permission should be refused.
- 7.3.2 Policies SP8 and GD1 of the Local Plan Partial Review (2024) are deemed to carry significant weight, this is because they generally reflect the good design principles outlined in the NPPF and National Design Guide, i.e., that these policies require developments do not adversely impact the amenities of neighbouring occupiers as a good design principle. Policy GD2 (design certification) is a new policy emerging from the review and states that the Council will support developments that are designed to achieve high levels of certification against nationally and internationally recognised sustainability standards such as BREEAM excellent, Secured by Design Silver or higher or BRE Home Quality Mark.
- 7.3.3 There are no external alterations proposed to the previously approved scheme that is currently under construction and therefore there is no requirement to provide any elevation plans.
- 7.3.4 Comments received regarding HMOs not being in keeping with the character and appearance of the area are noted. However, both Class C3 dwellinghouses and Class C4 HMOs fall within the same broad residential use category. In the absence of any external

alterations to the approved buildings and given that the proposal relates solely to a change of use, it is not considered that the development would materially alter the character or appearance of the surrounding area, which is predominantly residential in nature.

- 7.3.5 Policy HO14 of the Local Plan Partial Review does not restrict the number of HMOs in any given area and therefore the proposed change of use of all six dwellings in this back land development is not contrary to this policy.
- 7.3.6 Having regard to the above, it is considered that the proposed development would be of a high quality and suitably respectful of its surroundings. In these respects, the proposal accords with the relevant policies of the local plan.

7.4 Impact on Neighbouring residential amenity

- 7.4.1 Policy GD1 of the local plan requires that development does not lead to an adverse impact on the amenities of neighbouring occupiers. In the emerging partial update of the local plan, Policy GD1 is amended to refer to “unacceptable adverse impacts” on neighbouring amenities. This change is proposed to reflect the fact that in some instances, impacts on amenities may be deemed to be acceptable despite being adverse. The emerging policy is afforded significant weight. Policy HO5 additionally requires windfall development to have an acceptable impact on the surrounding environment.
- 7.4.2 The ground floors would comprise open plan living, dining, and kitchen spaces and 1no. en-suite bedroom; the first floors would comprise 2no. en-suite bedrooms; and the second floors would comprise 2no. bedrooms with a shared bathroom.
- 7.4.3 Environmental Health have assessed the application and advised they have no objections or concerns. They requested an informative be added to any grant of permission to alert the applicant to licensing and fire safety requirements of HMOs.

Outlook and Privacy

- 7.4.4 The site is bounded by residential dwellings to the north (Julians Road) and east (Orchard Road). To the west are the residential gardens of Julians Road properties with the commercial premises known as Lincolns Tyres beyond
- 7.4.5 The Julians Road properties would have their rear elevations facing the front of the northern block and there is no minimum separation in the Design Guide SPD (2025) for this. The most affected properties are No.35 and the flats within No.33. No.35 was granted planning permission for a two-storey rear extension of 6.2m deep in 2022. Taking this into account, the back to front separation distance is approximately 29m which is considered acceptable so as not to result in a loss of privacy.
- 7.4.6 Comments from residents regarding overlooking are noted, however, the previous buildings on the site that were in use as offices had windows directly overlooking neighbouring properties and it was considered under the 2023 planning permission for the 6no. dwellings that the proposed dwellings would be approximately 15m further away than the previous building, such that there would actually be a betterment to the as then existing conditions for neighbouring residents. Potential occupiers of the previously approved dwellings and potential occupiers of the proposed HMOs would have no more views into their private rear garden than the existing neighbours at Nos. 37a, b, and c currently do.
- 7.4.7 The flatted development within No.33, Julians Road is also orientated front to back the same as No.35 is, and the assessment above would be the same for these properties.

- 7.4.8 The properties in Orchard Road would have their rear elevations facing the side elevations of the proposed buildings, for which the Design Guide SPD identifies a minimum separation distance of 15m. Whilst the buildings include accommodation within the roof space, they are read as two-storey in scale and there are no windows proposed in the side elevations. As such, it is considered appropriate to assess the relationship on the basis of a two-storey form in this instance. The separation distances range between approximately 14m and 16m; however, given the absence of side-facing windows, it is not considered that this relationship would give rise to any unacceptable overlooking or loss of privacy. Accordingly, the relationship is considered to be acceptable.
- 7.4.9 With regard to the new buildings themselves, these are orientated such that the front of the southern block faces the rear of the northern block. There are no minimum distances for this orientation. However, they are approximately 25m apart which is considered acceptable in this regard.

Noise

- 7.4.10 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.
- 7.4.11 Turning to the operational side of the development, although the change in occupancy of the buildings could potentially generate additional noise, it is not considered that this would amount to a level that would result in unacceptable harm to neighbouring residents. The previously approved scheme comprised 4no. four-bedroom dwellings which could potentially have accommodated 2 parents and 3-4 children (including adult children), and 2no. three-bedroom dwellings which could potentially have accommodated 2 parents and 2-3 children (including adult children) each.
- 7.4.12 On that basis, the previously approved scheme could have potentially accommodated up to 34 people, but more realistically would have accommodated around 28-30 people. The proposed scheme is for 6no. HMOs in the C4 Use Class, which could only accommodate 6 people each, giving a total maximum allowed of 36 people.
- 7.4.13 As such, the approved scheme and the proposed scheme are for very similar number of people, and the possibility of 6 persons in each property is considered to be in line with that which could potentially live in the previously approved dwellings as a larger family home. Further to this, it is not uncommon to find HMOs within a predominantly residential area of a town as they provide short-term lets to individuals.
- 7.4.14 However, HMOs are generally subject to Building Regulations Approval which may require noise insulation. In addition, they have to be licensed under Section 63 of the Housing Act 2004. Therefore, any issues around the operation of the HMO would be for the Council's environmental health department to enforce against.
- 7.4.15 Noise from construction is an inevitable part of developments, but, with no proposed alterations internally or externally, this is not considered to be an issue in this instance.

Intensification of Use

- 7.4.16 From a planning perspective, the number of occupiers that could satisfactorily occupy the property is ultimately a housing matter determined through the Environmental Health Licencing process and is not part of the planning assessment in this instance. Notwithstanding this, the applicant has specifically only applied for HMOs under Use Class C4, which is restricted under the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended) to only 6 people in each dwelling. Numbers above this would be subject to an assessment of whether a material change of use has occurred to Use Class *Sui Generis*. The current application must be assessed on its merits as submitted and cannot be refused on matters that have not arisen, such as a breach in the number of occupants.
- 7.4.17 With regards to the implementation of a condition to control the number of occupants, such conditions are not generally enforceable. Whilst the imposition of such conditions may resolve any concerns that the intensity of occupancy of premises would increase in the future, they would fail the enforceability test and would also be in danger of failing the test of necessity. This is because the Housing Act 2004 HMO licensing regime gives local authorities power to specify the maximum number of residents that may occupy a house in multiple occupation with its existing facilities. Accordingly, the Council does not consider it reasonable to impose such a condition, especially as the licensing regime can limit the number of residents that can occupy a house.
- 7.4.18 With regards to increased noise and disturbance from additional residents, it is acknowledged this could be greater than at present; however, it is not considered it would amount to anything over and above what could ordinarily be expected from domestic residences containing solely adults, and any issues arising from such would be controllable through the Environmental Health Licencing powers.

Future Occupiers and Management of the HMO

- 7.4.19 The Council as Local Planning Authority has no control over who would occupy the HMOs in the future if this application was granted planning permission. Whilst the applicant has submitted a management policy, this is not enforceable by the Local Planning Authority and carries no weight in the assessment of the application. However, the properties would need to be licensed as HMOs by the Council's Environmental Health and Licensing Department. Any issues with the operation of the HMO in the future would be enforced by the respective department.
- 7.4.20 It is noted that the applicant has stated their intention to offer their accommodation only to local professional workers and that they vet applications to ensure potential tenants meet their high standards. The recently adopted Renters' Rights Act 2026, whilst removing Landlord's ability to discriminate against certain persons or characteristics, still allows Landlords and their agents to have final say on who they let their property to and can carry out referencing checks to make sure tenancies are sustainable for all parties. Accordingly, the management company of the HMOs would have final say over future occupiers and could offer to only professional workers if their referencing checks meet all relevant laws and legislations.
- 7.4.21 How residents of a proposed conversion might conduct themselves - whether they would come in late at night or leave early in the morning, whether they would care for the property or contribute to the social life of the area, is not something that the planning process should be involved in as these matters would be a matter for either the Landlord of the property through Tenancy Agreements, or Environmental Health if concerning noise.

- 7.4.22 Case Law suggests that anti-social behaviour and fear of crime can be material planning considerations where there is an evidential basis for that fear. In this instance, there is no evidence before the Council that any HMOs that may be in the vicinity of the site have given rise to any anti-social behaviour, increased crime rates, or harm to residential amenity through noise complaints. Accordingly, there is insufficient evidence before the Council that granting permission for the proposed HMOs would give rise to an increase in crime or anti-social behaviour and therefore it is not considered to be a reason for refusal that could be successfully defended on appeal.
- 7.4.23 Designing out crime through Secured by Design is recommended to developers but is not required through the Local Plan and therefore the imposition of a condition in this regard would be unreasonable.
- 7.4.24 Having regard to the above, the proposed development would have an acceptable impact on the amenities of neighbouring occupiers. In this respect, the proposal accords with Policies GD1 and HO5 of the adopted local plan. In the emerging partial update of the local plan, Policy GD1 is amended to refer to “unacceptable adverse impacts” on neighbouring amenities. This change is proposed to reflect the fact that in some instances, impacts on amenities may be deemed to be acceptable despite being adverse. The emerging policy is afforded significant weight, and the proposal is considered to comply with it.

7.5 Impact Upon Amenities of Future Residents

Standard of Accommodation

- 7.5.1 Policies SP8 and GD1 of the Local Plan Partial Review (2024) relate to high quality and good design and are deemed to carry significant weight, this is because they generally reflect the good design principles outlined in the NPPF and National Design Guide, i.e., that these policies require developments do not adversely impact the amenities of neighbouring occupiers as a good design principle.
- 7.5.2 Whilst Policy GD1 of the adopted local plan requires residential developments to comply with the government’s nationally described space standard (NDSS), which is reproduced in the plan in appendix C, these national standards do not apply to HMOs. This is because HMOs are covered by the Housing Act 2004 and Environmental Health Licencing laws and Planning should not obstruct, nor override, these other powers, and additionally, the NDSS only applies to self-contained accommodation types.
- 7.5.3 There is no minimum floor area for dwellings used as an HMO, but the bedrooms will be required to meet the minimum space standards of the Council’s Environmental Health departments’ HMO Licensing. This requires single rooms to be at least 6.5sqm and double rooms to be at least 10.5sqm. Where a property will be occupied as a House in Multiple Occupation by five or more persons, an application to the Council for a HMO Licence must be made in accordance with Section 63 of the Housing Act 2004.
- 7.5.4 All bedrooms have been measured by Officers as between 8sqm and 16.75sqm and as such all bedrooms are considered to exceed the minimum space standards of the Environmental Health licence requirements.

Private amenity space

- 7.5.5 In respect to private amenity space, the Design Guide SPD (2025) requires that all dwellings should have private open space of at least 50sqm and at least 10m deep. All gardens measure between 52sqm and 62sqm and all meet the required depth of 10m and are therefore considered acceptable and policy compliant.

Noise and Pollution

- 7.5.6 Policy FP7 of the Local Plan Partial Review (2024), states that developments should minimise, and where possible, reduce air, water, light and noise pollution. Policy FP8 stipulates that 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. Given the proposed development would be located within an existing residential area; harm from noise is not considered an issue. Through the Local Plan Review, these policies now carry significant weight.

7.6 Car Parking and Cycle Provision

National Planning Policy Framework and Planning Practice Guidance

- 7.6.1 Chapter 9. (Promoting Sustainable Transport) of the NPPF (2024) sets out a requirement to consider transport issues, which includes parking, at the earliest stages of a development proposal. Paragraph 116 of the NPPF (2024) states “*Development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe.*”. Taking this into consideration, paragraph 117 of the NPPF (2024) stipulates that applications for development should:

- a) give priority first to pedestrian and cycle movements, both within the scheme and with neighbouring areas; and second – so far as possible – to facilitating access to high quality public transport, with layouts that maximise the catchment area for bus or other public transport services, and appropriate facilities that encourage public transport use;
- b) address the needs of people with disabilities and reduced mobility in relation to all modes of transport;
- c) create places that are safe, secure and attractive – which minimise the scope for conflicts between pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles, avoid unnecessary street clutter, and respond to local character and design standards;
- d) allow for the efficient delivery of goods, and access by service and emergency vehicles; and
- e) be designed to enable charging of plug-in and other ultra-low emission vehicles in safe, accessible and convenient locations.

- 7.6.2 Policy IT5 of the local plan requires developments to provide parking in accordance with the council’s Parking Provision SPD (2025). Policy SP6 (Sustainable Transport), has been significantly updated in the Local Plan Partial Review and requires, amongst other things, for developments to demonstrate they are in a sustainable location and will promote active travel by non-car modes of transport by providing appropriate cycle parking and prioritise public transport.

- 7.6.3 The Parking Provision SPD (2025) sets out the maximum amount of off-street parking for residential developments based on the number of bedrooms. The proposed development would result in 6no. five-bedroom HMOs. HMOs require 0.5 spaces per bedroom unit, so each five-bedroom property would require 2.5 spaces with a total site requirement therefore of 15 spaces.
- 7.6.4 The existing office use and flatted developments on the site would require the provision of 3 spaces and 2 spaces respectively. However, as set out in the 2023 planning permission, the offices only have 2 spaces so are under-provided. The 2023 planning permission determined that the existing 4 spaces for the existing uses would remain acceptable.
- 7.6.5 Taking account of the above, the current proposal would therefore require 4 spaces for the existing uses and 15 spaces for the proposed HMOs, giving a total requirement of 19 spaces. The site is not located in a residential and non-residential accessibility zone and therefore no reductions would be applicable.
- 7.6.6 It is noted that the submitted Transport Statement makes reference to residential accessibility zones adjacent to the site whilst noting that the site itself does not fall within any accessibility zones. The parking Provision SPD (2025) states that *“the fact that a site lies close to the boundary of an accessibility zone (or an accessibility zone of a different level) will not, in itself, be accepted as justification for deviation from the range of acceptable provision”* and therefore no reduction is applicable.
- 7.6.7 The submitted site layout plan as originally submitted showed the parking spaces as per the 2023 permission, i.e. 18 spaces each measuring 2.4m wide and 4.8m long. No disabled spaces were shown. Herts County Council as Highways Authority (HA) advised that this was unacceptable and would not be supported as all spaces must meet the *current* space standards of 2.5m wide and 5m long. This puts the site in conflict with Policy IT5 through being in an identified deficit of 1 space.
- 7.6.8 An amended site plan has been received. However, whilst one space has been enlarged to meet disability standards and all other spaces enlarged to meet current HA’s standards, the result is that the total number of spaces has been reduced to 17 in order to pass the swept path analyses for fire tenders and refuse trucks to gain access to all of the site.
- 7.6.9 Taking account of the above, the site is therefore now identified as being in conflict with Policy IT5 with a deficit of 2 parking spaces.
- 7.6.10 It should be noted that the NPPF states planning permission should only be refused on highway grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or residual impacts would be severe. In this instance, it is noted that Julians Road has yellow lines which restrict on-street parking and as such there would be no overspill of parking from the site onto Julians Road. Accordingly, a deficit of 2 parking spaces on the site would be unlikely to result in severe impacts to be able to substantiate a refusal. In line with an appeal decision for the same issue (see below), only moderate weight can be applied to the policy contravention.
- 7.6.11 Members should be aware of an appeal that was allowed in Stevenage in 2025 for a two-dwelling development in Vardon Road with zero car parking. Appeal reference APP/K1935/W/25/3362953 against planning reference 24/00893/FP. In allowing the appeal, the Inspector made it clear that the Council’s failure in meeting the HDT score was given significant weight in favour of the development and outweighed any identified harms arising from a deficit in parking spaces, which only carries moderate weight against the proposal.

7.6.12 The HA have reviewed the amended plan and have removed all objections to the proposal as the parking spaces now meet the relevant standards and they are satisfied with the swept path analysis that shows the enlarged spaces can be accommodated safely.

Disabled Parking

7.6.13 The provision of 1no. disabled space meets the required standards of the Parking provision SPD.

Visitor Spaces

7.6.14 Visitor spaces are required at a standard of 0.25 spaces per dwelling, however, as the parking is unallocated then additional visitor spaces are not required on this site. It is for the owner of the site, or their appointed management company, to monitor and control on-site parking as the site will be privately owned.

EV Charging

7.6.15 The Parking Provision SPD (2020) requires all new parking spaces for new dwellings to 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. This can be secured with a suitably worded condition.

Cycle Storage

7.6.16 Policy IT5 of the Local Plan (2019) also requires developments to provide secure cycle parking provision in line with the Parking Provision SPD (2025). The recently adopted SPD requires one cycle parking space per bedroom. The submitted plans show that there is a cycle storage area within the curtilage of each property which is considered acceptable. No details have been provided on the extent of the storage although this can be secured via a condition.

Highway Safety

7.6.17 The application is accompanied by a Transport Statement (TS). It is noted that the TS makes reference to the site becoming a 40-bedroom HMO site and that local residents have raised substantial concerns in this regard. This statement is a typing error on the part of the company writing the TS. The submitted plans upon which any decision will be based, show that the proposal is actually for 6no. five-bedroom HMOs which amounts to only 30 bedrooms.

7.6.18 The TS confirms that the Crashmap database identifies no personal injury traffic collisions have occurred at or in the vicinity of the proposed site access in the period 2020 to 2024, however, there are four recorded 'slight' incidents at the Julians Road/Lytton Way Junction. Taking this further, the TS studied data back to 2000 and found no incidents at or in the vicinity of the site access.

7.6.19 In terms of trip generation, the submitted TS has provided multiple tables for differing residential uses on the basis that there are no model datasets for HMOs and further reviewed car ownership levels of differing residential types. The overall conclusion is that approximately 26% of flats in the area local to the application site do not own a car and, given that HMOs generally attract lower income or single persons, car ownership is expected to be lower than other types of residential uses. The non-car accessibility of the

site with excellent cycle route options would see a greater uptake in sustainable travel options. Therefore, of the potential +53 trips compared to the previously approved 6no. residential units, the TS assumes that approximately 75% would likely use sustainable transport options. The TS concludes that the trip generation is unlikely to differ significantly from that of the previously approved dwellings.

7.6.20 The HA have reviewed the application and raised no concerns or objections to the TS and have raised no concerns to the proposal in terms of highway safety.

7.6.21 At the time of writing, final comments from the HA are outstanding in regard to the acceptability of the parking spaces, but given that the LPA is the parking authority, comments in this regard are not required to proceed with a determination of the application. Comments from the HA will be presented to the Committee in an addendum report once received.

7.6.22 either no change or a net reduction of 1 vehicle movement in the respective AM and PM peak hours.

7.6.23 Given the aforementioned assessment, and through the use of appropriately worded conditions, the development would be in accordance with the policies set out in the adopted Local Plan (2019), the Council's Parking Standards SPD (2025), the NPPF (2024) and PPG.

7.7 Impact on the Environment

7.7.1 Following consultation with the Council's Environmental Health Section, they do not raise any concerns from a land contamination perspective.

Groundwater

7.7.2 The application site is not located within a Source Protection Zone.

Air Quality

7.7.3 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 Air Quality Annual Status Report (ASR) 2019 by Stevenage Borough Council identifies that the development site is not located within, or near, an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA).

7.7.4 With regards to the operational aspect of the development, due to its limited scale, the proposed development would give rise to a very small increase in NO₂ emissions which, in accordance with IAQM/EPUK guidance, is identified as having a negligible impact at all receptors in the area. As such, the need for additional mitigation has not been identified as being required. As such, the Council's Environmental Health Section has not raised any concerns with respect to the operational impact the development would have on air quality.

Noise Pollution

7.7.5 With respect to noise, Policy FP8: Pollution Sensitive Uses stipulates 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.

- 7.7.6 With regards to noise which could arise during the operational phase of development, if any complaints arose regarding future occupiers, these would be dealt with by the Borough Council's Environmental Health department.

Light Pollution

- 7.7.7 In terms of light pollution, Policy FP7: Pollution of the adopted Local Plan (2019) requires all development proposals should minimise, where possible, 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.

- 7.7.8 Turning to the operational side of the development, the dwellings would be set back from the main highways and therefore any external lighting is not considered to prejudice highway safety or cause a substantive nuisance to neighbouring residential properties. A condition can be imposed to ensure external lighting is not directed towards highways.

7.8 Biodiversity, Ecology and Protected Species

- 7.8.1 Paragraph 13 of Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 sets out that every planning permission granted for the development of land in England shall be deemed to have been granted subject to the 'biodiversity gain condition' requiring development to achieve a net gain of 10% of biodiversity value. There are statutory exemptions and transitional arrangements which mean that the biodiversity gain condition does not apply in some circumstances.

- 7.8.2 Applicants for planning permission are required to make a statement as to whether the biodiversity gain condition will apply if permission is granted, and, if it does not apply, under which exemption they are applying.

- 7.8.3 Based on the information available this permission is considered to be one which will not require the approval of a biodiversity gain plan before development is begun because the following statutory exemption or transitional arrangement is considered to apply.

1. Development below the de minimis threshold, meaning development which:
 - a) does not impact an onsite priority habitat (a habitat specified in a list published under section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006); and
 - b) impacts less than 25 square metres of onsite habitat that has biodiversity value greater than zero and less than 5 metres in length of onsite linear habitat (as defined in the statutory metric).

7.9 Other Matters

Sustainable construction and climate change

- 7.9.1 Under the Local Plan Partial Review, Policy FP1 has been revised to cover sustainable drainage and Policy SP1: climate change, is the new relevant policy in this regard. The fundamental objective of Policy SP1 remains the same as previous policy FP1, however, it sets out in more detail the objectives of adapting to climate change. This policy requires,

amongst other things off setting of emissions targets if not met on site, water usage targets, rainwater harvesting, grey water recycling, use of sustainable materials and practices on site, ultra-low and zero carbon combined heat and power systems and urban greening (green roofs and walls). This policy is further supported by a suite of new climate change polices, CC1 through CC6 which cover a broad range of topics but which, through the partial review and examination in public should be applied flexibly as they may not always be appropriate, and it should be noted that Policy CC1 requires only major planning applications to provide an energy statement.

- 7.9.2 The Council's Design Guide SPD (2025) sets out additional requirements with respect to climate change. The guide states that all developments are required to make efforts to minimise energy usage and to incorporate methods of using renewable energy.
- 7.9.3 The updated site layout plan, 21123-P002-C, includes a climate change statement information box that states the proposed development will be insulated to the relevant Building Regulation standards to reduce heat loss and it will be as airtight as practicable. Fenestrations will be double glazed to maintain internal temperatures and all radiators will be fitted with thermostatic controls. Water usage will be limited through dual flush cisterns and aerated taps with low-capacity bathtubs. Hot water supplies will be fitted with a blending valve to keep maximum temperatures below the main system temperature. Roof voids are to be fitted with 300mm insulation and cavity walls to be filled with 150mm insulation to meet relevant Building Regulations. These measures are all considered acceptable and can be secured via the imposition of a compliance condition should permission be granted.

Waste and Recycling

- 7.9.4 The Design Guide (2025) states provision should be made within new development for the storage and collection of waste from a site. The originally submitted plans showed the use of Euro Bins for each main building that would have been entirely unacceptable for occupiers to move to collection points. Subsequently, the amended layout plan shows that each main building would have storage units for individual household bins.
- 7.9.5 The amended TS includes revised swept path analyses that show that vehicles of a fire tender size can easily manoeuvre around the entirety of the site which would also mean that an SBC refuse vehicle could also manoeuvre around the site.
- 7.9.6 The Council's Environmental Operations team have failed to provide any comments on the application and as such it is considered reasonable and acceptable to impose a condition that requires full details of the storage units prior to the first occupation of the site so that the Council has opportunity to ensure that the storage units are capable of holding the number of bins required. It is noted that no objections were raised to the same set up on the 2023 planning permission.
- 7.9.7 Given the aforementioned, with an appropriate condition in place, suitable refuse and recycle storage facilities can be delivered to meet the criterion set out in the Council's Design Guide SPD (2023).

Community Infrastructure Levy

7.9.8 The Council adopted CIL on 1 April 2020 and the CIL Charging Schedule specifies a payment for new floorspace in line with the following rates (plus appropriate indexation):

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

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

7.9.10 CIL replaces the need for S106 agreements to specify financial and/or land contributions for non-site-specific infrastructure projects. This allows infrastructure to be planned on a borough-wide scale rather than on a site-by-site basis as mitigation against the impacts of individual proposals. A CIL Form 1: Additional Information has been submitted along with the application.

7.10 Matters Raised in Representation

7.10.1 Sewerage and drainage are matters for Building Control.

7.10.2 Concerns regarding the applicant's intentions to create HMOs are not material planning considerations. It should also be noted that the current applicant is not the same applicant as that who submitted the 2023 planning application for single family dwellings.

7.10.3 The application is not of a type that is required to be submitted through Gateway One and therefore a fire strategy/statement is not required.

7.11 Equality, Diversity and Human Rights

7.11.1 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.

7.11.2 When considering proposals placed before Members it is important that they are fully aware of and have themselves rigorously considered the equalities implications of the decision that they are taking.

- 7.11.3 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.
- 7.11.4 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.
- 7.11.5 In terms of inclusive access, the proposed development incorporates provision for disabled parking spaces in accordance with the Council's Parking Standards (2025). The external areas are designed as shared surfaces for vehicles and pedestrians, removing kerbs and facilitating level access across the site.

8. CONCLUSIONS

- 8.1 The proposed development would involve the provision of housing and the council's latest Housing Delivery Test result indicates that housing delivery was substantially below the housing requirement over the last three years. Therefore, the Council is required to apply the tilted balance by reason of its housing delivery position. Accordingly, Paragraph 11(d) of the NPPF is engaged and the subsequent presumption in favour of sustainable development is a key material consideration in the assessment of this application. This policy position tilts the planning balance in favour of the application.
- 8.2 The proposed development would provide a net increase of 15.6 housing units on the site based on the original site, or a net increase of 9.6 dwellings over the previously approved, and under construction development of 6no. dwellings. This makes a moderate contribution towards meeting the borough's housing needs. This carries significant weight in favour of the proposal. This is due to paragraph 11(d) of the NPPF being engaged. The application has demonstrated that the scheme would be capable of providing a good standard of accommodation.
- 8.3 It has been established that the proposed development accords with Policy HO5 as the site would be located on land which meets the definition of previously developed land as stated within the NPPF (2024). Paragraph 125(c) of the NPPF places substantial weight on reusing brownfield sites and states that proposals should be approved unless substantial harm would be caused.
- 8.4 There would be some economic benefit during the construction phase, and future occupiers would be likely to contribute to local services and facilities. Given the quantum of development, it is considered that these benefits would be moderate and therefore attracts moderate weight in favour of the proposal.
- 8.5 The proposed development would have an acceptable impact on the amenities of neighbouring occupiers, and the collection of waste and recycling is likely to be acceptable; these are neutral matters.
- 8.6 The development has been assessed to be acceptable in terms of private amenity space in accordance with the adopted Design Guide (2025) and Policy GD1 of the Local Plan (2019).

- 8.7 The cycle storage is likely to be acceptable but can be secured via the imposition a condition. Additionally, the Highways Authority have raised no concerns with highway safety. This carries moderate weight in favour of the proposal.
- 8.8 The car parking provision falls short of the required provision by 2 spaces, however, there is no parking on the highways closest to the site so there would be no overflow onto the street and no harm to highway safety in this regard due to Traffic Regulation Orders. Additionally, a failure of policy in this regard carries moderate weight against the proposal and when taken in context of the weight afforded to the delivery of much needed smaller units, does not warrant a refusal on this basis.
- 8.9 Given the weight attached to housing delivery under the presumption in favour of sustainable development, officers consider that the benefits of redeveloping a sustainably located brownfield site for much needed smaller homes outweigh the harm arising from the deficit of 2 parking spaces, noting also that the development remains liable for CIL and is acceptable in all other matters.
- 8.10 On balance, while the lack of 2 parking spaces weighs against the proposal, the significant public benefits arising from the delivery of housing in a sustainable location, combined with the weight attributed to the HDT position, are considered to outweigh the identified harms.
- 8.11 In conclusion, whilst the proposal has been assessed to contravene policy through failures of car parking provision, it is considered that the public benefits identified through the delivery of housing, on previously developed brownfield land, outweigh the harms identified. Therefore, despite the conflicts with the aforementioned Local Plan Policies, there are sufficient material considerations to indicate that planning permission should be granted in this instance.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.1 That planning permission be GRANTED subject to the conditions set out below and delegated authority be given to the Director of Planning and Regulation in consultation with the Chair of the Planning and Development Committee, to amend or add to the conditions subject to which the permission would be granted, where such amendments or additions would satisfy the relevant national policy tests and would most effectively deliver the development which the Committee has resolved to approve.

SUBJECT TO THE FOLLOWING CONDITIONS/REASONS

- 1 The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans:
Site Location Plan; 21123-P001-B; 21123-P002-C;
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 or construction work relating to this permission that are audible at the site boundary shall be carried out on any Sunday, Public or Bank Holiday nor at any other time, except between the hours of 07:30 18:00 on Mondays to Fridays and between the hours of 08:30 and 13:00 on Saturdays.

REASON:- To safeguard the amenities of the occupiers of neighbouring properties.
- 4 The development hereby approved shall be constructed in accordance with the measures to address adaptation to climate change as laid out on approved plan 21123-P002-C.

REASON:- To ensure the development is adaptable to climate change through provision of energy and water efficiency measures.
- 5 Prior to the first occupation of the dwellings hereby permitted the access, turning and parking provision, as shown on approved plan 21123-P002-C, shall be constructed, hardsurfaced and made ready for use. The parking areas shall be constructed in a porous material or provision shall be made for a sustainable urban drainage system (SuDS) to be built into the hardsurfaced areas. Once provided the parking facilities shall be retained in that form and thereafter be used for the parking of vehicles only.

REASON:- To ensure that adequate parking and servicing facilities are available within the site and to prevent surface water from passing onto the public highway which may be detrimental to highway safety.
- 6 Prior to the first occupation of the HMOs hereby permitted, details of the cycle storage spaces shall be submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority to ensure that each HMO can provide 6 storage spaces. The cycle storage shall be in accordance with the requirements of the Parking Provision Supplementary Planning Document (2025) and shall be retained and maintained accordingly for the lifetime of the development.

REASON:- To ensure that adequate cycle parking is provided in accordance with the Council's adopted supplementary planning.
- 7 Prior to the first occupation of the dwelling hereby permitted, details of the waste and recycling storage shall be submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority. Scaled plans and written specifications to illustrate that the storage areas can be accessed within 30m of each dwelling and within 25m of the kerbside collection point. The storage shall be retained and maintained accordingly during the lifetime of the development.

REASON:- To ensure that adequate storage is provided for waste and recycling in accordance with the Council's adopted supplementary planning documents.
- 8 Prior to the occupation of the dwellinghouses hereby permitted, the parking spaces shown on approved plan 21123-P002-C, shall be provided with the underlying infrastructure for connection to the electricity network to enable them to be served by an electric vehicle charging point.

REASON:- To ensure construction of a satisfactory development and to promote sustainable development.
- 9 Prior to first occupation of the development hereby permitted, all dwellings which exceed a 45m distance from the access point on the public highway where a fire appliance will stop must be fitted with a sprinkler system.

REASON:- To ensure suitable, safe and satisfactory planning and development of the site in accordance with Policy 5 of Hertfordshire's Local Transport Plan (adopted 2018).

The Council has acted Pro-Actively for the following reason:-

- 1 Planning permission has been granted for this proposal. The Council acted proactively through positive engagement with the applicant during the determination process which led 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.

INFORMATIVE

1 Public Information on Planning Applications

Warning: all information provided on your planning application is now publicly available. Individuals and organisations offering their services may contact you. The Council does not endorse or approve any builders, surveyors, trades persons or other supplier, and advises householders to obtain quotes/references, and check the legitimacy of any contractor who contacts them before making payment.

2 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.

3 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, Campus East, Welwyn Garden City, Hertfordshire, AL8 6AE.

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).

4 **Party Wall etc. Act 1996**

Any work that affects a party wall, including foundations dug within 3.0m of a neighbouring building, may be controllable under the Act and may require approval from the adjoining owner(s). Party Wall Act matters are always civil matters and it is neither Stevenage Borough Council's nor Hertfordshire Building Control Ltd's remit to control or enforce Party Wall act matters. Please refer to the Government's explanatory booklet The Party Wall etc. Act 1996, a copy of which is available online at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-party-wall-etc-act-1996-revised-explanatory-booklet>

5 **Biodiversity Net Gain**

Applications where Biodiversity Net Gain is not required as development is considered De Minimis

The effect of paragraph 13 of Schedule 7A to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 is that planning permission granted for the development of land in England is deemed to have been granted subject to the condition "(the biodiversity gain condition)" that development may not begin unless:

- a) a Biodiversity Gain Plan has been submitted to the planning authority, and
- b) the planning authority has approved the plan.

The planning authority, for the purposes of determining whether to approve a Biodiversity Gain Plan if one is required in respect of this permission would be Stevenage Borough Council.

There are statutory exemptions and transitional arrangements which mean that the biodiversity gain condition does not apply.

Based on the information available this permission is considered to be one which will not require the approval of a biodiversity gain plan before development is begun because the following statutory exemption or transitional arrangement is considered to apply.

1. Development below the de minimis threshold, meaning development which:
 - a) does not impact an onsite priority habitat (a habitat specified in a list published under section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006); and
 - b) impacts less than 25 square metres of onsite habitat that has biodiversity value greater than zero and less than 5 metres in length of onsite linear habitat (as defined in the statutory metric).

Where the local planning authority considers that the permission falls within paragraph 19 of Schedule 7A to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, the permission which has been granted has the effect of requiring or permitting the development to proceed in phases. The modifications in respect of the biodiversity gain condition which are set out in Part 2 of the Biodiversity Gain (Town and Country Planning) (Modifications and Amendments) (England) Regulations 2024 apply.

Biodiversity gain plans are required to be submitted to, and approved by, the planning authority before development may be begun, and, if subject to phased development, before each phase of development may be begun.

If the onsite habitat includes irreplaceable habitat (within the meaning of the Biodiversity Gain Requirements (Irreplaceable Habitat) Regulations 2024) there are additional requirements for the content and approval of Biodiversity Gain Plans. The Biodiversity Gain Plan must include, in addition to information about steps taken or to be taken to minimise any adverse effect of the development on the habitat, information on arrangements for compensation for any impact the development has on the biodiversity of the irreplaceable habitat. The planning authority can only approve a Biodiversity Gain Plan if satisfied that the adverse effect of the development on the biodiversity of the irreplaceable habitat is minimised and appropriate arrangements have been made for the purpose of compensating for any impact which do not include the use of biodiversity credits.

More information can be found in the Planning Practice Guidance online at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/biodiversity-net-gain>

6 Environmental Health HMO Requirements

Where a property will be occupied as a House in Multiple Occupation by five or more persons, an application to the Council for a HMO Licence must be made in accordance with Section 63 of the Housing Act 2004. Further information on the Council's fire precautions and amenity standards for HMOs, and how to apply for a HMO licence, can be accessed via the Council's website at:

www.stevenage.gov.uk/housing/private-sector-housing/house-in-multiple-occupation.

It is recommended that the Council's Environmental Health team are contacted to arrange an inspection of the property either prior to, or at an early stage of, conversion works, to confirm what works would be required to ensure that the property is compliant with the Council's HMO standards.

7 Hertfordshire County Council as Highways Authority

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

<https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/highways-roads-and-pavements/business-and-developer-information/development-management/highways-development-management.aspx> or by telephoning 0300 1234047.

8 Hertfordshire County Council as Highways Authority

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

<http://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/transtreets/highways/> or by telephoning 0300 1234047.

9 Hertfordshire County Council as Highways Authority

Debris and deposits on the highway: 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.

10 Hertfordshire County Council as Highways Authority

Roads to remain private: The applicant is advised that all new roads associated with this development will remain unadopted and the developer should put in place a permanent arrangement for long term maintenance. At the entrance of the new estate the road name plate should indicate that it is a private road to inform purchasers of their future maintenance liabilities. Further information is available via the website:

www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/transtreets/highways/ or by telephoning 0300 1234047.

10. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

1 The application file, forms, plans and supporting documents having the reference number relating to this item. Online copies may be obtained at <https://publicaccess.stevenage.gov.uk/online-applications/>

2 The Stevenage Borough Local Plan 2011-2031
<https://www.stevenage.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy/local-plan>

3 The Stevenage Borough Local Plan Partial Update 2025
<https://www.stevenage.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy/local-plan-partial-update/submission-to-secretary-of-state>

4 Stevenage Borough Council Supplementary Planning Documents: Parking Provision SPD 2025; Design Guidance SPD 2025; Developer Contributions SPD 2025.
<https://www.stevenage.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy/planning-library>

5 Hertfordshire County Council Local Transport Plan LTP4 2018-2031
<https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/media-library/documents/about-the-council/consultations/ltp4-local-transport-plan-4-complete.pdf>

5 Government advice contained in the National Planning Policy Framework 2024 and the Planning Practice Guidance.

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/67aafe8f3b41f783cca46251/NPPF_December_2024.pdf

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/planning-practice-guidance>

- 7 Representations made by statutory consultees and other interested parties referred to in this report. Online copies can be found on Public Access.

Meeting: Planning and Development Agenda Item:
Committee

Date: 4 June 2026

Author: Linda Sparrow

Lead Officer: Alex Robinson

Contact Officer: Linda Sparrow

Application No : 25/00907/FPM

Location : 45 Manor View Stevenage

Proposal : Demolition of existing care home (Class C2) building and erection of 10 no. dwellings (Class C3) comprising a pair of 2-storey semi-detached houses and three storey block of 8 no. flats along with associated works and landscaping.

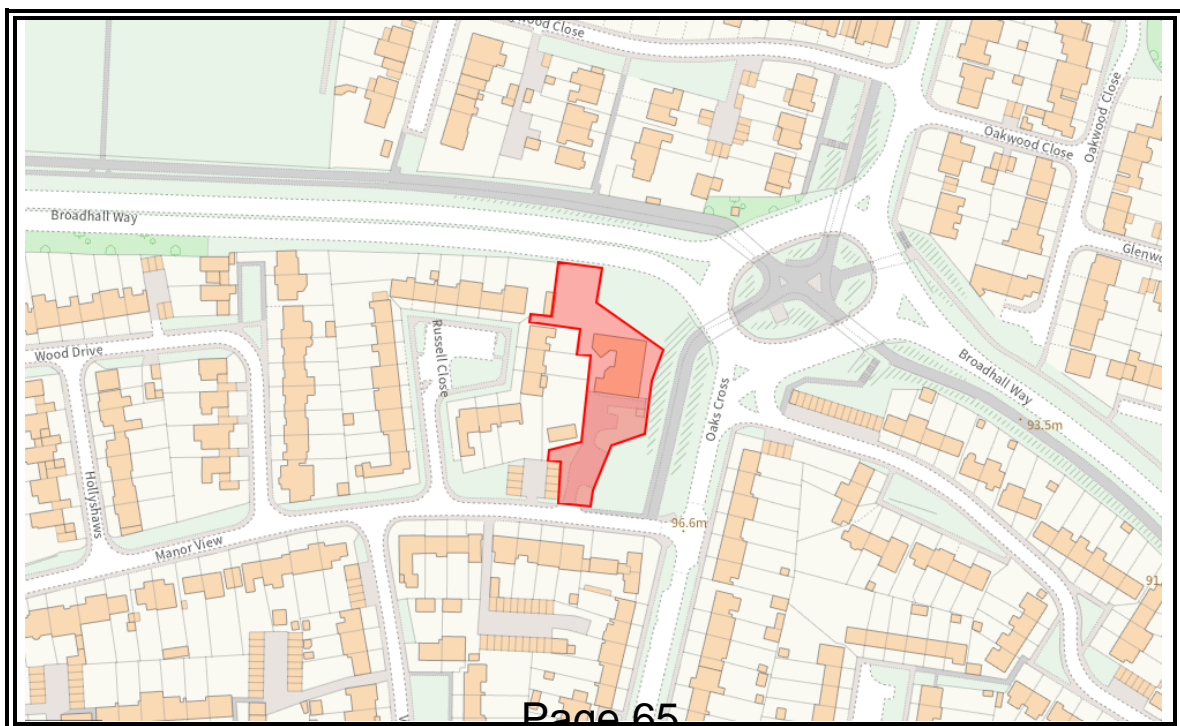
Drawing Nos.: 2161-PL01; 2161-PL03; 2161-PL04; 2161-PL05; 2161-PL06A; 2161-PL07A; 2161-PL08A; 2161-PL09A; 2161-PL11; 2161-PL02B; 2161-PL10B; B24063-101B;

Applicant : Hightown Housing Association

Agent: Barker Parry Town Planning Ltd

Date Valid: 23 December 2025

Recommendation: **GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION**



1. SITE DESCRIPTION

- 1.1 The application site comprises a vacant building which previously operated as an 8-bedroom care home that provided personal care to people with a learning disability or autism. Since 2023 the site has been leased by the applicant to a private provider, but this lease ceased in December 2025, and the site has been vacant since then.
- 1.2 The site is located on a prominent corner position at the junction of Oaks Cross and the A602 Broadhall Way, which is formed of a large roundabout with pedestrian and cycle subway access. Manor View is a small residential road accessed off Oaks Cross to the south of the site. The site sits slightly proud of the finished highway level due to grass banks between the site, foot/cycleway and vehicular highway edge. This does provide a good separation of the site from the highway, which is tree lined. The site area is approximately 1,970sqm with 917sqm of hard landscaping and 1,052sqm of soft landscaping.
- 1.3 The site is fairly open with boundary treatments only visible around the private amenity space to the north of the existing single storey buildings. To the north, the site sits around and abuts an area of green open space which fronts the roundabout and provides a green break between the built form of properties off Manor View and the A602 dual-carriageway.
- 1.4 This area of Broadwater is predominantly residential in character with two storey post war semi-detached and terraced housing visible. The site itself is occupied by a single storey buff coloured brick building with a dual pitched tiled roof.

2. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

- 2.1 11/00511/TPTPO Crown reduction of 10% and reduce lower laterals of 1no. Willow tree (T9) and removal of 4no. Ash trees (T1, T2, T3 & T4) protected by TPO52 28.10.2011. Tree consent granted.
- 2.2 18/00233/TPTPO Pollard 1no. Willow tree (T9) protected by Tree Preservation Order 52 04.06.2018. Tree consent granted.

3. THE CURRENT APPLICATION

- 3.1 This application seeks planning permission for the demolition of the existing vacant care home (Class C2) building and erection of 10 no. dwellings (Class C3) and associated landscaping, car parks and access arrangements.
- 3.2 The scheme would provide 2no. three-bedroom dwellinghouses and 8no. one-bedroom flats in a three-storey building.
- 3.3 The application comes before the Planning Committee as it is classified as a major application through the provision of 10 residential units.

4. PUBLIC REPRESENTATIONS

- 4.1 Following notification of the application via letters, the publication of a press notice and the erection of site notices, 9no. public representations have been received.
- 4.2 A summary of the comments received are set out below:

- Lack of parking
- Possibly a fox burrow on the site
- Inadequate neighbour and community consultations

- Developer only offered one day for their consultation
- Site was not vacant at time of submission (December 2025)
- Proposed dwellings too close to existing dwellings
- Scale not in keeping with the area
- Believe there are bats in the area
- Swift bricks should be conditioned
- Will devalue surrounding houses
- Loss of light and shadowing
- Noise and disturbance from increase in residents
- Overdevelopment of the site
- Covenants on site to remain as care home
- Number of cycles is acceptable but storage design is not.

4.3 The aforementioned is not a verbatim copy of the objections which have been raised. A copy of all representations that have been received can be viewed on the Council's website.

5. CONSULTATIONS

5.1. UK Power Networks

5.2. Please note there are LV underground cables on the site running within close proximity to the proposed development. Prior to commencement of work accurate records should be obtained from our Plan Provision Department

5.3. Thames Water

5.4. Waste Comments: Public sewers are crossing or close to your development. Build over agreements are required for any building works within 3 metres of a public sewer and, or within 1 metre of a public lateral drain. The proposed development is located within 15 metres of our underground wastewater assets and as such we would like an informative attached to any approval granted. With regard to SURFACE WATER drainage, Thames Water would advise that if the developer follows the sequential approach to the disposal of surface water we would have no objection. Thames Water would advise that with regard to WASTEWATER NETWORK and SEWAGE TREATMENT WORKS infrastructure capacity, we would not have any objection to the above planning application, based on the information provided. Water Comments: With regard to water supply, this comes within the area covered by the Affinity Water Company.

5.5. Affinity Water

5.6. We have no comments to make on this application.

5.7. Herts County Council Minerals and Waste Team

5.8. The Waste Planning Authority would expect to see a SWMP prepared to support this application. The SWMP must be prepared and agreed in consultation with the Waste Planning Authority prior to commencement of the project. The SWMP must be implemented throughout the duration of the project, from initial site preparation works to final completion of the construction phase.

5.9. SBC Environmental Health

5.10. The development site is situated adjacent to a busy road and therefore is subject to relatively high levels of noise. This Page 67 climate is recognised by the Acoustical

Investigation & Research Organisation Limited (AIRO) in its Acoustic Design Statement (reference DLW/7553/A, dated 7/11/2025). The main conclusion of this report is that, with robust mitigation measures, the site is capable of residential redevelopment of the kind set out in the application.

- 5.11. I broadly agree with this but note that the detailed noise mitigation measures and approach to overheating and ventilation have yet to be finalised. In light of this I believe that a condition, should the LPA be minded to authorise the application, would be a reasonable way of ensuring that the future residents of the scheme are adequately protected from transport noise.
- 5.12. This proposal may engage Local Plan Policy FP5 if the LPA considers that it amounts to redevelopment of a brownfield site. If so, the application is not accompanied by a Preliminary Risk Assessment (PRA) concerning soil contamination and/or the mitigation measures necessary to render the site safe as regards a range of receptors. Notwithstanding, I believe the risks associated with the proposals are modest and so I suggest a condition is imposed.

5.13. SBC Arboricultural Manager

- 5.14. I have now had the chance to carefully review this application and can confirm that I have no objection to the proposed development from an arboriculture viewpoint. However, there is a concern, regarding the amount of sunlight available for the south facing ground floor flats, which will be built in the shade of trees T4-T6. BRE 209 suggests that a living room should be able to receive a minimum of 2 hours of sunlight a day on 21 March. My question is whether this would be achievable and, if not with the current layout, would any pruning (perhaps crown reductions) be needed to accommodate this recommendation?

5.15. Herts County Council as Highways Authority

- 5.16. 15th January 2026: Notice is given under article 22 of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 that Hertfordshire County Council as Highway Authority recommends that permission be refused for the following reasons: Para 3.3.1 of the Transport Note (TN) says that the exiting access will be improved by reducing its radii which is shown the drawing (Ref-R-24-0123/Hy01) The proposed access arrangement is substandard in terms of its width. It shows the access radii is 5m and width is 4.1m which is below of standard width 5.5m and this will limit a two-way vehicle movements. A swept path analysis for 11.2m long refuse collection vehicle (RCV) is shown on the drawing (Ref-R-24-0123/SP-02). The proposed size of RCV is substandard comparing to the current strand RCV which 12.2m long. The applicant is advised submit a swept path analysis for 12.2m long refuse vehicle and consider parked cars onto Manor View. 3.Construction Traffic Management Plan: A construction traffic and Management plan should be submitted in the context of Logistics and Community safety standards (See www.CLOCS.org.uk) for further details.
- 5.17. 19th February 2026: based on the current submission, the highway authority considers that several significant concerns remain, • Substandard site access design. • Absence of adequate pedestrian footways. • Unsafe or unverified refuse vehicle movements and impacts on highway safety. These issues must be resolved before a positive recommendation can be considered. I am happy to discuss these matters further in person or online.
- 5.18. 9th April 2026: The Highway Authority is content in principle with the proposed access arrangement, which has been designed as a Copenhagen Crossing in order to prioritise active travel and improve pedestrian and cycle accessibility. Notwithstanding this, the

applicant is advised that the access improvements will need to be delivered via a minor Section 278 agreement with the Highway Authority to ensure the works are implemented safely and to the required adoptable standards. It is proposed that refuse collection will be undertaken from Manor View, which is considered to be acceptable in highway safety and operational terms. The scheme also proposes the provision of 14 car parking spaces, which is considered satisfactory and in accordance with the LPA's current parking standards. In respect of sustainable transport contributions, Stevenage Borough Council (SBC) is a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) charging authority. Accordingly, the Highway Authority will seek a CIL contribution of £96,810.00 (10 × £9,681) towards improvements to SBC's Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) – Route 4, to be secured via the appropriate CIL process in due course.

5.19. Herts County Council Adult Care Services

5.20. Adult Care Services (ACS) have now had a conversation with Hightown and it appears that the application does not relate to supported living – this was an error in the planning documents. As such, ACS has no comments to make in relation to this application.

5.21. Herts County Council Growth and Infrastructure Unit

5.22. Based on the information to date for the development of 10 dwellings we would seek financial contributions towards the following projects: Secondary Education Contribution towards new secondary education provision at the former Barnwell East site/ land at Redwing Close and/or provision serving the development (£34,824) index linked to BCIS 1Q2024 and BCIS Regional Factor).

5.23. Herts County Council as Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA)

5.24. We object to this planning application in the absence of an acceptable Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy: BRE365 Infiltration testing; FEH13 or FEH22 data should be used in rainfall scenarios; greenfield, brownfield and post development discharge rates are required; resilience measures are required; existing drainage network locations required; SuDS required; how biodiversity pillars of Suds has been addressed; storage rates; drainage layout plans required.

Officer response

5.25. At the time of writing this report, the applicant was seeking to address the points raised by the LLFA. If updated comments are received prior to the meeting and/or the drainage strategy is agreed an update will be provided, otherwise it is anticipated Members will agree to delegate powers being granted to the Director of Planning and Regulation to impose any conditions advised on any response provided after the committee meeting. However, it should be noted the LLFA does not object to the principle of the drainage strategy.

5.26. A decision will not be issued until the Legal Agreement associated with the development has been signed, which will allow time for updated comments to be received. Therefore, comments will be fully considered prior to a decision being issued. However, if the LLFA continues to raise an objection to this application and their concerns cannot be overcome, then this application will be referred back to the Planning and Development Committee for its decision.

5.27. SBC Ecology Officer

5.28. If off-site units are required to achieve the 10% gain, the following additionally must be submitted: A certificate or gain site number for off-site habitat units once the appropriate amount has been purchased; An updated complete statutory metric including on-site and off-site habitat baseline and post-development.

5.29. SBC Green Spaces Manager

5.30. I have no objections to the proposals in principle; however, to support a more robust assessment, we will need further detail on the proposed planting palette, specifications, and ongoing maintenance arrangements/strategy. I have not been able to locate this information within the submission, and without it, it's difficult to fully consider the suitability and long-term viability of the landscaping proposals. Given this, it would be advisable to secure these details through an appropriate condition to ensure they are addressed at the next stage.

6. RELEVANT PLANNING POLICIES

6.1 The Development Plan

6.1.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that planning applications be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. For Stevenage, the statutory development plan comprises the following documents:

- The Stevenage Borough Council Local Plan 2011-2031 (adopted 2019)
- The Hertfordshire Waste Core Strategy & Development Management Policies Development Plan Document 2011-2026 (adopted 2012)
- The Hertfordshire Waste Site Allocations Development Plan Document 2011-2026 (adopted 2014)
- The Hertfordshire Minerals Local Plan Review 2002-2016 (adopted 2007)

6.2 National Planning Policy Framework

6.2.1 The latest revision of the NPPF was published in December 2024. The policies it contains are material considerations which will be taken into account in dealing with applications. Due weight will be given to development plan policies according to their degree of consistency with the NPPF.

6.3 Housing Delivery Test and 5-Year Land Supply

6.3.1 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 95%, the authority should prepare an action plan to assess the causes of under delivery and identify actions to increase delivery in future years. 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 79 of the NPPF. This will be in addition to the preparation of an Action Plan. 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 under paragraph 11d) of the NPPF. The latest HDT results published by the Ministry of Housing, Communities, and Local Government (MHCLG) in December 2024 identifies that Stevenage delivered 38% of its housing requirement.

- 6.3.2 The Council, based on its HDT score is currently subject to the most severe penalty under paragraph 11(d) of the NPPF (2024). For reference, as this policy is now engaged, it means Local Plan policies would be classed as out-of-date. Consequently, Stevenage Borough Council must apply the presumption in favour of sustainable development in its decision making and give great weight towards the need to deliver housing. The Council must also apply a 20% buffer in its 5-year housing supply calculations, and it also has to produce an Action Plan in order to boost housing delivery.
- 6.3.3 On the 21st May 2024, the Council published its 5 Year Land Supply Update May 2024. This identifies that the Council can demonstrate a Housing Supply of **5.59 years** for the period 01 April 2024 to 31 March 2029, using the *Liverpool* methodology (spreads the delivery of historic undersupply of housing equally across the remainder of the Local Plan period) and guidance from the NPPF and Planning Practice Guidance. The 5-year land supply includes a 20% buffer.
- 6.3.4 However, the Revised Housing Technical Paper (June 2025) identifies that the Council's Housing Supply is at **5.49 years**, but this has yet to be confirmed through an Examination in Public (EiP) and is therefore not formally adopted at this time.

6.4 Planning Practice Guidance

- 6.4.1 The Planning Practice Guidance ("PPG"), with which Members are fully familiar, is an online resource containing guidance supplementing the NPPF. The PPG is a material consideration which should be taken into account in determining planning applications.

6.5 National Design Guide

- 6.5.1 The National Design Guide 2021 is Government guidance on the characteristics of well-designed places and demonstrates what good design means in practice. It has the same status as the PPG and should similarly be taken into account when determining planning applications.

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

- 6.6.1 The Stevenage Borough Local Plan 2011-2031 was adopted in 2019. Weight must be given to the policies it contains according to their degree of consistency with the NPPF (the closer the policies in the plan to the policies in the NPPF, the greater the weight that may be given).
- 6.6.2. In addition, the council is required to regard the local plan policies most relevant to determining the application as out-of-date because the application involves the provision of housing and the delivery of housing in the borough was substantially below the housing requirement over the last three years. Those policies are:

Policy SP1: Climate Change

Policy SP2: Sustainable development in Stevenage;

Policy SP5: Infrastructure;

Policy SP6: Sustainable transport;

Policy SP7: High quality homes;

Policy SP8: Good design;

Policy SP11: Flooding, and pollution;

Policy SP12: Green infrastructure and the natural environment;

Policy IT4: Transport assessments and travel plans;

Policy IT5: Parking and access;

Policy IT6: Sustainable transport;
Policy HO5: Windfall sites;
Policy HO7: Affordable housing targets;
Policy HO8: Affordable housing tenure, mix and design;
Policy HO9: House types and sizes;
Policy HO11: Accessible and adaptable housing;
Policy GD1: High quality design;
Policy FP1: Sustainable drainage
Policy FP2: Flood risk and management
Policy FP7: Pollution;
Policy FP8: Pollution sensitive uses;
Policy NH5: Trees and woodland.

- 6.6.3 According to the NPPF, the fact that these policies are regarded as out-of-date means that permission should be granted for the proposed development unless: i. the application of policies in the NPPF that protect areas or assets of particular importance provide a strong reason for refusing the development; or ii. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the NPPF taken as a whole, having particular regard to key policies for directing development to sustainable locations, making effective use of land, securing well-designed places and providing affordable homes, individually or in combination.

6.7 Local Plan Review and Update (2024)

6.7.1 Local Plan Partial Review and Update

The Stevenage Borough Local Plan 2011-2031 was adopted in 2019. The council concluded a full review of the plan in 2024, as required by regulation 10A of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended).

In response to the review, the council is carrying out a partial update of the local plan. Weight will be given to emerging policies according to:

- a) the stage of preparation of the emerging plan;
- b) the extent to which there are unresolved objections to the policies; and
- c) the degree of consistency between the policies and the most recent revision of the NPPF.

6.8 Supplementary Planning Documents

- 6.8.1 The following supplementary planning documents are relevant to determining the application:
- Parking Provision Supplementary Planning Document (February 2025);
 - Stevenage Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (February 2025);
 - Developer Contributions Supplementary Planning Document (February 2025);

6.9 Community Infrastructure Levy

- 6.9.1 Stevenage Borough Council adopted a Community Infrastructure Levy (“CIL”) 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.

7. APPRAISAL

7.1 The main issues in the assessment of the application are the principle of development, affordance housing and planning obligations, design and visual impact, impact on residential amenities, biodiversity, landscaping and ecology, and car parking and highway safety.

7.1.1 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 Principle of Development

7.2.1 The NPPF (2024) states that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. The NPPF also stipulates that decisions should play an active role in guiding development towards sustainable solutions, but in doing so should take local circumstances into account, to reflect the character, needs and opportunities of each area. In addition, the Framework also sets out that sustainable development needs to be pursued in a positive way and at the heart of the framework is a "presumption in favour of sustainable development". It also states that significant weight should be placed on both the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development.

7.2.2 The proposed site is undesignated in the adopted Stevenage Borough Local Plan 2011-2031 (2019) and is not allocated for residential development within the Local Plan. As such, the site is therefore regarded as a 'windfall site'.

7.2.3 Policy SP7 of the adopted local plan sets a strategic target of 7,600 homes to be provided within the borough over the plan period from 2011 to 2031. The emerging partial update of the local plan identifies that 4,956 of these homes remain to be delivered as of 2024. However, the overall target remains unchanged, and the proposed development would make a small but nonetheless positive contribution to meeting this target.

7.2.4 The spatial strategy for housing also remains unchanged; the majority of the planned new housing will be delivered on regeneration sites in the town centre and in urban extensions to the north, west and south-east of the town, with a sizeable minority delivered on smaller housing sites spread throughout the borough. An allowance is also made for residential development coming forward on sites not specifically allocated for any purpose in the local plan, referred to as "windfall" sites.

7.2.5 In this case, the application site is not designated for any particular purpose in the local plan. The proposed development is therefore treated as windfall development. Updated Policy HO5 of the Local Plan (2019) (windfall sites) stipulates that proposals should be on previously developed land, or an underused urban site and should not prejudice the Council's ability to deliver residential development on allocated sites. The updated Policy carries significant weight. Whilst the proposed development comprises partially previously developed land, the site as a whole could be considered to be an under-used urban site. There are no allocated sites nearby that would be detrimentally impacted by the proposal.

7.2.6 Chapter 11 of the NPPF stipulates that decisions should promote the effective use of land, and under paragraph 125(d) it promotes and supports the development of under-utilised land and buildings to meet identified needs. As the application is redeveloping an under-utilised, brownfield site and will be delivering dwellings of an identified need then this weighs in favour of the development and carries great weight. As such, the proposal is considered to comply with this Policy

- 7.2.7 Updated Policy SP2 (Sustainable Development) carries significant weight in the Local Plan Review and states residential developments must have a good level of access to local facilities. The site is located approximately 220m from the Local Centre on Oaks Cross as identified under Policy HC1. The site is also easily accessible to public transport as there is a bus route along Oaks Cross to the south. Additionally, access to the Town's substantial cycle network is less than 30m from the site entrance. As such, the application site is considered to have excellent access to local facilities and alternative forms of travel to the private car and, therefore, deemed to be within a sustainable location.
- 7.2.8 The effect of the proposal on housing choice (in terms of the range of housing types and sizes provided in the borough) is also a relevant consideration. Policy HO9 (House types and sizes) of the Local Plan (2019) (No change to this policy under the Local Plan Partial Update) states that there is a structural imbalance in the existing housing stock (albeit in a limited manner) whereby there is a lack of smaller properties and larger aspirational homes in the Borough.
- 7.2.9 The Design Guide SPD (2025) outlines that housing is an area of weakness across the town. One of the main issues is the lack of an appropriate mix of housing sizes, types, and tenures with a high proportion of three-bedroom terraced properties, and a lack of one- and two-bedroom properties. The lack of housing mix is exacerbated by changes in demographics leading to an increase in the number of single person households and couples needing homes.
- 7.2.10 Due to growth requirements for the town, there is a need to provide a substantial number of additional homes in Stevenage, and in particular, smaller dwellings or larger aspirational dwellings. Higher density development is set out as a key requirement of national guidance, and, where appropriate, densities will need to be raised in order to meet these targets for new homes.
- 7.2.11 The proposal seeks to provide 2no. three-bedroom semi-detached dwellings and 8no. one-bedroom flats. As such the proposal is considered to accord with Policy HO9 as it would mostly provide smaller dwellings which are an identified need.
- 7.2.12 Paragraph 61 of the NPPF (2024) states that to support the Governments objective of significantly boosting housing supply, it is important that a sufficient amount, and variety, of land comes forward where it is needed, that the needs of groups with specific housing requirements are met, and that land with permission is developed without unnecessary delay. In addition, para 61. of the NPPF states that the overall aim should be to meet as much of an area's identified housing need, including with an appropriate mix of housing types for the local community. As such, the proposed development would contribute to the aim of boosting housing supply without compromising the delivery of housing on allocated sites.
- 7.2.13 In summary, whilst the Council is currently able to demonstrate a five-year supply of deliverable housing sites, due to the under-delivery of housing as identified in recent HDT scores, paragraph 11(d) of the NPPF is engaged as there is a presumption in favour of delivering sustainable development. Consequently, this is considered to be a key material consideration in the assessment of this application.
- 7.2.14 The proposed development would contribute to the aim of boosting housing supply as required by the NPPF without compromising the delivery of housing on allocated sites or placing an undue burden on local infrastructure. There would be some economic benefit during the construction phase, and future occupiers would be likely to contribute to local services and facilities. Given the quantum of development (10 units), it is considered that

these benefits would be substantial and therefore attracts significant weight in favour of the proposal.

7.2.15 On balance, having regard to all the policy considerations laid out above, the proposed development is considered to be acceptable in principle.

7.3 Affordable Housing and Planning Obligations

7.3.1 Policy HO7 of the adopted Local Plan (2019) stipulates that planning permission would be granted for residential development which would maximise affordable housing provision. Taking this into consideration, there is a requirement to provide 25% of new homes to be affordable on previously developed sites. In this regard, there would be a requirement to provide 2.5 affordable units, rounded up to 3 units.

7.3.2 Turning to affordable housing tenure, mix and design, Policy HO8 states that planning permission will be granted where those dwellings:

- a) Are provided by the developer on site with at least 70% of the units being for rent and the remainder consisting of other tenures which is to be agreed with the Council's Housing team;
- b) Meets the requirements of Policy HO9 (House types and sizes);
- c) Are physically indistinguishable from other types of homes and are distributed across the site to avoid over-concentration in particular; and
- d) Will remain at an affordable price for future eligible households.

7.3.3 Paragraph 66 of the NPPF also advises on affordable housing tenure and mix, stating 'where major development involving the provision of housing is proposed, planning policies and decisions should expect that the mix of affordable housing required meets identified local needs, across Social Rent, other affordable housing for rent and affordable home ownership tenures.

7.3.4 In regard to affordable housing delivery, the Council's five-year land supply includes the provision of a number of affordable housing units. The Housing Technical paper (2024) advises that that the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) 2023 concluded the current unmet need for affordable housing totals 1,612 households. This is made up of households in Stevenage that are currently living in unsuitable housing and are unable to afford their own housing.

7.3.5 Of these households, 802 currently occupy affordable housing that does not meet the household's current needs. There is, therefore, a current need from 810 households in Stevenage that currently need affordable housing and do not currently occupy affordable housing. In addition, the SHMA assessment concludes there is an additional 110 households annually needing affordable housing in Stevenage. A further 312 households have then been identified as households that can afford market rents but aspire to home ownership. The Council's most recently published affordable housing need is therefore represented below –

Figure 4: Overall need for Affordable Housing 2022-31 in Stevenage by property size

| Stevenage | Affordable Housing Need Households unable to afford | Affordable Housing Need Households aspiring to home ownership | Affordable Housing (Households) |
|---------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1 bedroom | 94 | 103 | 197 |
| 2 bedrooms | 442 | 125 | 567 |
| 3 bedrooms | 993 | 84 | 1,077 |
| 4+ bedrooms | 272 | - | 272 |
| TOTAL HOUSING NEED | 1,802 | 312 | 2,114 |

7.3.6 This is also reflected in the appeal decision letter for Land West of Lytton Way appeal with respect to the under delivery of affordable homes whereby the inspector states (para. 87) and quote

“I have been referred to other schemes which have been granted planning permission or it has been resolved that planning permission should be granted. In these schemes, for one reason or another, affordable housing provision has been lower than the expected policy figure of 20%. Indeed 52 homes would equate to over 17% of the affordable housing that has been delivered thus far in the Local Plan period. In these circumstances of poor delivery of affordable homes and with sizeable unmet need for such housing, I give the provision of affordable housing significant weight”.

7.3.7 Paragraph 58 of the NPPF states that planning obligations must only be sought where they meet all the following tests, as contained in Regulation 122 of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Regulations 2010.

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

7.3.8 Paragraph 59 of the NPPF states where up-to-date policies have set out the contributions expected from development, planning applications that comply with them should be assumed to be viable.

7.3.9 To be policy compliant, the development would need to provide 25% affordable housing provision based on policy HO7. The applicant is proposing 3 affordable units, delivered as affordable rent which are to be secured through a s.106 legal agreement. The application is therefore considered to be fully compliant with the affordable housing policies and is acceptable in this regard. If planning permission were to be granted for this development, the affordable housing the development would provide is deemed to be a significant benefit.

Other Financial Contributions

7.3.10 Financial contributions are also required in line with the Developer Contributions Supplementary Planning Documents (2025). In this regard, only a contribution to be made towards the Local Training Fund if target employment of Stevenage residents is not met as follows:

- £4,000 per number of targeted jobs not filled by Stevenage residents;
- £2,000 per number of targeted apprenticeships not filled by Stevenage residents or students; and
- £500 per apprenticeship position as an administrative fee towards the brokerage system to fill apprenticeship positions;

- If a major development could not provide suitable apprenticeship opportunities due to the quick construction of the development project, and the resultant lack of suitable opportunity to provide apprenticeships, they should pay a lesser fee of £1,000 per number of targeted apprenticeships not created rather than the £2,000 fee.

7.3.11 These targets do not add a requirement for additional jobs that would add a financial burden to the developer or contractor. The targets merely add a requirement that a portion of the jobs will be targeted to local residents. The in-lieu payments do not add a significant financial burden to the developer or contractor and will only be required if the developer or contractor does not meet the employment targets.

7.3.12 The Developer Contributions SPD (2025) also has a requirement for fees to be paid to cover the monitoring of legal agreements. This cover requesting payments, ensuring transfer and/or expenditure of money and keeping/publishing records of contributions in line with regulations. The Council will seek 5% of the value of contributions being monitored with a minimum fee of £1000.00 and a cap of £50,000.00. This is considered a fair cost that will reflect the value of the legal agreement and will not affect the viability of a scheme being delivered.

7.3.13 Hertfordshire County Council Growth and Infrastructure Team have assessed the proposal and based on the provision of 10 dwellings, is requesting £34,824.00 towards new secondary education provision at the former Barnwell East site/land at Redwing Close and/or provision serving the development (index linked to BCIS 1Q2024). Furthermore, monitoring fees for each trigger within the legal agreement will attract a charge of £420 (adjusted for inflation against RPI January 2024) per trigger point.

7.3.14 The applicant has confirmed agreement to the aforementioned contributions which are being sought by the Borough Council and County Council. As such, should the committee be minded to grant planning permission, these contributions would also be secured as part of any s.106 legal agreement.

7.4 Design and visual impact

Policy Background

7.4.1 Chapter 12. (Achieving well-designed places) of the NPPF (2024) stipulates that the creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities. Being clear about design expectations, and how these will be tested, is essential for achieving this. So too is effective engagement between applicants, communities, local planning authorities and other interests throughout the process. Where development is not well designed, permission should be refused.

7.4.2 Policies SP8 and GD1 of the Local Plan Partial Review (2024) are deemed to carry significant weight, this is because they generally reflect the good design principles outlined in the NPPF and National Design Guide, i.e., that these policies require developments to not adversely impact the amenities of neighbouring occupiers as a good design principle. Policy GD2 (design certification) is a new policy emerging from the review and states that the Council will support developments that are designed to achieve high levels of certification against nationally and internationally recognised sustainability standards such as BREEAM excellent, Secured by Design Silver or higher or BRE Home Quality Mark.

- 7.4.3 The proposed semi-detached dwellings would be located to the rear of No. 15 Russell Close whilst the three-storey flatted element would be sited on the location of the existing building.
- 7.4.4 Looking first at the pair of semi's, the area is well characterised by semi-detached and terraced dwellings of brick walls and plain tiled roofs. They are designed and oriented to utilise good use of the land to the north of the site as rear gardens, and sites the dwellings at an angle away from existing properties to help with outlook, etc. The simple architecture is in-keeping with the area and does not propose to introduce houses which would sit at odds with the wider area. They would be constructed in brown multi blend brickwork with grey concrete tiled pitched roofs.
- 7.4.5 The three-storey flat roof flatted building would see an increase in built form over the existing single storey building. However, Government Policy as defined in the NPPF encourages development proposals to make effective use of land. Consequently, the proposal would align with this overall policy objective. The flat block would be constructed in multiple material choices including, red multi blend brickwork, buff brickwork, brown multi blend brickwork, and light grey zinc vertical cladding.
- 7.4.6 Local vernacular is predominantly buff or red multi bricks, but the use of differing materials is not considered to be harmful to the visual amenities of the area and will instead add architectural interest and character to this prominent focal point site.
- 7.4.7 It is accepted that a three-storey flat roofed building is visually different to the two-storey pitched roof terraced dwellings which are prevalent in this neighbourhood area. However, the area does contain some examples of flat roof buildings and therefore, a taller flat roofed building is not entirely out of keeping with the character of the area and the use of high-quality materials and a modern, contemporary design will add interest to views along Oaks Cross and Manor View and create a flagship building on this prominent corner location as you enter Oaks Cross.

Accessible and adaptable housing

- 7.4.8 Policy HO11 of the Local Plan (2019) requires at least 10% of dwellings within major residential dwellings to comply with optional standard M4(3) for wheelchair users, with a further 40% complying with optional standard M4(2) for accessible and adaptable dwellings.
- 7.4.9 The submitted Design and Access Statement advises that the pair of semi-detached dwellings have been designed to M4(2) standards and all 8 flats are designed to M4(2) enhanced accessibility standards, however, as a passenger lift is not included in the building, the upper floor flats are not readily accessible by wheelchair users despite the flats themselves being designed to accommodate wheelchair users.
- 7.4.10 Accordingly, the application is considered to meet the requirements of Policy HO11 as 2 dwellings and 3 flats are accessible which is 50% of the quantum of development.

7.5 Impact on Neighbouring residential amenity

Policy Background

- 7.5.1 Policy GD1 of the local plan requires that development does not lead to an adverse impact on the amenities of neighbouring occupiers. In the emerging partial update of the local plan, Policy GD1 is amended to refer to "unacceptable adverse impacts" on neighbouring amenities. This change is proposed to reflect the fact that in some instances, impacts on

amenities may be deemed to be acceptable despite being adverse. The emerging policy is afforded significant weight.

Outlook and Privacy

- 7.5.2 The relationship between the semi-detached dwellings and the dwellings in Russell Close is off-set, and more akin to back to side orientation. In this regard, the Design Guide SPD (2025) requires at least 15m between the two buildings. The main rear elevation is angled away from the Russell Close dwellings but the recessed element that is closest to No.15, is approximately 15m. The main rear elevation is approximately 20m from the side of No.14 Russell Close and this neighbour has no windows in their side elevation at first floor and only a door at ground floor level. In this regard the separation distances are considered acceptable to minimise impacts from overlooking or loss of privacy.
- 7.5.3 The front of the dwellings would face the flatted block, which has no clearly defined front, side or rear elevation, as all façades comprise habitable room windows. The buildings would be separated by approximately 10m, resulting in upper floor relationships where bedrooms and living spaces face one another.
- 7.5.4 This separation distance falls below the guidance typically set out in the Council's Design Guide SPD (2025) and therefore has the potential to give rise to some adverse impacts in respect of outlook and privacy between the two elements of the scheme. However, the SPD is intended to be applied flexibly, particularly in constrained urban environments, and does not prescribe minimum distances as absolute requirements.
- 7.5.5 In such contexts, reduced separation distances are not uncommon, and Policy GD1 acknowledges that a degree of adverse impact may arise, with refusal only justified where those impacts would be unacceptable. Having regard to the site's constraints, the urban character of the area, and the overall layout of the scheme, it is considered that any impacts arising would be limited and would not result in an unacceptable level of harm. As such, the relationship is considered to fall within acceptable parameters for this form of development.
- 7.5.6 The front of the flat block is in excess of 25m from the rear elevations of the dwellings in Russell Close which is considered acceptable.

Sunlight and Daylight

- 7.5.7 In terms of sunlight and daylight, due to the siting of the flat block and semis being to the east and with additional storeys to the existing bungalow, there may be some level of shadowing in the rear gardens of the existing properties off Manor View. However, the distance of the proposed buildings from the boundary is such that this is likely to be minimal and would only occur for a limited time in the morning and likely only affecting the bottom end of the gardens. The proposals would not therefore have a significant detrimental impact on the level of sunlight or daylight which is currently enjoyed by existing properties.

7.6 Impact Upon Amenities of Future Residents

- 7.6.1 Paragraph 135 of the NPPF (2024) sets out that planning decision should ensure create places with a high standard of amenity for existing and future residents. Paragraph 124 of the National Design Guide states that "*Good design promotes quality of life for the occupants and users of buildings. This includes function – buildings should be easy to*

use. It also includes comfort, safety, security, amenity, privacy, accessibility and adaptability”.

- 7.6.2 Paragraph 126 of the National Design Guide also emphasises that “*well-designed homes and communal areas within buildings provide a good standard and quality of internal space. This includes room sizes, floor-to-ceiling heights, internal and external storage, sunlight, daylight and ventilation. The quality of internal space needs careful consideration in higher density developments, particularly for family accommodation, where access, privacy, daylight and external amenity space are also important*”.

Internal Living Standards

- 7.6.3 Policies SP8 and GD1 of the Local Plan Partial Review (2024) relate to high quality and good design and are deemed to carry significant weight, this is because they generally reflect the good design principles outlined in the NPPF and National Design Guide, i.e., that these policies require developments do not adversely impact the amenities of neighbouring occupiers as a good design principle. These policies state that planning permission will be granted where the proposed scheme, under criterion j. meets the nationally described space standards. Appendix C of the Local Plan (2019) sets out the minimum gross internal floor space standards for dwellings which is in line with the Government’s nationally described space standards. Through the Local Plan Review, these policies now carry significant weight.

- 7.6.4 The semi-detached dwellings are three-bedroom, 5 persons and are 99.6sqm and 100.6sqm which both exceed the minimum requirement of 93sqm and are therefore acceptable. Further, all bedrooms exceed the minimum 7.5sqm for a single and 11.5sqm for a double.

- 7.6.5 The flats are one-bedroom, 2-persons and are between 50.6sqm and 55.6sqm which all exceed the minimum requirement of 50sqm. Again, all bedrooms meet the minimum space standards for double rooms.

Private amenity space

- 7.6.6 In respect to private amenity space, the Design Guide SPD (2025) requires that all dwellings should have private open space of at least 50sqm and at least 10m deep and that flatted developments should have a communal space of 50sqm for the first 5 flats and 10sqm for each additional flat.

- 7.6.7 The dwellings have over 150sqm each and whilst there are no demarcated private communal areas, each flat has a private balcony of at least 4.5sqm with a fully landscaped site that offers a good quality external space for additional use by residents if they choose. Further, the site is within walking distance of Shephalbury Park and Ridlins Athletic Track, such that the site has easy access to excellent public open space to mitigate the lack of private communal space on site.

Noise and Pollution

- 7.6.8 Policy FP7 of the Local Plan Partial Review (2024), states that developments should minimise, and where possible, reduce air, water, light and noise pollution. Policy FP8 stipulates that 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. Given the proposed development would be located

within an existing residential area; harm from noise is not considered an issue. Through the Local Plan Review, these policies now carry significant weight.

7.6.9 The application has been reviewed by Environmental Health who raised no concerns or objections subject to a condition requiring the submission of a noise impact assessment that confirms the development, as built, conforms to the residential noise standards in the habitable rooms. The applicant has agreed to this condition.

7.6.10 Whilst comments from local residents regarding an increase in the number of residents causing noise and disturbance issues are noted, any issues arising in this regard would be a matter for Environmental Health. Notwithstanding this, the development is a residential development in a residential area and therefore a suitable and compatible use.

Daylight and Sunlight

7.6.11 The application has not included a daylight and sunlight report. However, the Arboricultural Manager has raised the question of daylight levels in the flat block due to the trees to the south as BRE 209 suggests that a living room should be able to receive a minimum of 2 hours of sunlight a day on 21 March.

7.6.12 When reviewing the proposed floor plans of the flat block, all living rooms are dual aspect to the south and east or the south and west which means they have unencumbered windows on the east and west elevations to mitigate any impacts on the windows to the south. In this regard, whilst a daylight and sunlight report has not been submitted, officers are satisfied that the living spaces can receive an adequate amount of daylight and sunlight.

7.7 Car Parking, Cycle Provision and Highway impact

National Planning Policy Framework and Planning Practice Guidance

7.7.1 Chapter 9. (Promoting Sustainable Transport) of the NPPF (2024) sets out a requirement to consider transport issues, which includes parking, at the earliest stages of a development proposal. Paragraph 116 of the NPPF (2024) states “*Development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe.*”. Taking this into consideration, paragraph 117 of the NPPF (2024) stipulates that applications for development should:

- a) give priority first to pedestrian and cycle movements, both within the scheme and with neighbouring areas; and second – so far as possible – to facilitating access to high quality public transport, with layouts that maximise the catchment area for bus or other public transport services, and appropriate facilities that encourage public transport use;
- b) address the needs of people with disabilities and reduced mobility in relation to all modes of transport;
- c) create places that are safe, secure and attractive – which minimise the scope for conflicts between pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles, avoid unnecessary street clutter, and respond to local character and design standards;
- d) allow for the efficient delivery of goods, and access by service and emergency vehicles; and
- e) be designed to enable charging of plug-in and other ultra-low emission vehicles in safe, accessible and convenient locations.

- 7.7.2 Policy IT5 of the local plan requires developments to provide parking in accordance with the council's Parking Provision SPD (2025). Policy SP6 (Sustainable Transport), has been significantly updated in the Local Plan Partial Review and requires, amongst other things, for developments to demonstrate they are in a sustainable location and will promote active travel by non-car modes of transport by providing appropriate cycle parking and prioritise public transport.
- 7.7.3 Three-bedroom dwellings require two spaces each whilst one-bedroom flats require one space. This gives an overall site requirement of 12 spaces.
- 7.7.4 Parking spaces should be 2.5m wide and 5m long and the submitted plans show this is achieved. The site is located within Residential Accessibility Zone 3 which allows for a 25% reduction in spaces, but the applicant has chosen to provide the full requirement of 12 spaces. Concerns from local residents regarding a lack of parking are noted but the application is fully policy compliant in this regard and therefore not a reason to refuse planning permission.

Visitor Spaces

- 7.7.5 Visitor spaces are only required where parking for the dwellings is allocated and is required at 0.25 spaces per dwelling which would equate to 2.5 spaces, rounded to 3 spaces. The parking is not shown on the plans to be allocated and therefore is not required in this instance. However, the applicant could technically provide 9 spaces in accordance with the SPD due to being within an accessibility zone. Given the applicant is providing the full complement of 12 spaces, these 3 additional spaces could technically be used by visitors. Therefore, the proposal would be in full alignment with the Council's adopted standards.
- 7.7.6 All parking spaces will have the necessary underground infrastructure for electric vehicle parking. The number of EV charging points will be determined by Building Control through Approved Document S. The provision of the underground infrastructure can be secured via a condition.

Disabled Spaces

- 7.7.7 The standards for disabled spaces in residential developments are 1 space per wheelchair user dwelling, which is classified as those dwellings meeting Building Regulations M4(3). None of the proposed units fall within this category and therefore the required provision is zero.
- 7.7.8 Notwithstanding this, the applicant has opted to provide 1no. disabled space which is considered to be a benefit of the proposal that weighs in favour of the development.

Cycle Storage

- 7.7.9 In terms of cycle parking, the Parking Provision SPD requires 1 storage space per bedroom for all types of residential unit. This would require the dwellings to provide 3 spaces and the flat block to provide 8 spaces. All storage facilities should be secure and lockable.

- 7.7.10 The submitted plans show that each dwelling has sufficient garden space to easily accommodate the necessary storage and there is a storage unit to the south of the flat block that can accommodate 10 cycles in single storey storage with additional, spare storage space that could accommodate sundry items or adaptable cycles. The application is therefore acceptable in this regard.
- 7.7.11 Comments from Cycling UK are noted about the design of the cycle storage being vertical rather than Sheffield stands. The Parking Provision SPD does not specify the design or style of cycle parking and therefore there is no policy basis upon which to refuse the proposed design. Adapted cycle parking is only required on residential developments where wheelchair user dwellings M4(3) are provided. As no such dwellings are to be provided on this site then adapted cycle storage is not a policy requirement.

Highway Safety

- 7.7.12 Herts County Council as Highways Authority (HA) reviewed the application and initially raised some concerns over the size of the site access, inadequate swept path analyses, and the lack of a construction management plan. Following a meeting between all parties to discuss the concerns, and the subsequent submission of updated plans, the HA advised that they are content in principle with the proposed access arrangement, which has been designed as a Copenhagen Crossing in order to prioritise active travel and improve pedestrian and cycle accessibility.
- 7.7.13 Notwithstanding this, the applicant is advised that the access improvements will need to be delivered via a minor Section 278 agreement with the Highway Authority to ensure the works are implemented safely and to the required adoptable standards and an informative can be imposed on any decision notice advising of this. The HA also require the imposition of a condition for the submission of a construction management plan prior to commencement which the applicant has agreed to.
- 7.7.14 The development is not considered to overburden existing infrastructure given that it would be CIL liable, and the purpose of the CIL payment is to mitigate infrastructure impacts.
- 7.7.15 The HA have advised that they will submit a request for circa £96,810.00 as a CIL contribution towards improvements of the cycle network but that this will not be required as a section 106 contribution.
- 7.7.16 Given the site access is less than 30m from the access point of a shared cycle and pedestrian network to the east of the site, the development is considered to be in an excellent location for sustainable modes of transport away from the motor vehicle and a s106 financial contribution in this regard would not be necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms. The site is not identified in Policy IT7 as a site that is required to contribute to the improvement of pedestrian and cycle links. As such, the approach of seeking the contribution as a CIL contribution is a reasonable, and acceptable, approach.
- 7.7.17 In summary and subject to appropriate conditions if members were minded to grant permission, the development would not have a detrimental impact on the safety and operation of the nearby highway network.

7.8 Impact on the Environment

- 7.8.1 The application site is an existing, vacant care home building and associated hardstanding for parking, and prior to the original development, the site was part of open fields. Therefore, there would be very low risk of contamination.
- 7.8.2 Following consultation with the Council's Environmental Health section, they have raised no concerns from a land contamination perspective subject to the imposition of conditions. The conditions imposed would require a remediation strategy to be submitted for approval in the event that contamination is identified during the construction phase of development.

Groundwater

- 7.8.3 The application site is not located within a Source Protection Zone, and no concerns have been raised by Thames Water or Affinity Water with respect to potential impact from the development although Thames Water have advised that the applicant would need to make contact with them prior to commencing development as they have underground assets in the vicinity of the site.

Air Quality

- 7.8.4 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 Air Quality Annual Status Report (ASR) 2019 by Stevenage Borough Council identifies that the development site is not located within, or near, an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA).
- 7.8.5 In order to mitigate the construction phase, it is recommended a condition is imposed on any permission issued. This condition would require the applicant to adhere to the CMP which details measures on controlling levels of dust and air pollutions which are generated during the construction phase of development.
- 7.8.6 With regards to the operational aspect of the development, due to its limited scale, the proposed development would give rise to a very small increase in NO₂ emissions which, in accordance with IAQM/EPUK guidance, is identified as having a negligible impact at all receptors in the area. As such, the need for additional mitigation has not been identified as being required. As such, the Council's Environmental Health Section has not raised any concerns with respect to the operational impact the development would have on air quality.

Noise Pollution

- 7.8.7 With respect to noise, Policy FP8: Pollution Sensitive Uses stipulates 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.
- 7.8.8 Dealing firstly with the impact of noise from the construction phase of the development, detailed measures will be required in the CMP. Through the CMP the hours in which noisy activities take place are to be controlled along with the imposition of relevant mitigation measures being put in place to minimise the impact of noise from construction activities. Moreover, if a breach were to take place, the Council can enforce the condition accordingly. Consequently, the imposition of such a condition is supported by the Council's Environmental Health Section.

7.8.9 With regards to noise which could arise during the operational phase of development, if any complaints arose regarding future occupiers, these would be dealt with by the Borough Council's Environmental Health department.

Light Pollution

7.8.10 In terms of light pollution, Policy FP7: Pollution of the adopted Local Plan (2019) requires all development proposals should minimise, where possible, 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.

7.8.11 Turning to the operational side of the development, the dwellings would be set back from the main highways and therefore any external lighting is not considered to prejudice highway safety or cause a substantive nuisance to neighbouring residential properties. A condition can be imposed to ensure external lighting is not directed towards highways.

7.8.12 In terms of lighting associated with the construction aspect of the proposed development, this is dealt with as part of a Construction Management Plan.

7.9 Development and Flood Risk

7.9.1 In the emerging Local Plan Partial Update (2024), flood risk and drainage policies are significantly revised. The existing policy FP1 is replaced by a new sustainable drainage policy, which places an emphasis on the use of the most sustainable SuDS features and methods of surface water discharge and now requires all major and minor applications to incorporate SuDS unless there are clear and convincing reasons for not doing so. Meanwhile, existing policies FP2 and FP3 are combined into a new, more comprehensive flood risk policy, which largely reflects national flood risk policies but also seeks to protect watercourses and flood defences. Policy SP11 encourages direction of development to low-risk areas, where possible to utilise SuDS features and to overall protect watercourses and ensure developments do not result in acceptable harm to human health or the natural environment as a result of pollution.

7.9.2 The application site is located within Flood Zone 1 within the Environment Agency's flood risk map. Flood Zone 1 is defined as land having less than 1 in 1000 annual probability of flooding and is the lowest risk. Therefore, all developments are generally directed to Flood Zone 1.

7.9.3 The application is accompanied by a flood risk assessment and drainage strategy which have been assessed by Herts County as the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA). The LLFA raised a number of objections. The applicant has submitted amended details which are currently still with the LLFA for assessment.

7.9.4 Should members be minded to resolve to grant planning permission then it is requested that delegated authority be given to the Director of Planning and Regulation to work with the applicant and the LLFA to agree an acceptable drainage strategy and, in consultation with the Chair of the Planning and Development Committee, to amend or add to the

conditions subject to which the permission would be granted, where such amendments or additions would satisfy the relevant national policy tests and would most effectively deliver the development if the Committee has resolved to approve this application.

7.9.5 However, should the LLFA's outstanding concerns not be resolved, then it is recommended this application be referred back to the Planning and Development Committee for its decision.

7.10 Trees and Landscaping

7.10.1 Policy NH5 of the adopted Local Plan (2019) states that development proposals will be expected to protect and retain individual trees within the development site and should include new planting where appropriate.

7.10.2 The application is accompanied by an Arboricultural Impact Assessment (AIA) by Middlemarch Environmental Ltd which identifies 1no. Category A tree, 6no. trees and 3no. groups of trees in Category B and 5no. trees and 6no. groups of trees in Category C. No trees are identified as being in Category U.

7.10.3 For clarity the tree classification system is as follows:

- Category A: Trees of high quality with an estimated remaining life expectancy of at least 40 years.
- Category B: Trees of moderate quality with an estimated remaining life expectancy of at least 20 years.
- Category C: Trees of low quality with an estimated remaining life expectancy of at least 10 years, or young trees with a stem diameter below 150 mm.
- Category U: Trees in such a condition that they cannot realistically be retained as living trees in the context of the current land use for longer than 10 years.

7.10.4 There is a Tree Preservation Order (No.52) on the site which covers 9no. trees.

- T1 through T4 – Ash
- T5 – Sycamore
- T6 through T8 – Ash
- T9 – Golden Weeping Willow

7.10.5 None of the TPO trees are shown in the AIA as being removed.

7.10.6 Two individual trees and two groups, and one partial group are proposed to be removed which are identified in the AIA as all in Category C and are detailed as follows:

| Tree/ Tree Group Reference | Species | Retention Category | Reason for Removal |
|------------------------------------------------------|----------------|--------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| T7 | Lawson cypress | C | Proposed landscaping. |
| T8 | Snowy mespilus | C | Within footprint of proposed building. |
| G6* | Mixed species | C | Proposed landscaping, proximity to proposed building, bin store and cycle store. |
| G7 | Ash | C | Proposed landscaping. |
| G8 | Mixed species | C | Proposed landscaping |
| Key | | | |
| *: Partial removal of trees within group or hedgerow | | | |

- 7.10.7 The Council's Arboricultural Manager has reviewed the application and raised no concerns from an Arboricultural point of view but did raise the question of whether some of the trees on the southern side of the flat block would impact the light levels inside the flats. This has been addressed in paragraphs 7.6.10 and 7.6.11 of the report.
- 7.10.8 The Council's Green Spaces Manager has reviewed the landscaping proposals and raised no objections or concerns in principle. However, they note that the level of detail is insufficient to make a detailed assessment. Accordingly, they have requested that a condition be imposed to require the submission of a more detailed landscaping strategy that includes a maintenance strategy and species planting information. This can be secured for prior to occupation and as such there is no requirement to seek specific consent from the applicant to impose such a condition.

7.11 Biodiversity, Ecology and Protected Species

- 7.11.1 Paragraph 13 of Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 sets out that every planning permission granted for the development of land in England shall be deemed to have been granted subject to the 'biodiversity gain condition' requiring development to achieve a net gain of 10% of biodiversity value. There are statutory exemptions and transitional arrangements which mean that the biodiversity gain condition does not apply in some circumstances.
- 7.11.2 Applicants for planning permission are required to make a statement as to whether the biodiversity gain condition will apply if permission is granted, and, if it does not apply, under which exemption they are applying.
- 7.11.3 The development is subject to the BNG condition and therefore the applicant should provide a 10% net gain on site. Where this is not possible, the hierarchy states that the next best option is to purchase habitat units from a suitable Land Bank or Broker, and the least favourable option is to purchase credits from the Government for them to provide BNG at a suitable site.
- 7.11.4 The submitted BNG assessment advises that the site post development would result in a 0.69% loss of biodiversity which equates to 0.55 habitat units. The applicant will therefore be required to provide the required uplift off-site which would be secured through conditions.
- 7.11.5 The Council's Ecology Officer has reviewed the application and raised no objections or concerns subject to the mandatory submission of the Biodiversity Gain Plan prior to commencement.
- 7.11.6 The Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) concludes that the habitats on site are of low ecological value, and no protected species of wildlife, flora or fauna were observed.
- 7.11.7 The PEA notes that some of the vegetation on site may have potential to support foraging and commuting bats but no evidence of bats were found inside the building on site and whilst four trees on site have potential to roost bats, again, no evidence was found on site as to bats being present.
- 7.11.8 The PEA notes the site provides some suitable foraging and refuge habitat, in the form of dense scrub, scattered scrub and introduced shrub, for terrestrial mammals such as hedgehog. However, connectivity to other nearby areas of suitable habitat is limited by the presence of busy roads. Several shallow mammal holes, clearly not created by badger, were found in the on-site amenity grassland. It is considered likely that these were

created by fox (*Vulpes vulpes*). No recommendations have been provided to protect these mammal holes and therefore it is not considered necessary to condition otherwise.

7.11.9 Two representations were received requesting conditions for swift boxes – one for 6no. boxed and one for 8no. boxes. There are no Local Plan policies regarding this matter and currently no definitive rules or guidance in the NPPF or planning practice guidance that sets out a specific number of boxes or formula for calculating the number. Notwithstanding this, the applicant has raised no objections to the imposition of a condition for 6no. boxes.

7.12 Other Matters

Sustainable construction and climate change

7.12.1 Under the Local Plan Partial Review, Policy FP1 has been revised to cover sustainable drainage and Policy SP1: climate change, is the new relevant policy in this regard. The fundamental objective of Policy SP1 remains the same as previous policy FP1, however, it sets out in more detail the objectives to adapting to climate change. This policy requires, amongst other things off setting of emissions targets if not met on site, water usage targets, rainwater harvesting, grey water recycling, use of sustainable materials and practices on site, ultra-low and zero carbon combined heat and power systems and urban greening (green roofs and walls). This policy is further supported by a suite of new climate change polices, CC1 through CC6 which cover a broad range of topics but which, through the partial review and examination in public should be applied flexibly as they may not always be appropriate, and it should be noted that Policy CC1 requires only major planning applications to provide an energy statement.

7.12.2 The Council's Design Guide SPD (2025) sets outs additional requirements with respect to climate change. The guide states that all developments are required to make efforts to minimise energy usage and to incorporate methods of using renewable energy.

7.12.3 The application is accompanied by an Energy Statement by Abbey Consultants that comprehensively sets out the ways in which the development will be constructed to meet or exceed the relevant Building Regulations.

7.12.4 The strategy achieves and meets the following requirements which can be secured with a condition:

- Maximises the energy efficiency performance of the building fabric, in accordance with the energy hierarchy.
- The fabric energy efficiency (DFEE) achieves a 8% reduction over the minimum standards defined by Building Regulations Part L1 2021 (TFEE).
- The carbon dioxide emissions of the houses are further minimised at the 'Be Green' stage of the energy hierarchy by deploying air source heat pump technology to provide the dwellings with heating and hot water.
- Reduces a total estimated 5.74 tonnes of CO2 compared to the Part L 2021 baseline. This equates to a 63% saving.
- Complies with all of the main compliance criteria required by Part L 2021 of the Building Regulations.
- Details a specification of water efficiency measures which will limit the water consumption of the dwellings to no more than 110 litres/person/day.

Waste and Recycling

- 7.12.5 The Design Guide (2025) states, provision should be made within new development for the storage and collection of waste from a site. The layout plan shows that the pair of semi-detached dwellings have sufficient space within their gardens and curtilage to accommodate all the waste and recycling bins required.
- 7.12.6 Following concerns raised by the Highways Authority over the access to the site and the manoeuvrability of refuse vehicles, the plans were amended to move the bin store for the flat block nearer to the site access in order that refuse vehicles do not need to enter and the bins are within the required 30m drag distance.
- 7.12.7 Using the Council's Environmental Operations teams' calculator, there would be a requirement for 5no. 360 litre recycling bins, 1no. 240 litre food waste bin and 1no. 1100 litre waste bin, giving a total space requirement of 3,380 litres.
- 7.12.8 The applicant has calculated the waste storage provision using BS5906:2005 rather than the Council's Environmental Operations requirements. In this regard, they have allocated a storage facility that can accommodate 2no. 1,100 litre euro bins and 7no. 360 litre wheelie bins which equates to 4,720 litres of storage.
- 7.12.9 The Council's Environmental Operations department have been consulted on the application but as of the time of writing this report, they have not provided any comments. However, it is noted that the storage facility provided exceeds the requirements of the Council.
- 7.12.10 However, it is noted that due to the requirements of the Highways Authority, the bin collection point is now located close to the access and that means that the occupiers of the semi-detached dwellings will have a drag distance of between 50m and 60m to move their bins from their curtilage to the collection point each week. This does not accord with the requirements of the Design Guide SPD (2025) which states drag distances should not exceed 30m and therefore the proposal is contrary to Policy GHD1 which upholds the SPD. This will need to be considered in the final planning balance.

Fire Hydrants

- 7.12.11 The Fire Service's Water Officer is not a statutory consultee and as such were not consulted on this application. Notwithstanding this, the Fire Service are a statutory part of the Building Regulations application process and as such any requirements for fire hydrants or other such matters would be dealt with at that stage.

Community Infrastructure Levy

- 7.12.12 The Council adopted CIL on 1 April 2020 and the CIL Charging Schedule specifies a payment for new floorspace in line with the following rates (plus appropriate indexation):

| Development Type | CIL Rate (£ per square meter) | |
|------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| | Zone 1: Stevenage Central, Stevenage West Urban Extension and North of Stevenage Extension | Zone 2: Everywhere else |
| Residential | | |
| Market housing | £40/m ² | £100/m ² |

| | |
|-----------------------|---------------------|
| Sheltered housing | £100/m ² |
| Extra care housing | £40/m ² |
| Retail development | £60/m ² |
| All other development | £0/m ² |

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

7.12.14 CIL replaces the need for S106 agreements to specify financial and/or land contributions for non-site-specific infrastructure projects. This allows infrastructure to be planned on a borough-wide scale rather than on a site-by-site basis as mitigation against the impacts of individual proposals. A CIL Form 1: Additional Information has been submitted along with the application.

7.13 Matters Raised in Representations

7.13.1 The planning application was publicised in accordance with the Legislation and the Council's adopted Statement of Community Involvement (SCI), that is, letters were sent to adjoining landowners, a site notice was placed outside the site, and a notice was placed in the local newspaper. Accordingly, the Council has fulfilled its legal obligations in this matter. The comments regarding how the developer undertook their own community engagement are noted but are not a material planning consideration.

7.13.2 Comments regarding the site not being vacant at the time of submission are noted, but this is not a material planning consideration for the purpose of this planning application.

7.13.3 House values and legal covenants within property deeds are not material planning considerations as established by case law.

7.14 Equality, Diversity and Human Rights

7.14.1 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.

7.14.2 When considering proposals placed before Members it is important that they are fully aware of and have themselves rigorously considered the equalities implications of the decision that they are taking.

7.14.3 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.

7.14.4 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.

- 7.14.5 In terms of inclusive access, the scheme has been designed to be DDA (Disability Discrimination Act) compliant. In addition, in accordance with Policy HO11: Accessible and Adaptable Housing of the adopted Local Plan (2019), as this is a major scheme at least 50% of all new dwellings will need to be category 2: accessible and adaptable dwellings. The development also comprises of level access to the car park and ground floor areas of the buildings.
- 7.14.6 Further, the development will comply with current accessibility standards, including Part M of the building regulations, ensuring that units are accessible to individuals with varying mobility needs. This includes step-free access to the ground floors of houses, wide doorways, and interior layouts that allow for future adaptation. All dwellings will be designed to comply with the M4(2) standard, as a minimum.

8. CONCLUSIONS

- 8.1. The proposed development would involve the provision of housing and the council's latest Housing Delivery Test result indicates that housing delivery was substantially below the housing requirement over the last three years. Therefore, the policies most important for determining the application are considered to be out-of-date and paragraph 11(d) of the NPPF is engaged. This carries significant weight in favour of the application.
- 8.2. It has been established that the proposed development accords with Policy HO5 as the site would be located on land which meets the definition of previously developed land as stated within the NPPF (2024). Paragraph 125(c) of the NPPF places substantial weight on reusing brownfield sites and states that proposals should be approved unless substantial harm would be caused.
- 8.3. The development would provide 10no. residential units, making a reasonable contribution to the aim of boosting housing supply, which in this instance, would be through redeveloping a sustainable brownfield site.
- 8.4. Further, the proposal would deliver 3 affordable units which is in line with the requirements of Policy HO8 and attracts significant weight in favour of the development. This is due to the under-delivery of affordable housing to date over the Local Plan period.
- 8.5. There would be some economic benefit during the construction phase, and future occupiers would be likely to contribute to local services and facilities. Given the quantum of development, it is considered that these benefits would be significant and therefore attracts substantial weight in favour of the proposal.
- 8.6. The proposed development would have an acceptable impact on the amenities of neighbouring occupiers. The collection of waste and recycling does not accord with Manual for Streets drag distance of 30m; these are neutral matters and would not be sufficient reason to recommend a refusal on this basis.
- 8.7. The development has been assessed to be acceptable in appearance and would not harm the visual amenities of the area. The development has been assessed to be acceptable in terms of private amenity space in accordance with the adopted Design Guide (2025) and Policy GD1 of the Local Plan (2019). This weighs in favour of the proposal.

- 8.8. With regards to the environmental impact of the development in terms of ecology, biodiversity and landscaping, it has been established that there would be no uplift on site, but the applicant will make relevant contributions to biodiversity off-site and the installation of swift boxes on site. The application is therefore acceptable in this regard.
- 8.9. The car parking and cycle parking meet the standards as set out in the Parking Provision SPD (2025) and are therefore acceptable. Additionally, the Highways Authority have raised no concerns with highway safety. This carries moderate weight in favour of the proposal.
- 8.10. In conclusion, whilst the proposal has been assessed to contravene policy through failures of waste and recycling collections, it is considered that the public benefits identified through the delivery of housing, and most importantly the delivery of affordable housing, on previously developed brownfield land, substantially outweigh the harms identified. Therefore, despite the conflicts with the aforementioned Local Plan Policies, there are sufficient material considerations to indicate that planning permission should be granted in this instance.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.1 That planning permission be GRANTED subject to the conditions set out below and delegated authority be given to the Director of Planning and Regulation in consultation with the Chair of the Planning and Development Committee, to amend or add to the conditions subject to which the permission would be granted, where such amendments or additions would satisfy the relevant national policy tests and would most effectively deliver the development which the Committee has resolved to approve and also subject to the applicant having first entered into a S106 legal agreement to secure the following:-
- The provision of affordable housing;
 - Financial contributions for Herts County Council Education provision;
 - Local Employment Apprenticeships
 - SBC and HCC Section 106 monitoring fees.

SUBJECT TO THE FOLLOWING CONDITIONS/REASONS

- 1 The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans:
2161-PL01; 2161-PL03; 2161-PL04; 2161-PL05; 2161-PL06A; 2161-PL07A; 2161-PL08A; 2161-PL09A; 2161-PL11; 2161-PL02B; 2161-PL10B; B24063-101B;
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 Monday to Friday and 08:00 hours to 13:00 hours on Saturdays. For the avoidance of doubt, no such activity shall take place on Sundays or Bank Holidays, unless otherwise agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.
REASON:- In the interests of the living conditions of neighbouring occupiers.

- 4 In the event that any previously unidentified ground contamination is discovered on the site, no further construction work may be carried out in the affected area until a remediation strategy has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. Where any development to which this permission relates is required to be carried out in accordance with a remediation strategy, a verification report (setting out the remedial measures actually undertaken on the site) shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority prior to the beneficial occupation of the development.

REASON:- To prevent harm to human health and pollution of the water environment
- 5 The development hereby approved shall be constructed in accordance with the measures to address adaptation and mitigation to climate change as laid out in the Energy Statement by Abbey Consultants dated October 2025, Reference PA-ES-HHA-45MV-24-02. These measures shall then be implemented and permanently maintained in accordance with the approved details.

REASON:- To ensure the development is adaptable to climate change through provision of energy and water efficiency measures.
- 6 All planting, seeding or turfing comprised in the approved details of landscaping shall be carried out in the first planting and seeding seasons following the first occupation of the building(s) or the completion of the development whichever is the sooner. In regards to hard surfacing, this shall be carried out in accordance with any approved details within three months of the first occupation of the building or the completion of the development, whichever is the sooner.

REASON:- To ensure the development has an acceptable appearance and to protect the visual amenities of the area.
- 7 Any trees or plants comprised within the scheme of landscaping, which within a period of five years from the completion of the development die, are removed or become seriously damaged or diseased shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of similar size and species, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

REASON:- To ensure a satisfactory appearance for the development.
- 8 The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the ecological mitigation and enhancement measures as detailed in the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal dated October 2025, reference RT-MME-180733-04A by Middlemarch Environmental Ltd. This document shall be adhered to at all times during construction, including site clearance works, and during occupation of the development.

REASON:- To ensure protection of the natural environment
- 9 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:- To minimise pollution of the environment
- 10 At least 50% of the residential units shall be Category 2: Accessible and Adaptable dwellings.

REASON:- To ensure the development will meet the increase in demand for accessible and adaptable units for elderly and disabled residents in accordance with Policy HO11 of the Stevenage Borough Local Plan 2011 - 2031 (adopted 2019).

- 11 No development shall take place (including demolition and 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 the site;
 - c) Measure to minimise dust, noise machinery and traffic noise impacts during construction;
 - d) Screening and hoarding details to protect neighbouring residents;
 - e) Traffic management requirements, including the location of routes and from the site, details of their signing monitoring and enforcement measures;
 - f) Construction and storage compounds (including areas designated for car parking, loading /unloading and turning areas);
 - g) Siting and details of wheel washing facilities;
 - h) Cleaning of site entrances, site tracks and the adjacent public highway including end of day tidying procedures to ensure protection of the site out the hours of construction. The construction activities shall be designed and undertake in accordance with the code of best practice set out in BS5228 1997 and the agreed details unless otherwise agreed in writing by the LPA and Highways;
 - i) Timing of construction activities (including delivery times and removal of waste) and to avoid school pick up/drop off times;
 - j) Provision of sufficient on-site parking prior to commencement of construction activities;
 - k) Post construction restoration/reinstatement of the working areas and temporary access to the public highway;
 - l) 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;

REASON:- In the interests of highway safety and residential amenity.

12 HOLD FOR LLFA CONDITION

13 HOLD FOR LLFA CONDITION

- 14 No development shall take place (including demolition and site clearance) until a Site Waste Management Plan (SWMP) for the site has been submitted to the Local Planning Authority and approved in consultation with the Waste Planning Authority. The SWMP should aim to reduce the amount of waste produced on site and should contain information including estimated types and quantities of waste to arise from construction and waste management actions for each waste type. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved SWMP.

REASON:- To promote the sustainable management of waste arisings and contribution towards resource efficiency, in accordance with Policy 12 of the Hertfordshire Waste Core Strategy and Development Management Policies Development Plan Document (2012).

- 15 No development shall take place (including site clearance) until the tree protection measures as detailed in the Arboricultural Impact Assessment dated November 2025, Reference RT-MME-180733-02-Rev A by Middlemarch Environmental Ltd have been implemented accordingly. The tree protection measures shall remain in place until the development has been completed. Within the tree protection areas to be fenced off in accordance with the AIA there shall be no alteration to the ground level and they shall be kept clear of vehicles, materials, surplus soil, temporary buildings, plant and machinery. Any trees identified as part of Condition 9 shall not be covered by this condition.

REASON:- To ensure the protection of those trees which should be retained in the interests of visual amenity.

- 16 The development shall not commence until the Biodiversity Gain Plan has been prepared in accordance with the Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment dated April 2026, Reference RT-MME-180733-06-Rev B prepared by Middlemarch Environmental Ltd.

REASON:- To ensure the development delivers a biodiversity net gain on site.

- 17 The development shall not commence until a Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan (the HMMP), prepared in accordance with the Biodiversity Gain Plan and including:

(b) a non-technical summary;

(c) the roles and responsibilities of the people or organisation(s) delivering the HMMP;

(d) the planned habitat creation and enhancement works to create or improve habitat to achieve the biodiversity net gain in accordance with the approved Biodiversity Gain Plan;

(e) the management measures to maintain habitat in accordance with the approved Biodiversity Gain Plan for a period of 30 years from the completion of development; and

(f) the monitoring methodology and frequency in respect of the created or enhanced habitat to be submitted to the local planning authority

has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the local planning authority. The created and/or enhanced habitat specified in the approved HMMP shall be managed and maintained in accordance with the approved HMMP.

REASON:- To ensure the development delivers a biodiversity net gain on site.

- 18 Notice in writing shall be given to the Council when the:

(a) HMMP has been implemented; and

(b) Habitat creation and enhancement works as set out in the HMMP have been completed.

REASON:- To ensure the development delivers a biodiversity net gain on site.

- 19 No development shall take place above slab level until a specification of the materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces development hereby permitted have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall thereafter be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

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

- 20 No development shall take place above slab level until details of 6no. integrated swift boxes are submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. These features must be integrated into the brickwork of the development and located in the most appropriate locations to ensure occupation. They shall be fully installed prior to occupation and retained as such thereafter.

REASON:- To conserve and enhance biodiversity in accordance with NPPF.

- 21 Prior to the occupation of the dwellinghouses hereby permitted, all the parking spaces shown on the approved plans shall be provided with the underlying infrastructure for connection to the electricity network to enable them to be served by an electric vehicle charging point.

REASON:- To ensure construction of a satisfactory development and to promote sustainable development

22 Prior to the first occupation of the development hereby permitted, the access, parking, turning and servicing areas shown on the approved plans shall be provided, marked out and hard surfaced ready for use and shall be retained in that form and kept available for those purposes thereafter. The hardstanding areas shall be made of a porous material, or provision shall be made to direct surface water run-off water from the hardstanding to a permeable or porous area or surface within the curtilage of the building.

REASON:- To ensure that adequate parking and servicing facilities are available within the site and that there is no detriment to the safety of adjoining highways and to ensure the development is sustainable and accords with the aspirations of Class F, Part 1 of Schedule 2 to the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015.

23 Prior to the first occupation of the dwellings hereby permitted, the cycle storage facilities as shown on approved plan 2161-PL10B shall be installed and be ready for use. The approved facilities shall be maintained and retained for the lifetime of the development.

REASON:- To ensure that there is sufficient cycle parking provision in accordance with the Council's adopted standards is maintained for all dwellings on site in perpetuity.

24 Prior to the first occupation of the dwellings hereby permitted the general waste and recycle stores as shown on approved plan 2161-PL10B shall be installed and made ready for use and retained and maintained accordingly for the lifetime of the development.

REASON:- To ensure the storage areas have an acceptable appearance and are of sufficient size to accommodate the number of bins which are required for this development.

25 HOLD FOR LLFA CONDITION

26 a) Prior to the first occupation of the dwellings hereby approved, a written noise mitigation plan for the site shall be submitted in writing to, and approved by, the Local Planning Authority. The plan shall demonstrate that the layout and construction of dwellings and associated external amenity space reflects good acoustic design together with details of appropriate mitigation measures, where required, so that internal and external noise levels specified below will not be exceeded:

- 35dB (LAeq,16hr) during the daytime (07:00 - 23:00) within bedrooms and living rooms;
- 40dB (LAeq, 16hr) during the daytime (07:00 - 23:00) within dining rooms;
- 30dB (LAeq,16hr) during the night (23:00 - 07:00) within bedrooms;
- 45 dB (LAmax) on more than ten occasions during any typical night (23:00 - 07:00) within bedrooms

Where it is necessary to rely on closed windows to achieve the above internal noise levels then an alternative adequate means of ventilation and cooling, meeting the requirements of building regulations approved document F and O, shall be provided that do not compromise the performance of the relevant facade noise insulation. Where mechanical ventilation is proposed it should, in normal operation, achieve compliance with NR20 in bedrooms between 23:00 to 07:00 and NR25 in all habitable rooms between 07:00 to 23:00.

Noise levels in external amenity spaces (except balconies) shall not exceed 55dB LAeq,16hr.

b) Prior to the occupation of any dwellings a detailed written compliance report confirming that the agreed mitigation measures have been implemented shall be submitted to, and approved by, the Local Planning Authority.

c) All agreed mitigation measures shall be retained as such for the duration of the residential use.

REASON:- To protect the amenity of future occupiers of the development.

- 27 Prior to the first occupation of the development hereby approved, a detailed landscaping strategy shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The strategy shall include the proposed planting palette, specifications, and ongoing maintenance arrangements/strategy for the site.

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

The Council has acted Pro-Actively for the following reason:-

- 1 Planning permission has been granted for this proposal. The Council acted pro-actively through early engagement with the applicant at the pre-application stage which led to improvements to the scheme. The Council has therefore acted pro-actively in line with the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework and in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015.

INFORMATIVE

1 Public Information on Planning Applications

Warning: all information provided on your planning application is now publicly available. Individuals and organisations offering their services may contact you. The Council does not endorse or approve any builders, surveyors, trades persons or other supplier, and advises householders to obtain quotes/references, and check the legitimacy of any contractor who contacts them before making payment.

2 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.

3 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, Campus East, Welwyn Garden City, Hertfordshire, AL8 6AE.

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).

4 **Party Wall etc. Act 1996**

Any work that affects a party wall, including foundations dug within 3.0m of a neighbouring building, may be controllable under the Act and may require approval from the adjoining owner(s). Party Wall Act matters are always civil matters and it is neither Stevenage Borough Council's nor Hertfordshire Building Control Ltd's remit to control or enforce Party Wall act matters. Please refer to the Government's explanatory booklet The Party Wall etc. Act 1996, a copy of which is available online at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-party-wall-etc-act-1996-revised-explanatory-booklet>

5 **Biodiversity Net Gain**

The effect of paragraph 13 of Schedule 7A to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 is that planning permission granted for the development of land in England is deemed to have been granted subject to the condition "(the biodiversity gain condition)" that development may not begin unless:

- a) a Biodiversity Gain Plan has been submitted to the planning authority, and
- b) the planning authority has approved the plan.

The planning authority, for the purposes of determining whether to approve a Biodiversity Gain Plan if one is required in respect of this permission would be Stevenage Borough Council.

Based on the information available, this permission is considered to be one which will require the approval of a biodiversity gain plan before development is begun because none of the statutory exemptions or transitional arrangements are considered to apply.

Where the local planning authority considers that the permission falls within paragraph 19 of Schedule 7A to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, the permission which has been granted has the effect of requiring or permitting the development to proceed in phases. The modifications in respect of the biodiversity gain condition which are set out in Part 2 of the Biodiversity Gain (Town and Country Planning) (Modifications and Amendments) (England) Regulations 2024 apply.

Biodiversity gain plans are required to be submitted to, and approved by, the planning authority before development may be begun, and, if subject to phased development, before each phase of development may be begun (Phase Plans).

If the onsite habitat includes irreplaceable habitat (within the meaning of the Biodiversity Gain Requirements (Irreplaceable Habitat) Regulations 2024) there are additional requirements for the content and approval of Biodiversity Gain Plans. The Biodiversity Gain Plan must include, in addition to information about steps taken or to be taken to minimise any adverse effect of the development on the habitat, information on arrangements for compensation for any impact the development has on the biodiversity of the irreplaceable habitat.

The planning authority can only approve a Biodiversity Gain Plan if satisfied that the adverse effect of the development on the biodiversity of the irreplaceable habitat is minimised and appropriate arrangements have been made for the purpose of compensating for any impact which do not include the use of biodiversity credits.

More information can be found in the Planning Practice Guidance online at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/biodiversity-net-gain>

6 UK Power Networks

Please note there are LV underground cables on the site running within close proximity to the proposed development. Prior to commencement of work accurate records should be obtained from the Plan Provision Department at UK Power Networks, Fore Hamlet, Ipswich, IP3 8AA.

All works should be undertaken with due regard to Health & Safety Guidance notes HS(G)47 (Avoiding Danger from Underground services). This document is available from local HSE office. Should any diversion works be necessary as a result of the development then enquiries should be made to our Customer Connections department. The address is UK Power Networks, Metropolitan House, Darkes Lane, Potters Bar, Herts, EN6 1AG.

7 Thames Water

Public sewers are crossing, or close to, your development. Build over agreements are required for any building works within 3 metres of a public sewer or within 1 metre of a public lateral drain. Please refer to Thames Water's guide on working near or diverting pipes: <https://www.thameswater.co.uk/developers/larger-scale-developments/planning-your-development/working-near-our-pipes>. Please ensure to apply to determine if a build over agreement will be granted. Further, permit enquiries should be directed to Thames Water's Risk Management Team by telephoning 020 3577 9483 or by emailing trade.effluent@thameswater.co.uk. Application forms should be completed on line via www.thameswater.co.uk. Please refer to the Wholesale; Business customers; Groundwater discharges section.

Should you require further information please contact Thames Water. Email: developer.services@thameswater.co.uk, Phone: 0800 009 3921 (Monday to Friday, 8am to 5pm) Write to: Thames Water Developer Services, Clearwater Court, Vastern Road, Reading, Berkshire RG1 8DB.

8 Thames Water Wastewater Assets

The proposed development is located within 15 metres of Thames Waters underground assets and as such, the development could cause the assets to fail if appropriate measures are not taken. Please read our guide 'working near our assets' to ensure your workings are in line with the necessary processes you need to follow if you're considering working above or near our pipes or other structures. <https://www.thameswater.co.uk/developers/larger-scale-developments/planningyour-development/working-near-our-pipes> Should you require further information please contact Thames Water. Email: developer.services@thameswater.co.uk Phone: 0800 009 3921 (Monday to Friday, 8am to 5pm) Write to: Thames Water Developer Services, Clearwater Court, Vastern Road, Reading, Berkshire RG1 8DB.

9 Hertfordshire County Council as Highways Authority

Debris and deposits on the highway: 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.

10 Hertfordshire County Council as Highways Authority

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

<http://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/transtreets/highways/> or by telephoning 0300 1234047.

11 Hertfordshire County Council as Highways Authority

The applicant is advised that in order to comply with this permission it will be necessary for the developer of the site to enter into an agreement with Hertfordshire County Council as Highway Authority under Section 278 of the Highways Act 1980 to ensure the satisfactory completion of the access and associated road improvements. The construction of such works must be undertaken to the satisfaction and specification of the Highway Authority, and by a contractor who is authorised to work in the public highway. Before works commence the applicant will need to apply to the Highway Authority to obtain their permission and requirements. Further information is available via the website <https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/highways-roads-and-pavements/businessanddeveloper-information/development-management/highways-developmentmanagement.aspx> or by telephoning 0300 1234047.

12 **Hertfordshire County Council as Highways Authority**

Construction standards for new vehicle access: Where works are required within the public highway to facilitate the new or amended vehicular access, the Highway Authority require the construction of such works to be undertaken to their satisfaction and specification, and by a contractor who is authorised to work in the public highway. If any of the works associated with the construction of the access affects or requires the removal and/or the relocation of any equipment, apparatus or structures (e.g. street name plates, bus stop signs or shelters, statutory authority equipment etc.) the applicant will be required to bear the cost of such removal or alteration. Before works commence the applicant will need to apply to the Highway Authority to obtain their permission, requirements and for the work to be carried out on the applicant's behalf. Further information is available via the website <https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/highways-roads-and-pavements/changes-to-your-road/dropped-kerbs/dropped-kerbs.aspx> or by telephoning 0300 1234047.

13 **Hertfordshire County Council as Highways Authority**

Construction Management Plan (CMP): The purpose of the CMP is to help developers minimise construction impacts and relates to all construction activity both on and off site that impacts on the wider environment. It is intended to be a live document whereby different stages will be completed and submitted for application as the development progresses.

A completed and signed CMP must address the way in which any impacts associated with the proposed works, and any cumulative impacts of other nearby construction sites will be mitigated and managed. The level of detail required in a CMP will depend on the scale and nature of development. The CMP would need to include elements of the Construction Logistics and Community Safety (CLOCS) standards as set out in our Construction Management template, a copy of which is available on the County Council's website at: <https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/highways-roads-and-pavements/business-and-developer-information/development-management/highways-development-management.aspx>

14 **Environmental Protection Act 1990**

The applicant is advised of the Council's powers under Part III of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 to prohibit nuisances arising from dust, smoke, artificial light, and a range of other pollutants that may arise on construction sites. The applicant is advised of the Council's powers under the Control of Pollution Act 1974 to restrict noise generating construction (including demolition) activity audible beyond the development site boundary.

10. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

1 The application file, forms, plans and supporting documents having the reference number relating to this item. Online copies may be obtained at <https://publicaccess.stevenage.gov.uk/online-applications/>

2 The Stevenage Borough Local Plan 2011-2031
<https://www.stevenage.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy/local-plan>

3 The Stevenage Borough Local Plan Partial Update 2025
<https://www.stevenage.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy/local-plan-partial-update/submission-to-secretary-of-state>

4 Stevenage Borough Council Supplementary Planning Documents: Parking Provision SPD 2025; Design Guidance SPD 2025; Developer Contributions SPD 2025.

<https://www.stevenage.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy/planning-library>

5 Hertfordshire County Council Local Transport Plan LTP4 2018-2031
<https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/media-library/documents/about-the-council/consultations/ltp4-local-transport-plan-4-complete.pdf>

5 Government advice contained in the National Planning Policy Framework 2024 and the Planning Practice Guidance.
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/67aafe8f3b41f783cca46251/NPPF_December_2024.pdf

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/planning-practice-guidance>

7 Representations made by statutory consultees and other interested parties referred to in this report. Online copies can be found on Public Access.

Meeting: Planning and Development Agenda Item:
Committee

Date: 7 April 2026

Author: Linda Sparrow

Lead Officer: Alex Robinson

Contact Officer: Linda Sparrow

Application No : 26/00093/FP

Location : Garage Site Between 29-31 Broadview, Stevenage

Proposal : Demolition of the existing garages and development of 7no. three-bedroom dwellinghouses

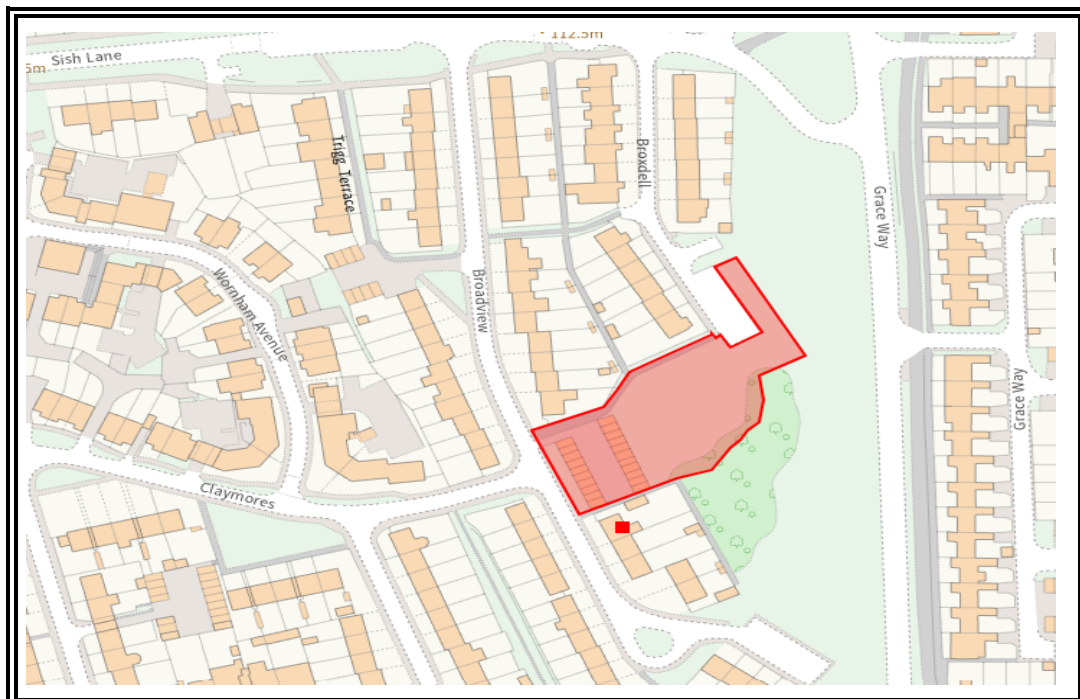
Drawing Nos.: 25016su1.01-B; 25016su1.02-C; 25016su1.03-A; 25016su1.04-C; 25016wd2.01-E; 25016wd2.01-E; 25016wd2.03-B; 25016wd2.04-B; 25016wd2.05; 25016wd2.10-C; 25016wd2.11-C; 25016wd2.12-C; 25016wd2.13-C; LSDP 2482.01-A; ST-3853-801-C; ST-3853-802-C; ST-3853-800-B; 36059-1; 25038-1;

Applicant : Housing Development

Agent: Mr Christopher Weir

Date Valid: 23 January 2026

Recommendation: GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION



1. SITE DESCRIPTION

- 1.1 The application site comprises a vacant council owned garage block on Broadview and an area of public open space located between the garage block and the southern end of the Broxdell cul-de-sac.
- 1.2 To the south of the site and outside the red line site location plan is a small woodland area. To the east of the site is an expansive area of public open space that comprises grassland only with the highway of Grace Way beyond. To the west of the site are the highways of Broadview and Claymores. The site has two-storey residential dwellings around it.
- 1.3 The public open space is not Green Belt but is designated in the Local Plan as forming part of a Green Corridor (structurally important route) and a Green Link.

2. RELEVANT PLANNING HISORY

- 2.1 None.

3. THE CURRENT APPLICATION

- 3.1 This application seeks planning permission for the demolition of the existing vacant garage block and the erection of 7no. three-bedroom dwellings.
- 3.2 The layout of the proposal sees 3no. 2.5 storey detached dwellings fronting Broadview in an east-west orientation and 4no. 2.5 storey dwellings arranged as two pairs of semi-detached dwellings fronting the end of the Broxdell cul-de-sac in a north-south orientation (See Figure 1).
- 3.3 The application comes before the Planning Committee as the land is owned by Stevenage Borough Council and the Council's Housing Development team are the applicant. It should also be noted that there have been more than 5 objections received.



Figure 1: Extract of proposed layout plan.

4. PUBLIC REPRESENTATIONS

4.1 Following notification of the application via letters and the erection of site notices, public representations have been received from 6 addresses with an additional e-petition from 55 properties that contains no names or address for verification.

4.2 A summary of the comments received are set out below:

- Suitable for swift bricks, please secure 7 integrated bricks
- CCTV should be considered in the area due to antisocial behaviour
- Destruction of green space and wildlife
- Cycle storage at rear is unattractive, needs to be in front gardens
- Footpath links between Broxdell and Broadview unsuitable for cyclists – make it shared surface
- No direct link to cycle network on Fairlands Way
- Should provide a safe crossing over Grace Way
- Loss of playing area for children and dog walkers
- Exacerbate existing terrible congestion
- Broxdell far too narrow for access route
- Green belt land for 53 years, its loss is unacceptable
- Will these be for Stevenage residents?

Neutral/Support comments

- Garages full of antisocial behaviour, redevelopment will improve the area
- No objection but Broxdell very narrow, access should be from Broadview for all plots

4.3 The aforementioned is not a verbatim copy of the objections which have been raised.

5. CONSULTATIONS

5.1 Herts County Council as Highways Authority

Following receipt of amended plans and additional information from the applicant, the Highway Authority considers that the proposal would not materially affect the safety and operation of the wider public highway network and therefore does not wish to restrict the grant of permission subject to conditions for a construction management plan, and new access arrangements.

5.2 Affinity Water

No comments to make.

5.3 Thames Water

No comments to make.

5.4 SBC Environmental Health

No objection in principle. Will require a preliminary risk assessment due to potential for contamination. Recommend a condition for a construction management plan and control of construction hours.

5.5 SBC Arboricultural Manager

I have now had the chance to study this application and revisit the site and can confirm that I have no objection to this development. However, I have great concerns regarding the impact of the retained trees T2-T5 onto the proposed properties due to overhanging crowns and shade. Please see drawing below. To my calculations/observation, the trees' canopies extend further than represented on the OSA. It is apparent therefore, that not only

two of the front gardens would be located almost in their entirety under the tree' canopies, but also a part of the proposed buildings too.

With this in mind, I propose a condition that substantial (but sympathetically carried out) overall reductions (25% or so) are completed before the commencement of any construction/demolition work. This work, carried out by the developer, should reduce inconvenience to the new properties as well as mitigate the impact of any root disturbance during the building/demolition process.

5.6 SBC Green Spaces Manager

5th February 2026: do not object to minor loss of green space but should consider providing funding to mitigate loss. Rear gardens overshadowed by trees which could pose landscaping difficulties – choose shade tolerant planting. Limited info on landscaping plans. Extensive amount of block paving which is acknowledged for permeability but could pose issues with weed control – permeable asphalt is better. Concerned about planting adjacent to parking bays – easily damaged. Advocate installation of swift bricks.

Amended plan forwarded on 12th March 2026; comments will be provided when received.

5.7 SBC Engineering Services/Traffic Enforcement Manager

To ensure safety around the access points, it is recommended that “no waiting” restrictions are implemented at a cost of £4000 to the applicant. There is opportunity for the applicant to investigate redesigning the existing parking bays.

5.8 SBC Ecology

Near an area noted for bats so a survey should be undertaken. Any trees must be protected during construction works. Landscaping to be checked for nesting birds or bats. The BNG metric needs to be updated to reflect the loss of the tree on site and post determination, the BNG Condition applies and relevant documentation to be submitted prior to commencement.

6. RELEVANT PLANNING POLICIES

6.1 The Development Plan

6.1.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that planning applications be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. For Stevenage, the statutory development plan comprises the following documents:

- The Stevenage Borough Council Local Plan 2011-2031 (adopted 2019)
- The Hertfordshire Waste Core Strategy & Development Management Policies Development Plan Document 2011-2026 (adopted 2012)
- The Hertfordshire Waste Site Allocations Development Plan Document 2011-2026 (adopted 2014)
- The Hertfordshire Minerals Local Plan Review 2002-2016 (adopted 2007)

6.2 National Planning Policy Framework

6.2.1 The latest revision of the NPPF was published in December 2024. The policies it contains are material considerations which will be taken into account in dealing with applications. Due weight will be given to development plan policies according to their degree of consistency with the NPPF.

6.3 Housing Delivery Test and 5-Year Land Supply

- 6.3.1 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 95%, the authority should prepare an action plan to assess the causes of under delivery and identify actions to increase delivery in future years. 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 79 of the NPPF. This will be in addition to the preparation of an Action Plan. 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 under paragraph 11d) of the NPPF. The latest HDT results published by the Ministry of Housing, Communities, and Local Government (MHCLG) in December 2024 identifies that Stevenage delivered 38% of its housing requirement.
- 6.3.2 The Council, based on its HDT score is currently subject to the most severe penalty under paragraph 11(d) of the NPPF (2024). For reference, as this policy is now engaged, it means Local Plan policies would be classed as out-of-date. Consequently, Stevenage Borough Council must apply the presumption in favour of sustainable development in its decision making and give great weight towards the need to deliver housing. The Council must also apply a 20% buffer in its 5-year housing supply calculations, and it also has to produce an Action Plan in order to boost housing delivery.
- 6.3.3 On the 21st May 2024, the Council published its 5 Year Land Supply Update May 2024. This identifies that the Council can demonstrate a Housing Supply of **5.59 years** for the period 01 April 2024 to 31 March 2029, using the *Liverpool* methodology (spreads the delivery of historic undersupply of housing equally across the remainder of the Local Plan period) and guidance from the NPPF and Planning Practice Guidance. The 5-year land supply includes a 20% buffer.
- 6.3.4 However, the Revised Housing Technical Paper (June 2025) identifies that the Council's Housing Supply is at **5.49 years**, but this has yet to be confirmed through an Examination in Public (EiP) and is therefore not formally adopted at this time.

6.4 Planning Practice Guidance

- 6.4.1 The Planning Practice Guidance ("PPG"), with which Members are fully familiar, is an online resource containing guidance supplementing the NPPF. The PPG is a material consideration which should be taken into account in determining planning applications.

6.5 National Design Guide

- 6.5.1 The National Design Guide 2021 is Government guidance on the characteristics of well-designed places and demonstrates what good design means in practice. It has the same status as the PPG and should similarly be taken into account when determining planning applications.

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

- 6.6.1 The Stevenage Borough Local Plan 2011-2031 was adopted in 2019. Weight must be given to the policies it contains according to their degree of consistency with the NPPF

(the closer the policies in the plan to the policies in the NPPF, the greater the weight that may be given).

- 6.6.2 In addition, the council is required to regard the local plan policies most relevant to determining the application as out-of-date because the application involves the provision of housing and the delivery of housing in the borough was substantially below the housing requirement over the last three years. Those policies are:

Policy SP1: Presumption in favour of sustainable development;
Policy SP2: Sustainable development in Stevenage;
Policy SP5: Infrastructure;
Policy SP6: Sustainable transport;
Policy SP7: High quality homes;
Policy SP8: Good design;
Policy SP11: Climate change, flooding, and pollution;
Policy SP12: Green infrastructure and the natural environment;
Policy IT5: Parking and access;
Policy HO5: Windfall sites;
Policy HO9: House types and sizes;
Policy GD1: High quality design;
Policy FP1: Climate change;
Policy FP2: Flood risk in Flood Zone 1;
Policy FP5: Contaminated land;
Policy FP7: Pollution;
Policy FP8: Pollution sensitive uses;
Policy NH5: Trees and woodland.

- 6.6.3 According to the NPPF, the fact that these policies are regarded as out-of-date means that permission should be granted for the proposed development unless: i. the application of policies in the NPPF that protect areas or assets of particular importance provide a strong reason for refusing the development; or ii. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the NPPF taken as a whole, having particular regard to key policies for directing development to sustainable locations, making effective use of land, securing well-designed places and providing affordable homes, individually or in combination.

6.7 Local Plan Review and Update (2024)

- 6.7.1 The council concluded a full review of the plan in 2024, as required by regulation 10A of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended).
- 6.7.2 In response to the review, the council has proposed a partial update of the local plan. Weight must be given to the emerging policies in the partial update according to: a) the stage of preparation of the emerging plan; b) the extent to which there are unresolved objections to the policies; and c) the degree of consistency between the policies and the most recent revision of the NPPF.
- 6.7.3 At the time of writing, the partial update is undergoing examination by the Secretary of State. Given that the examination has yet to conclude, there remain unresolved objections to a number of emerging policies. The partial update is nonetheless at an advanced stage of preparation, and the council considers the emerging policies within it to have a high degree of consistency with the NPPF. Where relevant, the weight to be given to emerging policies will be set out in the assessment section of this report.

6.8 Supplementary Planning Documents

- 6.8.1 The following supplementary planning documents are relevant to determining the application:
- Parking Provision Supplementary Planning Document (February 2025);
 - Stevenage Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (February 2025);
 - Developer Contributions Supplementary Planning Document (February 2025);

6.9 Community Infrastructure Levy

- 6.9.1 Stevenage Borough Council adopted a Community Infrastructure Levy (“CIL”) 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.

7. APPRAISAL

- 7.1 The main issues in the assessment of the application are its acceptability in land use policy terms, visual impact of the development, impact upon neighbouring amenities, impact upon future amenities of residents, parking provision, highway implications, impact on the environment, trees, and landscaping and Biodiversity Net Gain.

- 7.1.1 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 Principle of Development

- 7.2.1 The NPPF (2024) states that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. The NPPF also stipulates that decisions should play an active role in guiding development towards sustainable solutions, but in doing so should take local circumstances into account, to reflect the character, needs and opportunities of each area. In addition, the Framework also sets out that sustainable development needs to be pursued in a positive way and at the heart of the framework is a "presumption in favour of sustainable development". It also states that significant weight should be placed on both the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development.

- 7.2.2 The proposed site is undesignated in the adopted Stevenage Borough Local Plan 2011-2031 (2019) and is not allocated for residential development within the Local Plan. As such, the site is therefore regarded as a ‘windfall site’.

- 7.2.3 Policy SP7 of the adopted local plan sets a strategic target of 7,600 homes to be provided within the borough over the plan period from 2011 to 2031. The emerging partial update of the local plan identifies that 4,956 of these homes remain to be delivered as of 2024. However, the overall target remains unchanged, and the proposed development would make a small but nonetheless positive contribution to meeting this target.

- 7.2.4 The spatial strategy for housing also remains unchanged; the majority of the planned new housing will be delivered on regeneration sites in the town centre and in urban extensions to the north, west and south-east of the town, with a sizeable minority delivered on smaller housing sites spread throughout the borough. An allowance is also made for residential development coming forward on sites not specifically allocated for any purpose in the local plan, referred to as “windfall” sites.

- 7.2.5 In this case, the application site is not designated for any particular purpose in the local plan. The proposed development is therefore treated as windfall development. Updated Policy HO5 of the Local Plan (2019) (windfall sites) stipulates that proposals should be on previously developed land, or an underused urban site and should not prejudice the Council's ability to deliver residential development on allocated sites. The updated Policy carries significant weight. The proposal will be partially on previously developed land (garage site) and partially on public open space and there are no allocated sites nearby that would be detrimentally impacted by the proposal. As such, the proposal only partially complies with this Policy.
- 7.2.6 Updated Policy SP2 (Sustainable Development) carries significant weight in the Local Plan Review and states residential developments must have a good level of access to local facilities. The site is approximately 15minutes walk from the Town Centre and less than 20-minute walk from the Old Town High Street, both of which contain supermarkets, retail shops, restaurants, take-aways, and drinking establishments. A doctor's surgery is within 15-minute walk and there are multiple primary and secondary schools within 20-minute walk. Bus routes operate along Fairlands Way and Grace Way. A substantial area of public open space, King George V Playing Field is a 5-minute walk. Accordingly, the application site is considered to have excellent access to local facilities and alternative forms of travel to the private car and therefore deemed to be within a highly sustainable location.
- 7.2.7 The effect of the proposal on housing choice (in terms of the range of housing types and sizes provided in the borough) is also a relevant consideration. Policy HO9 (House types and sizes) of the Local Plan (2019) (No change to this policy under the Local Plan Partial Review) states that there is a structural imbalance in the existing housing stock (albeit in a limited manner) whereby there is a lack of smaller properties and larger aspirational homes in the Borough.
- 7.2.8 The Design Guide SPD (2025) outlines that housing is an area of weakness across the town. One of the main issues is the lack of an appropriate mix of housing sizes, types, and tenures with a high proportion of three-bedroom terraced properties, and a lack of one- and two-bedroom properties. The lack of housing mix is exacerbated by changes in demographics leading to an increase in the number of single person households and couples needing homes.
- 7.2.9 Due to growth requirements for the town, there is a need to provide a substantial number of additional homes in Stevenage, and in particular, smaller dwellings or larger aspirational dwellings. Higher density development is set out as a key requirement of national guidance, and, where appropriate, densities will need to be raised in order to meet these targets for new homes.
- 7.2.10 The proposal seeks to provide 7no. three-bedroom detached and semi-detached dwellings. As such the proposal is not considered to accord with Policy HO9 as it does not provide smaller or aspirational dwellings which are an identified need.
- 7.2.11 The application site partially falls within an area of public space that is designated as a structurally important local route and a green link under policies NH3 and NH4 respectively. The effect of the application on the public open space will be discussed later in this report but here it will be discussed in a land use policy context. Both these policies state that planning permission will only be granted for development proposals where they would not have a substantive adverse impact and would not create a substantive physical or visual break, nor impact the overall use of the land.

- 7.2.12 The total area of the Green Link/Corridor amounts to approximately 145,000sqm whilst the proposed development would cover approximately 1,950sqm, which amounts to less than 1.5% of the total area lost to development. There would be an area of land approximately 37m wide between the back edge of the development and the back edge of the highway of Grace Way. Accordingly, strictly from a land use context, the proposal will not result in substantive harm to the open space, nor would it create a visual or physical break.
- 7.2.13 Paragraph 61 of the NPPF (2024) states that to support the Governments objective of significantly boosting housing supply, it is important that a sufficient amount, and variety, of land comes forward where it is needed, that the needs of groups with specific housing requirements are met, and that land with permission is developed without unnecessary delay. In addition, para 61. of the NPPF states that the overall aim should be to meet as much of an area's identified housing need, including with an appropriate mix of housing types for the local community. As such, the proposed development would contribute to the aim of boosting housing supply without compromising the delivery of housing on allocated sites.
- 7.2.14 In summary, whilst the Council is currently able to demonstrate a five-year supply of deliverable housing sites, due to the under-delivery of housing as identified in recent HDT scores, paragraph 11(d) of the NPPF is engaged as there is a presumption in favour of delivering sustainable development. Consequently, this is considered to be a key material consideration in the assessment of this application.
- 7.2.15 The proposed development would contribute to the aim of boosting housing supply as required by the NPPF without compromising the delivery of housing on allocated sites or placing an undue burden on local infrastructure. There would be some economic benefit during the construction phase, and future occupiers would be likely to contribute to local services and facilities. Given the quantum of development (7 units), it is considered that these benefits would be moderate and therefore attracts moderate weight in favour of the proposal.
- 7.2.16 On balance, having regard to all the policy considerations laid out above, the proposed development is considered to be acceptable in principle.

7.3 Planning Obligations

- 7.3.1 The application is not classified as a major development and therefore there is no requirement to secure affordable housing; having regard to the Developer Contributions SPD (2025) the application is not required to provide financial contributions to mitigate the impact of development.
- 7.3.2 However, the Council's Engineering Services team has requested a financial contribution of £4,000.00 to create a new Traffic Regulation Order and associated road markings at both access points to create "No Waiting" restrictions to protect highway safety at these points. The applicant has agreed in writing to this contribution and further agreed in writing to transfer this sum internally should the application be granted planning permission and therefore it is not considered necessary to enter into a Legal Agreement in this instance, however, Officers will monitor this appropriately to ensure that it is paid.

7.4 Design and visual impact

Policy Background

- 7.4.1 Chapter 12. (Achieving well-designed places) of the NPPF (2024) stipulates that the creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect

of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities. Being clear about design expectations, and how these will be tested, is essential for achieving this. So too is effective engagement between applicants, communities, local planning authorities and other interests throughout the process. Where development is not well designed, permission should be refused.

- 7.4.2 Policies SP8 and GD1 of the Local Plan Partial Review (2024) are deemed to carry significant weight, this is because they generally reflect the good design principles outlined in the NPPF and National Design Guide, i.e., that these policies require developments do not adversely impact the amenities of neighbouring occupiers as a good design principle. Policy GD2 (design certification) is a new policy emerging from the review and states that the Council will support developments that are designed to achieve high levels of certification against nationally and internationally recognised sustainability standards such as BREEAM excellent, Secured by Design Silver or higher or BRE Home Quality Mark.
- 7.4.3 The 3no. dwellings fronting Broadview are slightly set back behind the established building line to accommodate the substantial Council owned trees. The set back is not considered to be harmful to the visual amenities of the street scene. These dwellings would be 2.5 storeys with a small dormer in the front elevation and solar panels on the rear roof slope.
- 7.4.4 The 4no. dwellings on the open space at the rear are entirely at odds with, and have no correlation to, the established built form of either Broadview or Broxdell. This is because the proposed dwellings are built with a north-south orientation whereas all other dwellings in this area are built with an east-west orientation. Further, these dwellings are also 2.5 storeys in height with a dormer window in the rear roof slope and solar panels on the front roof slope.
- 7.4.5 The use of a buff facing brick and a pitched roof design in grey coloured roof tiles is intended to integrate with the local architectural character and complement the existing streetscape. The houses incorporate projecting entrance canopies, typical of the surrounding postwar context, and are stepped in elevation to articulate the individual houses within the larger massing of the semi-detached arrangement. The entrance canopies, dormers, window frames, metal copings and flashings are presented in a cool grey colour to compliment the warm tones of the proposed buff facing brick.
- 7.4.6 The proposed dwellings are narrower and taller than the surrounding dwellings and therefore not entirely in keeping with the surrounding vernacular. However, the surrounding dwellings were some of the first dwellings constructed in the post-war New Town and therefore should not necessarily be copied 80 years later. More recent additions in the area on the former Stoneyhall Estate, in Wornham Avenue and Miller Way set a more modern architectural tone such that the proposal would not be entirely out of keeping with the surrounding area.
- 7.4.7 The visual appearance of the development, with the staggered heights and frontages add architectural interest. The materials are modern and high-quality which adds interest to the character and appearance of the area. With innovation in design lacking in the Town, modern and contemporary architectural developments are welcomed as encouraged in the Council's Design Guide SPD.
- 7.4.8 Overall, the design, scale, and massing are considered acceptable. The materials and appearance of the proposal are modern and high quality and will have a positive contribution to the visual amenities of the area.

7.5 Impact on Neighbouring residential amenity

Policy Background

- 7.5.1 Policy GD1 of the local plan requires that development does not lead to an adverse impact on the amenities of neighbouring occupiers. In the emerging partial update of the local plan, Policy GD1 is amended to refer to “unacceptable adverse impacts” on neighbouring amenities. This change is proposed to reflect the fact that in some instances, impacts on amenities may be deemed to be acceptable despite being adverse. The emerging policy is afforded significant weight.
- 7.5.2 The dwellings fronting Broadview have no windows in the side elevations and are oriented the same as other dwellings in Broadview. As such, they would not have any adverse impact on neighbouring properties in Broadview.
- 7.5.3 The dwellings on the open space at the rear are orientated north-south and therefore their front elevations face towards the rear gardens of properties in Broadview and Broxdell, albeit approximately 16m-17m from the side boundary of the nearest property. This is a similar separation between the rear elevation of Broadview properties and the rear fence of Broxdell properties so it is not considered that existing impacts from overlooking would be worsened to a degree that warrants a refusal.
- 7.5.4 The front elevations of Plots 4 and 5 are between 26m and 28m from the rear elevation of No.26 Broxdell, whilst plots 6 and 7 have their front elevations approximately 22m from the side elevation of the same neighbour. There are no minimum separation distances for front to back and front to side orientations and therefore these approximate separation distances are considered acceptable. None of these rear plot dwellings have windows in the front roof slope that would cause adverse overlooking or loss of privacy impacts.

7.6 Impact Upon Amenities of Future Residents

- 7.6.1 Paragraph 135 of the NPPF (2024) sets out that planning decision should ensure create places with a high standard of amenity for existing and future residents. Paragraph 124 of the National Design Guide states that *“Good design promotes quality of life for the occupants and users of buildings. This includes function – buildings should be easy to use. It also includes comfort, safety, security, amenity, privacy, accessibility and adaptability”*.
- 7.6.2 Paragraph 126 of the National Design Guide also emphasises that *“well-designed homes and communal areas within buildings provide a good standard and quality of internal space. This includes room sizes, floor-to-ceiling heights, internal and external storage, sunlight, daylight and ventilation. The quality of internal space needs careful consideration in higher density developments, particularly for family accommodation, where access, privacy, daylight and external amenity space are also important”*.

Internal Living Standards

- 7.6.3 Policies SP8 and GD1 of the Local Plan Partial Review (2024) relate to high quality and good design and are deemed to carry significant weight, this is because they generally reflect the good design principles outlined in the NPPF and National Design Guide, i.e., that these policies require developments do not adversely impact the amenities of neighbouring occupiers as a good design principle. These policies state that planning permission will be granted where the proposed scheme, under criterion j. meets the nationally described space standards. Appendix C of the Local Plan (2019) sets out the minimum gross internal floor space standards for dwellings which is in line with the

Government's nationally described space standards. Through the Local Plan Review, these policies now carry significant weight.

- 7.6.4 The dwellings are 3-bed, 6-person dwellings with accommodation over 3 floors, albeit the third floor is a bedroom in the loft space. There are no space requirements for 2.5 storey dwellings. A two-storey dwelling would need 102sqm and a three-storey dwelling 108sqm. The floor plans indicate each dwelling to be approximately 105sqm which falls between the two standards as is therefore considered acceptable in this instance.
- 7.6.5 All bedrooms exceed 12.5sqm which is greater than the minimum floor space required for a double bedroom and therefore all rooms are considered acceptable in this regard.

Private amenity space

- 7.6.6 In respect to private amenity space, the Design Guide SPD (2025) requires that all dwellings should have private open space of at least 50sqm and at least 10m deep. Plots 1 to 6 all exceed the minimum requirements. However, plot 7 only achieves approximately 47sqm in area and 7m in depth which whilst a contravention of policy, is only marginal and will be weighed up in the final planning balance of the report.

Outlook, Daylight and Sunlight

- 7.6.7 Plots 1 to 3 front on to Broadview and are set back from the highway behind substantial mature sycamore trees. One of these trees is to be removed (the impact of this is discussed later in this report), however, the remaining 4 trees are likely to have some level of impact on these proposed dwellings. Similarly, plots 4 to 7 have a small tree belt comprising substantial mature trees to the south of their rear gardens.
- 7.6.8 Given this, the application is accompanied by a Daylight and Sunlight report, produced by Right of Light Consulting, dated January 2026. The report has been produced following the BRE Site Layout Planning for Daylight and Sunlight (2022).
- 7.6.9 For interior daylight, the targets set out in UK National BS EN 17037 are UK specific targets of 100 lux in bedrooms, 150 lux in living rooms and 200 lux in kitchens to be exceeded over at least 50% of the reference area.
- 7.6.10 All rooms surpass the winter recommendations. Some rooms fall short during summer, but it should be noted that BRE guidelines state that providing winter targets are met, summer daylight is likely to be adequate and within acceptable limits.
- 7.6.11 For sunlight, BRE guidance states the main requirement for sunlight is living rooms, and most importantly in the afternoons. It is viewed as less important in bedrooms and kitchens. In general, a dwelling would be considered reasonably sunlit if at least one main window faces within 90-degrees of due south, and a habitable room (living room) can achieve at least 1.5 hours of sunlight on 21st March.
- 7.6.12 All dwellings have at least one window within 90-degrees of due south; all dwellings meet or surpass the targets when not factoring in deciduous trees. When factoring them in, only one dwelling falls short of the sunlight target – plot 3. BRE guidance explains that in these situations, sunlight provision may be adequate but note trees will have some level of impact. For the living room/dining room the failure is marginal – requires 1.5 hours and achieves 1.4 hours. Whilst the bedrooms also have failures, these rooms are less important in the assessment.

| Plot 3 | Room Use | Target Sunlight | Achieved Sunlight: with trees Excluding trees |
|------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------|-----------------------------------------------------|
| Ground floor windows 11 & 12 | Living/dining/kitchen | 1.5 hours | 1.4 hours 5.7 hours |
| First floor window 13 | Bedroom | 1.5 hours | 0 3.9 hours |
| First floor window 14 | Bedroom | 1.5 hours | 0.5 hours 2.2 hours |
| Second floor window 15 | Bedroom | 1.5 hours | 1.4 hours 4.9 hours |

7.6.13 For gardens and open spaces, BRE guidance recommends at least 50% of the area should receive 2 hours of sunlight on 21st March.

7.6.14 All dwellings achieve at least 62% of their garden meeting the required target which surpasses the requirement of 50%.

7.6.15 In summary, whilst one dwelling may have some level of impact in summer when the trees are in full bloom, overall, the dwellings and their gardens exceed all minimum targets in all areas. When taken as a whole, the development is considered to be more acceptable than it is not acceptable in this regard, and this will be taken into account in the final planning balance of this report.

Noise and Pollution

7.6.16 Policy FP7 of the Local Plan Partial Review (2024), states that developments should minimise, and where possible, reduce air, water, light and noise pollution. Policy FP8 stipulates that 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. Given the proposed development would be located within an existing residential area; harm from noise is not considered an issue. Through the Local Plan Review, these policies now carry significant weight.

7.7 Car Parking and Cycle Provision

National Planning Policy Framework and Planning Practice Guidance

7.7.1 Chapter 9. (Promoting Sustainable Transport) of the NPPF (2024) sets out a requirement to consider transport issues, which includes parking, at the earliest stages of a development proposal. Paragraph 116 of the NPPF (2024) states “*Development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe.*”. Taking this into consideration, paragraph 117 of the NPPF (2024) stipulates that applications for development should:

- a) give priority first to pedestrian and cycle movements, both within the scheme and with neighbouring areas; and second – so far as possible – to facilitating access to high quality public transport, with layouts that maximise the catchment area for bus or other public transport services, and appropriate facilities that encourage public transport use;
- b) address the needs of people with disabilities and reduced mobility in relation to all modes of transport;
- c) create places that are safe, secure and attractive – which minimise the scope for conflicts between pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles, avoid unnecessary street clutter, and respond to local character and design standards;

- d) allow for the efficient delivery of goods, and access by service and emergency vehicles; and
- e) be designed to enable charging of plug-in and other ultra-low emission vehicles in safe, accessible and convenient locations.

- 7.7.2 Policy IT5 of the local plan requires developments to provide parking in accordance with the council's Parking Provision SPD (2025). Policy SP6 (Sustainable Transport), has been significantly updated in the Local Plan Partial Review and requires, amongst other things, for developments to demonstrate they are in a sustainable location and will promote active travel by non-car modes of transport by providing appropriate cycle parking and prioritise public transport.
- 7.7.3 Three-bedroom dwellings require two spaces each. Open spaces should be 2.5m wide and 5m long whilst garages should be 3m wide and 6m long internally. However, the site is located within Residential Accessibility Zone 2 which allows for between 50% and 75% of the maximum provision to be provided.
- 7.7.4 Plots 1-3 on Broadview have 3 spaces adjacent to plot 3, whilst plots 4-7 have two spaces each in front of the respective dwelling. 2no. dedicated visitor spaces are also provided alongside the spaces for plots 1-3.
- 7.7.5 As such, plots 4-7 have 100% of the maximum parking provision whilst plots 1-3 have 50% of the maximum. The site is therefore adequately provided for in terms of parking spaces.
- 7.7.6 Visitor spaces are only required where parking for the dwellings is allocated and is required at 0.25 spaces per dwelling. The parking is allocated and therefore visitor parking at a requirement of 1.75 spaces, rounded to 2 spaces is necessary. The plans show 2 spaces and therefore visitors are adequately provided for.
- 7.7.7 All parking spaces will have the necessary underground infrastructure for electric vehicle parking. The number of EV charging points will be determined by Building Control through Approved Document S. Having all spaces capable of providing EV Charging is acceptable from a planning perspective.
- 7.7.8 In terms of cycle parking, each dwelling should provide a secure and lockable storage unit capable of securing 3 cycles. For private dwellings, standard garden sheds in rear gardens are considered appropriate and acceptable. Storage of cycles in sheds in the front garden poses security concerns as they are far more susceptible to crime in addition to introducing domestic clutter in the street scene. Storage within rear gardens, secured by high level timber fencing is much more likely to be used and is far more secure. The gardens are of a size that suitable storage areas can easily be provided without compromising available amenity space. The application is acceptable in this regard.
- 7.7.9 Comments from Cycling UK Stevenage are noted. However, the access point to the cycle network on Grace Way is less than a 5-minute walk, via an underpass from Sish Lane to Grace Way; the creation of a level crossing over Grace Way is unnecessary or reasonable given the much safer underpass within 250m of the site. Additionally, there are multiple access points to the Fairlands Way cycle network, less than a 5-minute walk via footpaths from Claymores and Broadview. The applicant is therefore not required to provide any additional cycle links to the site. Herts County Council as Highways Authority has reviewed the application and made no requests for such improvements.

7.7.10 Herts County Council as Highways Authority reviewed the application and raised some initial concerns regarding the shared surface, kerb lines, land ownership and swept path analyses. The applicant provided written comments and updated plans to address the points raised and the HA subsequently provided confirmation that the application is acceptable in highway safety terms, and they raise no objections to the development.

7.8 Impact on the Environment

7.8.1 The application site comprises an area of open grassland which would be very low risk of contamination. Part of the site comprises a vacant garage compound which carries some risk of contamination from fluids from vehicles.

7.8.2 Following consultation with the Council's Environmental Health section, they have raised a concern regarding possible contamination on the garage compound site which can be adequately dealt with through the imposition of conditions. The conditions imposed would require a remediation strategy to be submitted for approval in the event that contamination is identified during the construction phase of development.

Groundwater

7.8.3 The application site is not located within a Source Protection Zone, and no concerns have been raised by Thames Water or Affinity Water with respect to potential impact from the development.

Air Quality

7.8.4 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 Air Quality Annual Status Report (ASR) 2019 by Stevenage Borough Council identifies that the development site is not located within, or near, an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA).

7.8.5 In order to mitigate the construction phase, it is recommended a condition is imposed on any permission issued. This condition would require the applicant to adhere to the CMP which details measures on controlling levels of dust and air pollutions which are generated during the construction phase of development.

7.8.6 With regards to the operational aspect of the development, due to its limited scale, the proposed development would give rise to a very small increase in NO₂ emissions which, in accordance with IAQM/EPUK guidance, is identified as having a negligible impact at all receptors in the area. As such, the need for additional mitigation has not been identified as being required. As such, the Council's Environmental Health Section has not raised any concerns with respect to the operational impact the development would have on air quality.

Noise Pollution

7.8.7 With respect to noise, Policy FP8: Pollution Sensitive Uses stipulates 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.

7.8.8 Dealing firstly with the impact of noise from the construction phase of the development, detailed measures will be required in the CMP. Through the CMP the hours in which noisy activities take place are to be controlled along with the imposition of relevant mitigation measures being put in place to minimise the impact of noise from construction activities. Moreover, if a breach were to take place, the Council can enforce the condition accordingly. Consequently, the imposition of such a condition is supported by the Council's Environmental Health Section.

7.8.9 With regards to noise which could arise during the operational phase of development, if any complaints arose regarding future occupiers, these would be dealt with by the Borough Council's Environmental Health department.

Light Pollution

7.8.10 In terms of light pollution, Policy FP7: Pollution of the adopted Local Plan (2019) requires all development proposals should minimise, where possible, 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.

7.8.11 Turning to the operational side of the development, the dwellings would be set back from the main highways and therefore any external lighting is not considered to prejudice highway safety or cause a substantive nuisance to neighbouring residential properties. A condition can be imposed to ensure external lighting is not directed towards highways.

7.8.12 In terms of lighting associated with the construction aspect of the proposed development, this is dealt with as part of a Construction Management Plan.

7.9 Trees and Landscaping

7.9.1 Policy NH5 of the adopted Local Plan (2019) states that development proposals will be expected to protect and retain individual trees within the development site and should include new planting where appropriate. The public open space part of the site is not designated as Green Belt but is designated in the Local Plan under Policies NH3/21 Green Corridor (structurally important route) and NH4 Green Link.

7.9.2 Policy NH3, which classifies Grace Way as a structurally important route, states that planning permission will be granted where proposals:

- a) Would not have a substantive adverse effect upon a Green Corridor;
- b) Retain and sensitively integrate any Green Corridor which must be crossed or incorporated into the site layout;
- c) Provide replacement planting, preferably using locally native species, where hedgerow removal is unavoidable; and
- d) Reasonably contribute towards the improvement of Green Corridors in the vicinity of the application site

- 7.9.3 Accompanying text to the policy states that the Structurally Important Routes are major highways within the built-up area of Stevenage that include significant areas within and alongside the highway that provide open space, landscaping and/or cycleways. They are primarily for human movement and are particularly conducive to cycling because of the segregated routes.
- 7.9.4 Policy NH4 designates Grace Way along its entire length as a Green Link and states that Planning permission will be granted where proposals:
- a) Would not create a substantive physical or visual break in a Green Link;
 - b) Would not otherwise have a material adverse effect on the recreational, structural, amenity or wildlife value of a green link;
 - c) Reasonably provide extensions of, or connections to, existing Green Links through the provision of on-site open space; and
 - d) Reasonably contribute towards the maintenance, improvement or extension of Green Links.
- 7.9.5 Using the Council's mapping software, very conservatively, the whole NH3/NH4 policy area is approximately 145,000sqm, whilst the proposed development would cover approximately 1,950sqm, which amounts to less than 1.5% of the total area lost to development. There would be an area of land approximately 37m wide between the back edge of the development and the back edge of the highway of Grace Way. Accordingly, the proposal would not result in substantive harm to the open space, nor would it create a visual or physical break and would therefore be policy compliant in this regard.
- 7.9.6 The comments from local residents regarding the loss of the space for children's play and dog walking are noted, however, as set out above, the amount of open space that would be lost to development amounts to less than 1.5% of the total area and as such a significant amount of open space will remain available to the public.
- 7.9.7 The small, wooded area on the public open space falls outside the red line of the site and there are no proposals to remove or undertake any other works to these Council owned trees. Any works to those trees would fall under the routine maintenance of the Council's Arboricultural team.
- 7.9.8 The site itself currently comprises 5no. large trees on the Broadview frontage. The accompanying Arboricultural Assessment identifies one of these trees as being Category C, and bordering Category U, with very little prospect of a short-term future and would have to be removed by the Council in the short-term future irrespective of the current planning application. This is because it is showing signs of disease. The remaining trees on site are in good health and are not proposed to be removed.
- 7.9.9 The Council's Arboricultural Manager has reviewed the application and has raised no objections. However, he is of the opinion that the canopies of the trees on Broadview could be larger than the Arboricultural Impact Assessment states them to be and could therefore possibly have an impact on the proposed dwellings.
- 7.9.10 The submitted daylight and sunlight report has concluded that the trees would not pose a concern regarding daylight and sunlight but given the concerns of the Arboricultural Manager, there is potential for issue over the canopies.
- 7.9.11 The Arboricultural Manager has requested that the developer undertakes a 25% crown reduction to each of the retained trees prior to construction. This can be secured via the implementation of a condition.

7.9.12 The Council's Green Spaces Manager has assessed the application and raised no objections to the principle of development in this location. However, they raised a number of questions/concerns about planting choices, the use of permeable block paving, shadowing from trees, the requirement for a full detailed landscaping plan, and swift bricks.

7.9.13 Detailed landscaping plans and swift boxes can be secured via the imposition of conditions. Details of planting choices would be secured via the final landscaping plans, as would the use of permeable paving or permeable asphalt as an alternative; both options are acceptable from a planning perspective and would be for the developer and the Council's Green Spaces team to agree on. Shadowing from trees has been shown to be within acceptable limits through the Daylight and Sunlight assessment.

7.10 Biodiversity, Ecology and Protected Species

7.10.1 Paragraph 13 of Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 sets out that every planning permission granted for the development of land in England shall be deemed to have been granted subject to the 'biodiversity gain condition' requiring development to achieve a net gain of 10% of biodiversity value. There are statutory exemptions and transitional arrangements which mean that the biodiversity gain condition does not apply in some circumstances.

7.10.2 Applicants for planning permission are required to make a statement as to whether the biodiversity gain condition will apply if permission is granted, and, if it does not apply, under which exemption they are applying.

7.10.3 The application is accompanied by detailed landscaping plans and a Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Assessment, a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) and a Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA).

7.10.4 The BNG Assessment concludes that with trading rules satisfied, the development will result in 19.32% net gain in area-based habitat units and 310.39% net gain in linear-based (hedgerow) habitat units. The Council's Ecology Officer has reviewed the documents and raised no objections or concerns. The site therefore significantly exceeds the minimum 10% net gain requirement is acceptable in this regard.

7.10.5 The Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) concludes that no habitats on site meet the criteria of an important habitat of high conservation value. It also concludes that the vacant garage block has a low habitat value for bats. Whilst the Council's Ecology Officer raises no objections to this point, they have requested a pre-commencement condition for a bat survey to be undertaken by a qualified ecologist and, where necessary, a bat licence obtained from Natural England and provided to the Council. The applicant has agreed to this condition.

7.10.6 The PEA states that 2no. integrated bat boxes and 2no. integrated swift bricks would be beneficial to the development. There are no Local Plan policies regarding this matter and currently no definitive rules or guidance in the NPPF or planning practice guidance that sets out a specific number of boxes or formula for calculating the number. As such, whilst a condition can be imposed to require the developer to install said boxes, it is for them to determine how many they wish to provide.

7.11 Other Matters

Sustainable construction and climate change

7.11.1 Under the Local Plan Partial Review, Policy FP1 has been revised to cover sustainable drainage and Policy SP1: climate change, is the new relevant policy in this regard. The fundamental objective of Policy SP1 remains the same as previous policy FP1, however, it sets out in more detail the objectives to adapting to climate change. This policy requires, amongst other things off setting of emissions targets if not met on site, water usage targets, rainwater harvesting, grey water recycling, use of sustainable materials and practices on site, ultra-low and zero carbon combined heat and power systems and urban greening (green roofs and walls). This policy is further supported by a suite of new climate change polices, CC1 through CC6 which cover a broad range of topics but which, through the partial review and examination in public should be applied flexibly as they may not always be appropriate, and it should be noted that Policy CC1 requires only major planning applications to provide an energy statement.

7.11.2 The Council's Design Guide SPD (2025) sets outs additional requirements with respect to climate change. The guide states that all developments are required to make efforts to minimise energy usage and to incorporate methods of using renewable energy.

7.11.3 The application is accompanied by a Design and Access Statement with a sustainability section that advises the dwellings would be constructed with, but not limited to, solar panels on the roof, air source heat pumps for heating and hot water, materials to be locally sourced where possible, materials to be recyclable, constructed using Fabric First approach, contain energy efficient windows, water saving measures, and thermal insulation. The construction will meet all the relevant Building Regulation ratings to secure an efficient as possible construction. This can be secured with a condition.

Waste and Recycling

7.11.4 The Design Guide (2025) states that provision should be made within new development for the storage and collection of waste from a site.

7.11.5 No comments have been provided by the Council's Environmental Operations department but the proposed dwellings have sufficient curtilage space to provide the relevant waste and recycling receptacles. Additionally, waste collections will be undertaken from two communal bin collection spots and these are located within the 30m drag distance for both occupiers and Council Operatives.

7.11.6 Given the aforementioned, with an appropriate condition in place, suitable refuse and recycle storage facilities can be delivered to meet the criterion set out in the Council's Design Guide SPD (2025).

Community Infrastructure Levy

7.11.7 The Council adopted CIL on 1 April 2020, and the CIL Charging Schedule specifies a payment for new floorspace in line with the following rates (plus appropriate indexation):

| Development Type | CIL Rate (£ per square meter) | |
|------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| | Zone 1: Stevenage Central, Stevenage West Urban Extension and North of Stevenage | 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 | |

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

7.11.9 CIL replaces the need for S106 agreements to specify financial and/or land contributions for non-site-specific infrastructure projects. This allows infrastructure to be planned on a borough-wide scale rather than on a site-by-site basis as mitigation against the impacts of individual proposals. A CIL Form 1: Additional Information has been submitted along with the application.

7.12 Equality, Diversity and Human Rights

7.12.1 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.

7.12.2 When considering proposals placed before Members it is important that they are fully aware of and have themselves rigorously considered the equalities implications of the decision that they are taking.

7.12.3 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.

7.12.4 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.

7.12.5 In terms of inclusive access, the development will comply with current accessibility standards, including Part M of the building regulations, ensuring that units are accessible to individuals with varying mobility needs. This includes step-free access to the ground floors of houses, wide doorways, and interior layouts that allow for future adaptation. All dwellings will be designed to comply with the M4(1) standard, as a minimum.

8. CONCLUSIONS

- 8.1 The proposed development would involve the provision of housing and the council's latest Housing Delivery Test result indicates that housing delivery was substantially below the housing requirement over the last three years. Therefore, the policies most important for determining the application are considered to be out-of-date and paragraph 11(d) of the NPPF is engaged
- 8.2 It has been established that the proposed development only partially accords with Policy HO5 as only part of the site would be located on land which meets the definition of previously developed land as stated within the NPPF (2024), which places substantial weight on reusing brownfield sites. Part of the site occupies public open space, and it has been concluded that the amount of open space lost to development is minor and would not harm the established green link or structurally important route of Grace Way. Given the proposal is partially reusing a brownfield site which is encouraged by the NPPF, this weighs strongly in favour of the proposal.
- 8.3 The development would provide 7 dwellings, making a reasonable contribution to the aim of boosting housing supply, which in this instance, would be partially through redeveloping a sustainable brownfield site.
- 8.4 There would be some economic benefit during the construction phase, and future occupiers would be likely to contribute to local services and facilities. Given the quantum of development, it is considered that these benefits would be moderate and therefore attracts moderate weight in favour of the proposal.
- 8.5 The proposal would incorporate a number of measures to be adaptable to, and mitigate, climate change and would result in a sustainable built form. This attracts moderate weight in favour of the proposal.
- 8.6 The proposed development would have an acceptable impact on the amenities of neighbouring occupiers, and the collection of waste and recycling is acceptable; these are neutral matters.
- 8.7 The development has been assessed to be acceptable in appearance and would not harm the visual amenities of the area. The development has been assessed to be acceptable in terms of private amenity space with regards to 6 of the 7 proposed dwellings in accordance with the adopted Design Guide (2025) and Policy GD1 of the Local Plan (2019). The one plot that fails to meet minimum standards, does so only marginally. Given the proposal complies more with the standards than it fails, it would be unreasonable to refuse the application on this basis alone.
- 8.8 The proposed dwellings would receive an acceptable amount of daylight and sunlight with the exception of plot 3 which has a marginal failure of sunlight hours when taking account of trees in full leaf; when excluding trees from the assessment, the plot passed all tests. In this regard, whilst there is a failure, it is within acceptable limits and would be unreasonable to refuse planning permission on this basis alone.
- 8.9 With regards to the environmental impact of the development in terms of ecology, biodiversity and landscaping, it has been established that there would be significant uplift and improvements to landscaping and biodiversity and is therefore acceptable in this regard.

- 8.10 The car parking and cycle parking meet the standards as set out in the Parking Provision SPD (2025) and are therefore acceptable. Additionally, the Highways Authority have raised no concerns with highway safety. This carries moderate weight in favour of the proposal.
- 8.11 In conclusion, whilst the proposal has been assessed to contravene policy through marginal failures of one plot for private amenity space and one plot for sunlight hours when trees are in full leaf only, it is considered that the public benefits identified through the delivery of housing, partially on previously developed brownfield land, outweigh the harms identified. Therefore, despite the conflicts with the aforementioned Local Plan Policies, there are sufficient material considerations to indicate that planning permission should be granted in this instance.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.1 That planning permission be GRANTED subject to the conditions set out below and delegated authority be given to the Director of Planning and Regulation in consultation with the Chair of the Planning and Development Committee, to amend or add to the conditions subject to which the permission would be granted, where such amendments or additions would satisfy the relevant national policy tests and would most effectively deliver the development which the Committee has resolved to approve.

SUBJECT TO THE FOLLOWING CONDITIONS/REASONS

- 1 The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans:
25016su1.01-B; 25016su1.02-C; 25016su1.03-A; 25016su1.04-C; 25016wd2.01-E; 25016wd2.01-E; 25016wd2.03-B; 25016wd2.04-B; 25016wd2.05; 25016wd2.10-C; 25016wd2.11-C; 25016wd2.12-C; 25016wd2.13-C; LSDP 2482.01-A; ST-3853-801-C; ST-3853-802-C; ST-3853-800-B; 36059-1; 25038-1;
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 Monday to Friday and 08:00 hours to 13:00 hours on Saturdays. For the avoidance of doubt, no such activity shall take place on Sundays or Bank Holidays, unless otherwise agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.
REASON:- In the interests of the living conditions of neighbouring occupiers.
- 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 the interests of the living conditions of neighbouring occupiers and highway safety.
- 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 prevent unacceptable risks to human health as a result of contamination.

- 6 The development to which this permission relates shall be carried out in accordance with Section 5 (Sustainability Statement) of the Design and Access Statement by Kyle Smart Associates dated January 2026, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the local planning authority.
REASON:- To ensure that the development mitigates and adapts to the negative effects of climate change.
- 7 Any trees or plants comprised within the scheme of landscaping, which within a period of five years from the completion of the development die, are removed or become seriously damaged or diseased shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of similar size and species, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.
REASON:- To ensure a satisfactory appearance for the development.
- 8 All planting, seeding or turfing comprised in the approved details of landscaping shall be carried out in the first planting and seeding seasons following the first occupation of the building(s) or the completion of the development whichever is the sooner.
REASON:- To ensure a satisfactory appearance for the development.
- 9 No development shall take place (including site clearance) until the tree protection measures as detailed in the Arboricultural Impact Assessment Report prepared by Macintyre Trees, dated January 2026, have been implemented accordingly. The tree protection measures shall remain in place until the development has been completed. Within the tree protection areas to be fenced off in accordance with the AIA there shall be no alteration to the ground level and they shall be kept clear of vehicles, materials, surplus soil, temporary buildings, plant and machinery.
REASON:- To ensure the protection of those trees which should be retained in the interests of visual amenity.
- 10 No development shall commence until a Construction Management Plan has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority in consultation with the Highway Authority. Thereafter the construction of the development shall only be carried out in accordance with the approved Plan. The Plan would need to include details of:
- a. Construction vehicle numbers, type, routing;
 - b. Access arrangements to the site;
 - c. Traffic management requirements;
 - d. Construction and storage compounds (including areas designated for car parking);
 - 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. Phasing Plan.
- REASON:-** In order to protect the safety and the amenity of other users of the public highway
- 11 No development shall take place (including demolition and site clearance) until a bat survey of the site has been undertaken by a qualified ecologist and the local planning authority has been provided with a copy of the licence issued by Natural England pursuant to Regulation 53 of The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) authorising the specified activity/development to go ahead.
REASON:- To ensure compliance with the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) and to conserve and enhance biodiversity in accordance with NPPF

- 12 No development shall take place above slab level until there has been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority a scheme of soft and hard landscaping and details of the treatment of all hard surfaces. The scheme shall include details of all existing trees and hedgerows on the land and details showing all trees to be removed, or retained, together with details of all new planting to take place including species, size and method of planting.
REASON:- To ensure a satisfactory appearance for the development.
- 13 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.
- 14 No development shall take place above slab level until details of integrated swift bricks and bat boxes to be provided within the development have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The development shall then be carried out in accordance with the approved details.
REASON:- To ensure that the development enhances the natural environment.
- 15 No development shall take place above slab level until the retained trees labelled T2, T3, T4, and T5 on the approved plans, located to the front of Plots 1 to 3 on Broadview, have been crown reduced by no more than 25% by the developers qualified Arborist.
REASON:- To ensure the protection of those trees which should be retained in the interests of visual amenity.
- 16 Prior to the beneficial occupation of the development to which this permission relates, the refuse stores and cycle storage as shown on the approved plans shall be provided in full. The stores shall be permanently retained as such thereafter unless otherwise agreed in writing by the local planning authority.
REASON:- To ensure the proper disposal of waste for the lifetime of the development.
- 17 Prior to the first occupation of the development hereby permitted, the pedestrian and vehicular accesses and visibility splays shall be completed as per the approved plans and thereafter retained in that form for the lifetime of the development.
REASON:- To ensure construction of a satisfactory access to the site in the interests of highway safety.
- 18 Prior to the first occupation of the development hereby approved, the parking spaces shall be provided and marked out in accordance with the approved plans. Any new areas of hardstanding shall be made of a porous material, or provision shall be made to direct surface water run-off water from the hardstanding to a permeable or porous area or surface within the curtilage of the dwellinghouse.
REASON:- In the interest of visual amenity and to ensure the development is sustainable and accords with the aspirations of Class F, Part 1 of Schedule 2 to the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015.
- 19 Prior to the first occupation of the dwellinghouses hereby permitted, all parking spaces shall be provided with the underlying infrastructure for connection to the electricity network to enable them to be served by an electric vehicle charging point.
REASON:- To ensure construction of a satisfactory development and to promote sustainable development
- 20 The Biodiversity Gain Plan shall be prepared in accordance with the Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment produced by Arbtech Consulting Ltd on 26 February 2026.
REASON:- To ensure the development delivers a biodiversity net gain on site.

- 21 The development shall not commence until a Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan (the HMMP), prepared in accordance with the approved Biodiversity Gain Plan and including:
- a. a non-technical summary;
 - b. the roles and responsibilities of the people or organisation(s) delivering the HMMP;
 - c. the planned habitat creation and enhancement works to create or improve habitat to achieve the biodiversity net gain in accordance with the approved Biodiversity Gain Plan;
 - d. the management measures to maintain habitat in accordance with the approved Biodiversity Gain Plan for a period of 30 years from the completion of development; and
 - e. the monitoring methodology and frequency in respect of the created or enhanced habitat to be submitted to the local planning authority

has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the local planning authority. The created and/or enhanced habitat specified in the approved HMMP shall be managed and maintained in accordance with the approved HMMP.

REASON:- To ensure the development delivers a biodiversity net gain on site.

- 22 Notice in writing shall be given to the Council when the:
- a. HMMP has been implemented; and
 - b. Habitat creation and enhancement works as set out in the HMMP have been completed.

REASON:- To ensure the development delivers a biodiversity net gain on site.

The Council has acted Pro-Actively for the following reason:-

- 1 Planning permission has been granted for this proposal. The Council acted pro-actively through positive engagement with the applicant during the determination process which led to improvements to the scheme. The Council has therefore acted pro-actively in line with the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework and in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015.

INFORMATIVE

1 Public Information on Planning Applications

Warning: all information provided on your planning application is now publicly available. Individuals and organisations offering their services may contact you. The Council does not endorse or approve any builders, surveyors, trades persons or other supplier, and advises householders to obtain quotes/references, and check the legitimacy of any contractor who contacts them before making payment.

2 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.

3 **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, Campus East, Welwyn Garden City, Hertfordshire, AL8 6AE.

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).

4 **Party Wall etc. Act 1996**

Any work that affects a party wall, including foundations dug within 3.0m of a neighbouring building, may be controllable under the Act and may require approval from the adjoining owner(s). Party Wall Act matters are always civil matters and it is neither Stevenage Borough Council's nor Hertfordshire Building Control Ltd's remit to control or enforce Party Wall act matters. Please refer to the Government's explanatory booklet The Party Wall etc. Act 1996, a copy of which is available online at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-party-wall-etc-act-1996-revised-explanatory-booklet>

5 **Biodiversity Net Gain**

The effect of paragraph 13 of Schedule 7A to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 is that planning permission granted for the development of land in England is deemed to have been granted subject to the condition "(the biodiversity gain condition)" that development may not begin unless:

- a) a Biodiversity Gain Plan has been submitted to the planning authority, and
- b) the planning authority has approved the plan.

The planning authority, for the purposes of determining whether to approve a Biodiversity Gain Plan if one is required in respect of this permission would be Stevenage Borough Council.

Based on the information available, this permission is considered to be one which will require the approval of a biodiversity gain plan before development is begun because none of the statutory exemptions or transitional arrangements are considered to apply.

Where the local planning authority considers that the permission falls within paragraph 19 of Schedule 7A to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, the permission which has been granted has the effect of requiring or permitting the development to proceed in phases. The modifications in respect of the biodiversity gain condition which are set out in Part 2 of the Biodiversity Gain (Town and Country Planning) (Modifications and Amendments) (England) Regulations 2024 apply.

Biodiversity gain plans are required to be submitted to, and approved by, the planning authority before development may be begun, and, if subject to phased development, before each phase of development may be begun (Phase Plans).

If the onsite habitat includes irreplaceable habitat (within the meaning of the Biodiversity Gain Requirements (Irreplaceable Habitat) Regulations 2024) there are additional requirements for the content and approval of Biodiversity Gain Plans. The Biodiversity Gain Plan must include, in addition to information about steps taken or to be taken to minimise any adverse effect of the development on the habitat, information on arrangements for compensation for any impact the development has on the biodiversity of the irreplaceable habitat.

The planning authority can only approve a Biodiversity Gain Plan if satisfied that the adverse effect of the development on the biodiversity of the irreplaceable habitat is minimised and appropriate arrangements have been made for the purpose of compensating for any impact which do not include the use of biodiversity credits.

More information can be found in the Planning Practice Guidance online at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/biodiversity-net-gain>

6 Environmental Protection Act 1990

The applicant is advised of the Council's powers under Part III of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 to prohibit nuisances arising from dust, smoke, artificial light, and a range of other pollutants that may arise on construction sites.

7 Environmental Health

During the demolition and construction phase of the development, the guidance in BS5228-1:2009 (Code of Practice for Noise Control on Construction and Open Sites) should be adhered to.

8 Hertfordshire County Council as Highways Authority

The applicant is advised that in order to comply with this permission it will be necessary for the developer of the site to enter into an agreement with Hertfordshire County Council as Highway Authority under Section 278 of the Highways Act 1980 to ensure the satisfactory completion of the access and associated road improvements. The construction of such works must be undertaken to the satisfaction and specification of the Highway Authority, and by a contractor who is authorised to work in the public highway. Before works commence the applicant will need to apply to the Highway Authority to obtain their permission and requirements. Further information is available via the website <https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/highways-roads-and-pavements/businessanddeveloper-information/development-management/highways-developmentmanagement.aspx> or by telephoning 0300 1234047.

9 Hertfordshire County Council as Highways Authority

Parking and Storage of materials: The applicant is advised that all areas for parking, storage, and delivery of materials associated with the construction of this development should be provided within the site on land which is not public highway, and the use of such areas must not interfere with the public highway. If this is not possible, authorisation should be sought from the Highway Authority before construction works commence. Further information is available via the website: <https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/highways-roads-and-pavements/business-and-developer-information/development-management/highways-development-management.aspx> or by telephoning 0300 1234047.

- 10 **Hertfordshire County Council as Highways Authority**
Obstruction of public highway land: It is an offence under section 137 of the Highways Act 1980 for any person, without lawful authority or excuse, in any way to wilfully obstruct the free passage along a highway or public right of way. If this development is likely to result in the public highway or public right of way network becoming routinely blocked (fully or partly) the applicant must contact the Highway Authority to obtain their permission and requirements before construction works commence. Further information is available via the website:
<http://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/transtreets/highways/> or by telephoning 0300 1234047.
- 11 **Hertfordshire County Council as Highways Authority**
Debris and deposits on the highway: 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.
- 12 **Hertfordshire County Council as Highways Authority**
Public Rights of Way (RoW) should remain unobstructed by vehicles, machinery, materials, tools and any other aspects of the construction during works. The safety of the public using the routes and any other routes to be used by construction traffic should be a paramount concern during works; safe passage past the site should be maintained at all times. The condition of the route should not deteriorate as a result of these works; any adverse effects to the surface from traffic, machinery or materials (especially overflows of cement & concrete) must be made good by the applicant to the satisfaction of this Authority. All materials must be removed at the end of the construction and not left on the Highway or Highway verges. Further details regarding RoW can be obtained from the RoW unit at Hertfordshire County Council. Additionally if the works to the RoW require a temporary closure then the developer should contact Rights of Way to discuss the process and costs involved.
- 13 **Hertfordshire County Council as Highways Authority**
Roads to remain private: The applicant is advised that all new roads associated with this development will remain unadopted and the developer should put in place a permanent arrangement for long term maintenance. At the entrance of the new estate the road name plate should indicate that it is a private road to inform purchasers of their future maintenance liabilities. Further information is available via the website www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/transtreets/highways/ or by telephoning 0300 1234047.
- 14 **Stevenage Borough Council Engineering Department**
The applicant is reminded of their agreement to pay the Council's Engineering Services team a financial contribution of £4,000.00 to create a new Traffic Regulation Order and associated road markings at both access points to create "No Waiting" restrictions to protect highway safety at these points.

10. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

- 1 The application file, forms, plans and supporting documents having the reference number relating to this item. Online copies may be obtained at <https://publicaccess.stevenage.gov.uk/online-applications/>
- 2 The Stevenage Borough Local Plan 2011-2031
<https://www.stevenage.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy/local-plan>

- 3 The Stevenage Borough Local Plan Partial Update 2025
<https://www.stevenage.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy/local-plan-partial-update/submission-to-secretary-of-state>
- 4 Stevenage Borough Council Supplementary Planning Documents: Parking Provision SPD 2025; Design Guidance SPD 2025; Developer Contributions SPD 2025.
<https://www.stevenage.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy/planning-library>
- 5 Hertfordshire County Council Local Transport Plan LTP4 2018-2031
<https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/media-library/documents/about-the-council/consultations/ltp4-local-transport-plan-4-complete.pdf>
- 5 Government advice contained in the National Planning Policy Framework 2024 and the Planning Practice Guidance.
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/67aafe8f3b41f783cca46251/NPPF_December_2024.pdf

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/planning-practice-guidance>
- 7 Representations made by statutory consultees and other interested parties referred to in this report. Online copies can be found on Public Access.

This page is intentionally left blank

Meeting: Planning and Development Committee **Agenda Item:**
Date: 4th June 2026
Author: Aliya Muskaan Khalil
Lead Officer: Alex Robinson
Contact Officer: Aliya Muskaan Khalil

| | |
|-------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Application No : | 26/00250/FP |
| Location : | The North End Of The Fairlands Valley Park Fairlands Way |
| Proposal : | Installation of public sculpture |
| Drawing Nos.: | Site Location Plan; Aerial View; Elevation View; Proposed Site Plan |
| Applicant : | Mr Louis Smith |
| Agent: | Ms Ana Carolina Pinto White |
| Date Valid: | 19 March 2026 |
| Recommendation: | GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION |



1. SITE DESCRIPTION

- 1.1 The application site comprises a 4m² area of Fairlands Valley Park, located to the south of the park carpark accessed from Fairlands Way

2. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

2.1 The relevant planning history on file is as follows:

- 26/00305/FP - Installation of public sculpture. This application is currently pending consideration.

3. THE CURRENT APPLICATION

3.1 This application seeks planning permission for the installation of a public sculpture. This would comprise a Roman Legionary, a large-scale public sculpture intended for Stevenage as part of the Public Art Commission 2025.

3.2 This application has been referred to the Planning and Development Committee for its decision. This is because the agent and landowner is Stevenage Borough Council.

4. PUBLIC REPRESENTATIONS

4.1 Following notification of the application via letters and the erection of site notices, public representations have been received from the following properties:

- Ridgeway (no number given);
- Archer Road (no number given);
- 31 Trent Road;
- 75 Brook Drive;
- 206 Bedwell Crescent.

4.2 A summary of the comments received are set out below:

- Waste of public funding/unnecessary expenditure;
- Unsuitable location;
- It will be subject to vandalism;
- Stevenage does not have a strong history of Roman connections;
- Poor prioritisation of limited public resources.

4.3 The aforementioned is not a verbatim copy of the objections which have been raised.

5. CONSULTATIONS

5.1. Green Spaces Team – Comments received on the 15th of April 2026: “The proposal is supported in principle. The sculpture has the potential to be an interesting and valuable addition to the park, contributing positively to the visitor experience and overall character of the space. The interactive nature of the proposal is welcomed, subject to appropriate durability and longevity considerations.”

6. RELEVANT PLANNING POLICIES

6.1 The Development Plan

6.1.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that planning applications be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. For Stevenage, the statutory development plan comprises the following documents:

- The Stevenage Borough Council Local Plan 2011-2031 (adopted 2019)
- The Hertfordshire Waste Core Strategy & Development Management Policies Development Plan Document 2011-2026 (adopted 2012)

- The Hertfordshire Waste Site Allocations Development Plan Document 2011-2026 (adopted 2014)
- The Hertfordshire Minerals Local Plan Review 2002-2016 (adopted 2007)

6.2 National Planning Policy Framework

6.2.1 The latest revision of the NPPF was published in December 2024. The policies it contains are material considerations which will be taken into account in dealing with applications. Due weight will be given to development plan policies according to their degree of consistency with the NPPF. The NPPF should be read as a whole (including its footnotes and annexes).

6.3 Planning Practice Guidance

6.3.1 The Planning Practice Guidance (“PPG”), with which Members are fully familiar, is an online resource containing guidance supplementing the NPPF. The PPG is a material consideration which should be taken into account in determining planning applications.

6.4 National Design Guide

6.4.1 The National Design Guide 2021 is Government guidance on the characteristics of well-designed places and demonstrates what good design means in practice. It has the same status as the PPG and should similarly be taken into account when determining planning applications.

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

6.5.1 The Stevenage Borough Local Plan 2011-2031 was adopted in 2019. Weight must be given to the policies it contains according to their degree of consistency with the NPPF (the closer the policies in the plan to the policies in the NPPF, the greater the weight that may be given).

6.6.2. In addition, the council is required to regard the local plan policies most relevant to determining the application as out-of-date because the application involves the provision of housing and the delivery of housing in the borough was substantially below the housing requirement over the last three years. Those policies are:

Policy SP1: Presumption in favour of sustainable development;
 Policy SP2: Sustainable Development in Stevenage;
 Policy SP8: Good Design;
 Policy IT5: Parking and access;
 Policy GD1: High quality design;
 Policy NH4: Green Links.

6.6.3 According to the NPPF, the fact that these policies are regarded as out-of-date means that permission should be granted for the proposed development unless: i. the application of policies in the NPPF that protect areas or assets of particular importance provide a strong reason for refusing the development; or ii. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the NPPF taken as a whole, having particular regard to key policies for directing development to sustainable locations, making effective use of land, securing well-designed places and providing affordable homes, individually or in combination.

6.7 Local Plan Review and Update (2024)

- 6.7.1 The council concluded a full review of the plan in 2024, as required by regulation 10A of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended).
- 6.7.2. In response to the review, the council has proposed a partial update of the local plan. Weight must be given to the emerging policies in the partial update according to: a) the stage of preparation of the emerging plan; b) the extent to which there are unresolved objections to the policies; and c) the degree of consistency between the policies and the most recent revision of the NPPF.
- 6.7.3. At the time of writing, the partial update has undergone examination by the Secretary of State and the main modifications consultation has closed. The partial update is at an advanced stage of preparation, and the council considers the emerging policies within it to have a high degree of consistency with the NPPF. Where relevant, the weight to be given to emerging policies will be set out in the assessment section of this report.

6.8 Supplementary Planning Documents

- 6.8.1 The following supplementary planning documents are relevant to determining the application:
- Stevenage Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (February 2025);

6.9 Community Infrastructure Levy

- 6.9.1 Stevenage Borough Council adopted a Community Infrastructure Levy (“CIL”) Charging Schedule in 2020. This allows the Council to collect a levy to fund infrastructure projects based on the type, location, and floor space of a development. This proposal is not CIL liable.

7. APPRAISAL

- 7.1.1 The main issues in the assessment of the application is its acceptability with impact on the setting of a heritage asset, impact visual amenities, impact on amenities, parking and highways implications and impact on the environment.
- 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 Impact on the Significance of a Designated Heritage Asset

- 7.2.1. The proposed development seeks to install a new sculpture in a grassed area to the south of the Fairlands Valley Park car park accessed from Fairlands Way. This would be approximately 50 metres away from the Grade II Listed Building of Fairlands Farm, a Grade II listed building comprising a former farmhouse of the C17, remodelled in the C19 (list entry no: 1393097).
- 7.2.2. The proposed sculpture would be approximately 1 metre tall at its maximum height, and 4 metres long, would be ground mounted and constructed from concrete.
- 7.2.3. Regarding listed buildings, S66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires that when considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, special regard shall be had

to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.

- 7.2.4. Case Law has determined that in this context 'preserve' is taken to mean 'to do no harm'. The NPPF requires 'great weight' to be given to conserving the significance of designated heritage assets (paragraph 212). This is regardless of whether any harm may be 'substantial harm' or 'less than substantial harm' (paragraph 212). Any harm should require 'clear and convincing' justification (paragraph 213). If a development proposal would lead to less than substantial harm, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal (paragraph 215).
- 7.2.5. In undertaking that balancing, Case Law has confirmed that the presumption to preserve in the 1990 Act is a strong one and must be given 'considerable importance and weight'. For instance, less than substantial harm is not a less than substantial planning issue. However, that presumption is not irrefutable and can be outweighed by circumstances important enough to justify it. A decision maker that has followed the processes set out in the NPPF can be considered to have discharged their duties under the 1990 Act. The balancing, however, is not 'equal' the presumption to preserve must come first.
- 7.2.6. Due to the set back from the main highway this sculpture would have minimal visual impact on the street scene, and given that it would be ground mounted, owing to the topography and vegetation of the surrounding park, it would have low visibility from the grade II listed farmhouse especially when considering its maximum height at 1 metre, as noted during the Officer Site Visit dated the 1st of April 2026. The use of concrete would allow the sculpture to appear similar to a traditional material such as clay.
- 7.2.7. It is therefore considered the setting and significance of the listed Fairlands Farmhouse would be preserved.

7.3 Design and visual impact

Policy Background

- 7.3.1 Chapter 12. (Achieving well-designed places) of the NPPF (2024) stipulates that the creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities. Being clear about design expectations, and how these will be tested, is essential for achieving this. So too is effective engagement between applicants, communities, local planning authorities and other interests throughout the process. Where development is not well designed, permission should be refused.
- 7.3.2 Policies SP8 and GD1 of the Local Plan Partial Review (2024) are deemed to carry significant weight, this is because they generally reflect the good design principles outlined in the NPPF and National Design Guide, i.e., that these policies require developments do not adversely impact the amenities of neighbouring occupiers as a good design principle. Policy GD2 (design certification) is a new policy emerging from the review and states that the Council will support developments that are designed to achieve high levels of certification against nationally and internationally recognised sustainability standards such as BREEAM excellent, Secured by Design Silver or higher or BRE Home Quality Mark.
- 7.3.3 The submitted Design and Access Statement states that the proposal comprises "The Sleeping Legionary, a large-scale public sculpture intended for Stevenage as part of the Public Art Commission 2025."

- 7.3.4 The work is intended to combine “history, archaeology, local stories and a touch of mythology to create something that feels both grounded in the earth and alive with imagination.”
- 7.3.5 The sculpture, which would feature a sleeping Roman Soldier, would have a length of 4 metres and a maximum height of 1 metre, but the width is not to scale. The sculpture would be low-level and ground mounted, with three steel beams affixed into the soil for security.
- 7.3.6 It would be situated on the existing grass open space, and would not block pedestrian views around the bend into the wider Fairlands Valley Park when approaching from the nearest parking.
- 7.3.7 Whilst it is large at 4 metres in length, it is low-lying and would not have an adverse visual impact on the wider Fairlands Valley Park.
- 7.3.8 The Design and Access statement acknowledges that the use of modified concrete would emulate historic Roman finds, such as broken clay pots, and the use of ceramic-like finishes would give the sculpture an earthy feel. The use of this material is also intended to require minimal maintenance. This is considered acceptable.
- 7.3.9 Given the aforementioned assessment, the proposal would not have a detrimental impact on the character and appearance of this part of the park. In addition, the proposal would not harm the visual amenities of the wider street scene. Therefore, it accords with the design policies in the adopted Local Plan (2019), the Council’s Design Guide SPD (2025), and the NPPF (2024).

7.4 Impact on neighbouring amenities

Policy Background

- 7.4.1 Policy GD1 of the local plan requires that development does not lead to an adverse impact on the amenities of neighbouring occupiers. In the emerging partial update of the local plan, Policy GD1 is amended to refer to “unacceptable adverse impacts” on neighbouring amenities. This change is proposed to reflect the fact that in some instances, impacts on amenities may be deemed to be acceptable despite being adverse. The emerging policy is afforded significant weight.
- 7.4.2 In terms of impact on residential amenities, the nearest residential properties are located at least 80m from the application site, the closest being towards the east at Archer Road. Due to the significant separation distance combined with the fact that the sculpture would be ground mounted and would not result in any noise or odour emissions, it is not considered the proposal would harm the amenities of the nearest residential properties.
- 7.4.3 In terms of impact on the surrounding area, the site falls within the Fairlands Valley Park, which is fairly quiet and following construction, it is unlikely that any noise would arise directly as a result of the sculpture. Therefore, the proposal would not harm amenities more generally.

7.5 Car Parking and Cycle Provision

National Planning Policy Framework and Planning Practice Guidance

- 7.5.1 Chapter 9. (Promoting Sustainable Transport) of the NPPF (2024) sets out a requirement to consider transport issues, which includes parking, at the earliest stages

of a development proposal. Paragraph 116 of the NPPF (2024) states “*Development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe.*”. Taking this into consideration, paragraph 117 of the NPPF (2024) stipulates that applications for development should:

- a) give priority first to pedestrian and cycle movements, both within the scheme and with neighbouring areas; and second – so far as possible – to facilitating access to high quality public transport, with layouts that maximise the catchment area for bus or other public transport services, and appropriate facilities that encourage public transport use;
- b) address the needs of people with disabilities and reduced mobility in relation to all modes of transport;
- c) create places that are safe, secure and attractive – which minimise the scope for conflicts between pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles, avoid unnecessary street clutter, and respond to local character and design standards;
- d) allow for the efficient delivery of goods, and access by service and emergency vehicles; and
- e) be designed to enable charging of plug-in and other ultra-low emission vehicles in safe, accessible and convenient locations.

7.5.2 Policy IT5 of the local plan requires developments to provide parking in accordance with the council’s Parking Provision SPD (2025). Policy SP6 (Sustainable Transport), has been significantly updated in the Local Plan Partial Review and requires, amongst other things, for developments to demonstrate they are in a sustainable location and will promote active travel by non-car modes of transport by providing appropriate cycle parking and prioritise public transport.

7.5.3 The proposed development does not seek to increase the number of facilities available at Fairlands Valley Park, and the sculpture is designed as part of the landscape for the users of Fairlands Valley Park. The proposal would not have an impact on or result in the loss of any existing parking which is already being provided on site. With respect to the impact on the highway network, the application site already benefits from an existing vehicle access offset from Fairlands Way which is designated as a local access road with a speed restriction of 20-40mph. The proposal does not seek to alter or create any new access points onto the established highway network.

7.5.4 The existing pedestrian path leading into Fairlands Valley Park would not be impacted from the installation of the sculpture as it is located at least 11 metres away from the public footpath. The proposal is considered acceptable from a highway and parking point of view, as it would not result in the requirement for any additional parking, alter existing parking provision, would not generate any additional vehicle traffic and would not affect the existing public pedestrian path.

7.6 Impact on the Environment

7.6.1 Policy NH4 (Green Links) identifies Fairlands Valley Park as a designated Green Link. The application site comprises an area of open green space which would be at very low risk of contamination.

7.6.2 The Green Spaces Development Manager has reviewed the application and supports the application in principle. This is subject to materials being resistant to graffiti and vandalism, and maintenance of the surrounding ground and grass land.

7.6.3 The sculpture has the potential to be an interesting and valuable addition to the park, contributing positively to the visitor experience and overall character of the space. The interactive nature of the proposal is welcomed, subject to appropriate durability and longevity considerations.

7.6.4 The proposal would not create a substantive visual break in the Green Link, and would not have an otherwise material adverse effect on the recreational, structural, amenity or wildlife value of a green link. It is therefore considered to be in accordance with Local Plan policy NH4.

7.7 Development and Flood Risk

7.7.1 In the emerging Local Plan Partial Review and update (2024), flood risk and drainage policies are significantly revised. The existing policy FP1 is replaced by a new sustainable drainage policy, which places an emphasis on the use of the most sustainable SuDS features and methods of surface water discharge and now requires all major and minor applications to incorporate SuDS unless there are clear and convincing reasons for not doing so.

7.7.2 Meanwhile, existing policies FP2 and FP3 are combined into a new, more comprehensive flood risk policy, which largely reflects national flood risk policies but also seeks to protect watercourses and flood defences. Policy SP11 encourages direction of development to low-risk areas, where possible to utilise SuDS features and to overall protect watercourses and ensure developments do not result in acceptable harm to human health or the natural environment as a result of pollution.

7.7.3 The application site to the extent of the location of the installation of the sculpture is located within Flood Zone 1 within the Environment Agency's flood risk map. Flood Zone 1 is defined as land having less than 1 in 1000 annual probability of flooding and is the lowest risk. The proposal is not therefore expected to raise any flood risk issues.

7.8 Biodiversity, Ecology and Protected Species

7.8.1 Paragraph 13 of Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 sets out that every planning permission granted for the development of land in England shall be deemed to have been granted subject to the 'biodiversity gain condition' requiring development to achieve a net gain of 10% of biodiversity value. There are statutory exemptions and transitional arrangements which mean that the biodiversity gain condition does not apply in some circumstances.

7.8.2 Applicants for planning permission are required to make a statement as to whether the biodiversity gain condition will apply if permission is granted, and, if it does not apply, under which exemption they are applying.

7.8.3 Based on the information submitted, this proposal is not considered to be one which would require the approval of a biodiversity gain plan before development is begun because the following statutory exemption or transitional arrangement is considered to apply.

1. Development below the de minimis threshold, meaning development which:

a) does not impact an onsite priority habitat (a habitat specified in a list published under section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006); and

b) impacts less than 25 square metres of onsite habitat that has biodiversity value greater than zero and less than 5 metres in length of onsite linear habitat (as defined in the statutory metric).

7.8.4 The sculpture would have foundations on the existing grass but owing to its size (4m²), it would fall under the de minimum category and therefore a 10% net gain in biodiversity is not required.

7.9 Other Matters Raised in Representations

7.9.1 The use or allocations of public funds are not a material consideration in this application.

7.9.2 The applicant is not required to submit contact details of future staff members as part of this application.

7.9.3 Concerns over vandalism or graffiti in the area arising from the sculpture are a matter for the Police.

7.10 Other Matters

Community Infrastructure Levy

7.10.1 The Council adopted CIL on 1 April 2020 and the CIL Charging Schedule specifies a payment for new floorspace. Due to the nature of the proposed development, there is no CIL liability.

7.11 Equality, Diversity and Human Rights

7.11.1 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.

7.11.2 When considering proposals placed before Members it is important that they are fully aware of and have themselves rigorously considered the equalities implications of the decision that they are taking.

7.11.3 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.

7.11.4 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.

7.11.5 The proposal does not affect the accessibility into the Fairlands Valley Park, nor would it affect members of the public, including those covered by the Equalities Act. The proposed development is not considered therefore to have any material impact on persons with any of the protected characteristics listed under the Equalities Act.

8. CONCLUSIONS

- 8.1 To conclude, the principle of the proposed development is acceptable as it would support the operation and maintenance of the Fairlands Valley Park. Furthermore, it would preserve the setting of Fairlands Farmhouse heritage asset, the character and appearance of the wider site, and would not detract from the visual amenities of the street scene. The proposal would not cause harm to the amenities of the nearest residential properties, nor would it have any impact on the safety and usability of the highway network.
- 8.2 Given the aforementioned, the proposed development is considered to be acceptable in line with the Council adopted Local Plan (2019), Planning and Design Guide SPD (2025), the NPPF (2024) and Planning Practice Guide.

9. RECOMMENDATION

- 9.1 That planning permission be GRANTED subject to the conditions set out below and delegated authority be given to the Director of Planning and Regulation in consultation with the Chair of the Planning and Development Committee.

SUBJECT TO THE FOLLOWING CONDITIONS/REASONS

- 1 The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans:
Site Location Plan; Aerial View; Elevation View; Proposed Site Plan
REASON:- For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning
- 2 The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.
REASON:- To comply with the requirements of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004).
- 3 The external materials used in the development to which this permission relates shall be those detailed on the approved plans and in the accompanying planning submission documents unless otherwise agreed in writing by the local planning authority.
REASON:- To ensure the development has an acceptable appearance.

The Council has acted Pro-Actively for the following reason:-

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

INFORMATIVE

1 Public Information on Planning Applications

Warning: all information provided on your planning application is now publicly available. Individuals and organisations offering their services may contact you. The Council does not endorse or approve any builders, surveyors, trades persons or other supplier, and advises householders to obtain quotes/references, and check the legitimacy of any contractor who contacts them before making payment.

2 **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.

3 **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, Campus East, Welwyn Garden City, Hertfordshire, AL8 6AE.

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).

4 **Biodiversity Net Gain**

Applications where Biodiversity Net Gain is not required as development is considered De Minimis

The effect of paragraph 13 of Schedule 7A to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 is that planning permission granted for the development of land in England is deemed to have been granted subject to the condition "(the biodiversity gain condition)" that development may not begin unless:

- a) a Biodiversity Gain Plan has been submitted to the planning authority, and
- b) the planning authority has approved the plan.

The planning authority, for the purposes of determining whether to approve a Biodiversity Gain Plan if one is required in respect of this permission would be Stevenage Borough Council.

There are statutory exemptions and transitional arrangements which mean that the biodiversity gain condition does not apply.

Based on the information available this permission is considered to be one which will not require the approval of a biodiversity gain plan before development is begun because the following statutory exemption or transitional arrangement is considered to apply.

1. Development below the de minimis threshold, meaning development which:
 - a) does not impact an onsite priority habitat (a habitat specified in a list published under section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006); and
 - b) impacts less than 25 square metres of onsite habitat that has biodiversity value greater than zero and less than 5 metres in length of onsite linear habitat (as defined in the statutory metric).

Where the local planning authority considers that the permission falls within paragraph 19 of Schedule 7A to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, the permission which has been granted has the effect of requiring or permitting the development to proceed in phases. The modifications in respect of the biodiversity gain condition which are set out in Part 2 of the Biodiversity Gain (Town and Country Planning) (Modifications and Amendments) (England) Regulations 2024 apply.

Biodiversity gain plans are required to be submitted to, and approved by, the planning authority before development may be begun, and, if subject to phased development, before each phase of development may be begun.

If the onsite habitat includes irreplaceable habitat (within the meaning of the Biodiversity Gain Requirements (Irreplaceable Habitat) Regulations 2024) there are additional requirements for the content and approval of Biodiversity Gain Plans. The Biodiversity Gain Plan must include, in addition to information about steps taken or to be taken to minimise any adverse effect of the development on the habitat, information on arrangements for compensation for any impact the development has on the biodiversity of the irreplaceable habitat. The planning authority can only approve a Biodiversity Gain Plan if satisfied that the adverse effect of the development on the biodiversity of the irreplaceable habitat is minimised and appropriate arrangements have been made for the purpose of compensating for any impact which do not include the use of biodiversity credits.

More information can be found in the Planning Practice Guidance online at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/biodiversity-net-gain>

10. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

- 1 The application file, forms, plans and supporting documents having the reference number relating to this item. Online copies may be obtained at <https://publicaccess.stevenage.gov.uk/online-applications/>
- 2 The Stevenage Borough Local Plan 2011-2031
<https://www.stevenage.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy/local-plan>
- 3 The Stevenage Borough Local Plan Partial Update 2025
<https://www.stevenage.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy/local-plan-partial-update/submission-to-secretary-of-state>
- 4 Stevenage Borough Council Supplementary Planning Documents: Parking Provision SPD 2025; Design Guidance SPD 2025; Developer Contributions SPD 2025.
<https://www.stevenage.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy/planning-library>
- 5 Hertfordshire County Council Local Transport Plan LTP4 2018-2031
<https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/media-library/documents/about-the-council/consultations/ltp4-local-transport-plan-4-complete.pdf>
- 5 Government advice contained in the National Planning Policy Framework 2024 and the Planning Practice Guidance.
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/67aafe8f3b41f783cca46251/NPPF_December_2024.pdf
<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/planning-practice-guidance>
- 7 Representations made by statutory consultees and other interested parties referred to in this report. Online copies can be found on Public Access.

This page is intentionally left blank

Meeting: Planning and Development
Committee

Agenda Item:

Date: 04.06.2026

IMPORTANT INFORMATION - DELEGATED DECISIONS

Author – Technical Support 01438 242838

Lead Officer – Alex Robinson 01438 242257

Contact Officer – James Chettleburgh 01438 242266

The Assistant Director of Planning and Regulation has issued decisions in respect of the following applications in accordance with his delegated authority:-

1. Application No : 26/00268/CLPD
Date Received : 26.03.26
Location : 44 Old Bourne Way Stevenage Herts SG1 6AE
Proposal : Lawful Development Certificate (Proposed) for rear dormer window and 2no. front rooflights for loft conversion.
Date of Decision : 23.04.26
Decision : **Certificate of Lawfulness is APPROVED**

2. Application No : 26/00272/CLPD
Date Received : 30.03.26
Location : 101 Ingleside Drive Stevenage Herts SG1 4RY
Proposal : Lawful Development Certificate (Proposed) Single storey rear extension
Date of Decision : 09.04.26
Decision : **Certificate of Lawfulness is APPROVED**

3. Application No : 26/00274/FP
Date Received : 31.03.26
Location : 11 High Street Stevenage Herts SG1 3BG
Proposal : Construction of outdoor decking, installation of solar panels, and replacement of two first floor rear windows
Date of Decision : 18.05.26
Decision : **Planning Permission is GRANTED**
4. Application No : 26/00275/LB
Date Received : 31.03.26
Location : 11 High Street Stevenage Herts SG1 3BG
Proposal : Construction of outdoor decking, installation of solar panels, and replacement of two first floor rear windows, minor internal alterations, and replacement of external render on side elevation
Date of Decision : 18.05.26
Decision : **Listed Building Consent is GRANTED**
5. Application No : 26/00276/TPCA
Date Received : 31.03.26
Location : Humphrey's End Rectory Lane Stevenage Herts
Proposal : Fell to ground 1no. Leylandii and fell and remove fully 1no. Lime tree.
Date of Decision : 12.05.26
Decision : **CONSENT TO CARRY OUT WORKS TO A TREE IN A CONSERVATION AREA**
6. Application No : 26/00283/AD
Date Received : 02.04.26
Location : 13A Town Square Town Centre Stevenage Herts
Proposal : Display of 7no. vinyl signs and 2no. electronic media screens
Date of Decision : 16.04.26
Decision : **Advertisement Consent is GRANTED**

7. Application No : 26/00286/TPTPO
Date Received : 07.04.26
Location : The Mansion Whitney Wood Stevenage Herts
Proposal : Work to tree protected by TPO 68: Oak Tree (T1) fell to 1m stump
Date of Decision : 18.05.26
Decision : **CONSENT TO CARRY OUT WORKS TO A TREE, THE SUBJECT OF A TREE PRESERVATION ORDER**
8. Application No : 26/00289/NMA
Date Received : 07.04.26
Location : Cinnabar 56 - 58 High Street Stevenage Herts
Proposal : Non-material amendment to planning approval 23/00482/FP to facilitate construction of outdoor seating area associated with 56-58 High Street
Date of Decision : 27.04.26
Decision : **Non Material Amendment AGREED**
9. Application No : 26/00290/COND
Date Received : 08.04.26
Location : 18-24 Ellis Avenue Stevenage Herts SG1 3SA
Proposal : Discharge of Condition 19 (climate change adaptations) attached to planning permission reference number 24/00064/FPM
Date of Decision : 14.04.26
Decision : **The discharge of Condition(s)/Obligation(s) is APPROVED**
11. Application No : 26/00312/NMA
Date Received : 17.04.26
Location : 2 Langmoor Cottages Symonds Green Road Stevenage Herts
Proposal : Non-material amendment to planning approval 25/00885/FPH to change material finishes
Date of Decision : 14.05.26
Decision : **Non Material Amendment AGREED**

BACKGROUND PAPERS

1. The application file, forms, plans and supporting documents having the reference number relating to this item.
2. Stevenage Borough Council Supplementary Planning Documents – Parking Provision adopted January 2020.
3. Stevenage Borough Local Plan 2011-2031 adopted May 2019.
4. Local Plan Partial Review (2024).
5. Hertfordshire County Council's Local Transport Plan 4 adopted May 2018.
6. Responses to consultations with statutory undertakers and other interested parties referred to in this report.
7. Central Government advice contained in the National Planning Policy Framework December 2024 and Planning Policy Guidance.

Meeting: Planning and Development
Committee

Agenda Item:

Date: 4 June 2026

INFORMATION REPORT - APPEALS / CALLED IN APPLICATIONS

Author – Linda Sparrow

Lead Officer – Alex Robinson

Contact Officer – Alex Robinson

1. APPEALS RECEIVED

1.1 NONE.

2. DECISIONS AWAITED

2.1. 21/01025/ENFAPL, 7 Boxfield Green. Appeal against the serving of an Enforcement Notice relating to the development not in accordance with approved plans under planning permission reference number 17/00734/FPH.

3. DECISIONS RECEIVED

3.1 None.

This page is intentionally left blank

Document is Restricted

This page is intentionally left blank