

Meeting: Full Council

Agenda Item:

Portfolio Area: Planning and Regulation

Date: 27 February 2019

Land East of Stevenage (EOS1), Gresley Way, Stevenage

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1. PURPOSE

- 1.1. To provide a Council response to East Hertfordshire District Council (EHDC) on planning application reference 3/19/0118/OUT (Stevenage Borough Council Reference:- 19/00057/CC) which is for the following proposed development:-

Hybrid Planning Application: Outline Planning Comprising (i) Planning Permission for construction of the spine, site accesses, drainage infrastructure and ancillary works and (ii) outline planning permission for the erection of up to 618 homes, primary school and pre-school, up to 1 no. 80 bed care home and up to 50 assisted living homes (C2 use), neighbourhood hub comprising (up to 658 sq.m of A1 to A5 uses), community facilities (up to 400 sq.m of D1 use), travelling show people site, public open space, landscaping, drainage infrastructure, all associated and ancillary development. Detailed planning permission for the construction of the spine road, site accesses, drainage infrastructure and ancillary works.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1. That East Hertfordshire District Council be advised that Stevenage Borough Council, whilst accepting that the principle of development in this location has already been established by Policy EOS1 of the East Herts District Plan (2018), expresses significant concerns with regard to a number of aspects of the proposed development.
- 2.2. That East Hertfordshire District Council be advised that prior to the determination of this application, further consideration should be given to the following areas, as outlined in this report :-
- Affordable housing
 - Access and highways issues
 - Education provision
 - Health provision
 - Design and neighbourhood issues
 - Environmental concerns
 - Financial considerations.

- 2.3 That East Hertfordshire District Council be advised that the current noise impact assessment (report reference:- AC104941-2R0, Dec 2018) does not adequately cover the impact that increased traffic noise could potentially have on existing residents in Stevenage to the west of the application site and that therefore the applicant should be required to undertake a further noise assessment of the proposed development.
- 2.4 That this report be submitted to EHDC as the corporate response of Stevenage Borough Council (SBC) to the current application.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 Site Description

- 3.1.1 The application site is located within the district of East Hertfordshire and lies adjacent to the boundary of Stevenage Borough within the Beane Valley. The application site itself is a triangular shaped plot of land which is 37.68 hectares in area and is positioned to the east of Gresley Way and the residential estate of Chells Manor. The eastern boundary of the application site comprises a mature hedgerow and tree belt which runs parallel with Gresley Way.
- 3.1.2 The southern, northern and western boundaries of the application site also comprise mature vegetation which includes trees and hedgerow. Running through the centre of the site is a designated bridleway (Aston 004) with the site itself comprising undeveloped agricultural land which is subdivided by mature vegetation strips. In terms of the site's overall surroundings, this is made up of residential development, arable farmland, woodland and paddocks.

3.2 The current application

- 3.2.1 Hybrid Planning Application: Outline Planning Comprising (i) Planning Permission for construction of the spine, site accesses, drainage infrastructure and ancillary works and (ii) outline planning permission for the erection of up to 618 homes, primary school and pre-school, up to 1 no. 80 bed care home and up to 50 assisted living homes (C2 use), neighbourhood hub comprising (up to 658 sq.m of A1 to A5 uses), community facilities (up to 400 sq.m of D1 use), travelling show people site, public open space, landscaping, drainage infrastructure, all associated and ancillary development. Detailed planning permission for the construction of the spine road, site accesses, drainage infrastructure and ancillary work.

3.3 Previous representations by SBC

- 3.3.1 Representations were made by SBC in December 2016 in relation to the East Herts District Plan (EHDP) and specifically the development proposal regarding this site in Policy EOS1. Whilst SBC noted that Policy EOS1 represented a significant change in direction for EHDC towards Stevenage expansion and this was generally welcomed, the Council raised a number of objections to the policy as summarised below:

- SBC was concerned that the proposed development may place an undue reliance on infrastructure provided within Stevenage Borough and that this development has not been taken into account, or provision made for it , within the emerging Stevenage Borough Local Plan (SBLP).

- SBC objected to the lack of certainty about whether sufficient secondary school provision has been made to meet the needs generated by this proposed development.
- SBC objected to the lack of references to Stevenage neighbourhood principles or design principles being applied to development in this location.
- SBC objected to the transport mitigation measures being proposed on the basis that these measures may be inadequate when considered against the latest modelling work undertaken by Hertfordshire County Council (HCC).

3.4 Present planning application

3.4.1 The present planning application may be assessed against the original objections made by SBC to Policy EOS1 in the EHDP as noted above. Additional representations may be made with regard to the present application under a number of headings which form the technical content of this report (Section 3.7 seq below)

3.5 Public representations

3.5.1 As the result of actions by the applicant, Pigeon Investment Management, significant consultation has taken place with existing residents in Stevenage affected by the proposed development. A public exhibition was held on February 1st and 2nd, following a leaflet drop to approximately 6000 addresses in Chells and Chells Manor wards. The exhibition presented conceptual and illustrative plans of the proposed development plans, and responses were collated during the events.

3.5.2 Significant numbers of public responses have been received by SBC regarding this application. It should be emphasised that this is an application to EHDC for land entirely within that local authority areas, and SBC has no involvement in the planning process other than to make representations on behalf of the Council for EHDC to consider in their determination of the application.

3.5.3 The Council has also received an e-petition which has been submitted by Councillor Tom Wren which asks the Council to listen to the concerns of local residents and to object to the East of Stevenage Application. At the time of publication of this report, there were 646 signatures on the petition. In addition, 4 objections have been received from residents of Harvest Lane, Conifer Walk and Uplands plus 1 objection from an unknown address.

3.5.4 A summary of the objections which have been raised are as follows:-

- The development would have a detrimental impact on the safety and operation of the highway network;
- The development would result in an unacceptable loss of Green Belt;
- East Hertfordshire District Council should be considering developments on brownfield sites;
- The development would have an unacceptable impact on existing infrastructure within Stevenage such as GP surgeries, education facilities as well as the Lister hospital;
- The development would generate unacceptable levels of light and noise pollution;

- The provision of travelling show people should be removed from the application on both public and highway safety grounds;
- The development would restrict the exiting local communities' ability to access the wider countryside;
- The Transport Assessment is inadequate as it does not properly assess peak travel periods or contain adequate travel data to make a proper assessment;
- The development would have an unacceptable impact on air quality in the area;
- The proposed creation of three storey buildings near the three access points would have an unacceptable visual impact and should be located elsewhere in the development;
- The development would have an unacceptable impact on wildlife;
- The development results in an unacceptable loss of some of the hedgerow for the vehicle accesses;
- The bus service will be unable to cope with the extra demand created from the development;
- The development does not really allow for safe pedestrian access from Gresley Way;
- Residents do not consider there is a need for a new neighbourhood centre due to the current retail market and will most likely comprise fast food establishments which are not beneficial to the community;
- The development is too dense and needs to be reduced in scale with the road layout appearing to be poorly designed.

3.6 Other consultations

3.6.1 SBC has consulted the appropriate internal departments for their comments on the application and responses have been received from the following services.

Environmental Health

3.6.2 It is considered that the noise impact assessment does not adequately cover the impact of increased traffic noise for existing Stevenage residents to the west of the proposed development. Consequently, the Council considers there should be a further noise assessment as there will be a change to the existing noise levels of traffic due to the increased volume of traffic (from the housing development, the school and commercial units and the site for travelling showpeople) and installation of three sets of traffic lights which will disrupt the current traffic flow.

3.6.3 In terms of air quality, it is considered that the development does not appear to result in emissions levels which would exceed current regulations. However, it is recommended that a financial contribution is sought for the provision of air quality monitoring stations to be provided in close proximity to the development to ensure that air quality can be managed.

Engineering

3.6.4 This scheme offers a high level of cycling routes and linkages to Chells Lane and Lanterns Lane and for the establishment of a dedicated cycleway on the western side of Gresley Way. Given that the proposed development is likely to increase traffic on the Chells Lane bridleway which bisects the site, consideration should be given to providing a safer crossing point where it crosses Gresley Way at grade. SBC encourages the inclusion of good quality cycle parking exceeding the requirements of

the EHDC Parking SPD and preferably including secure parking in internal communal areas of flat blocks.

- 3.6.5 Inclusion of the spine road within the route of the SB1 bus and the provision of three bus stops is welcomed. Discussions should continue with bus companies to ensure that adequate public transport is provided.
- 3.6.6 The number of parking spaces to be provided is not set out in detail at this stage and it is presumed that it will meet the requirements of the EHDC Parking SPD. SBC urges EHDC to consider implementing parking restrictions throughout the site to protect verges, footways, junctions and the school frontage and possibly to keep the spine road entirely clear of parked vehicles. Such restrictions will help to turn excess parking demand into modal shift towards more sustainable modes of transport.
- 3.6.7 Financial contributions should be sought to enable SBC to implement parking restrictions on Gresley Way in order to prevent overspill parking in general and school drop-off parking at Chells Lane / Gresley Way intersection in particular. A contribution of £1500 is also sought towards the cost of signage at the three new junctions indicating the extent of the existing area wide verge and footway parking ban and overnight lorry ban.
- 3.6.8 With regard to street naming and numbering, as this development is perhaps the most cycling friendly for some years, it is proposed that Eric Claxton, the man responsible for Stevenage's remarkable cycleway network, be recognised in the naming of a street within this development.

Parks and Amenities

- 3.6.9 SBC seeks further detail and information on the proposed provision at the north of the site for travelling showpeople. It is not clear at this stage on the proposed function of this space or how this will be managed. There may be a conflict of interest with the existing showground at Fairlands Valley Park (South Field) and mitigation methods may need to be put in place to reduce impact.
- 3.6.10 Consideration should also be given to allotment provision within the design. There continues to be significant demand for allotments from Stevenage residents particularly in the east of the town. This amounts to over 1/3rd of the current waiting list for the town overall (approx. 64 people). East Herts District Council and the developer are advised to enter into discussion and negotiations with Stevenage Borough Council to consider methods of alleviating Stevenage's allotment demand through this scheme, whilst also considering likely additional pressures on demand through delivery of this development.
- 3.6.11 Chells Park in Stevenage is the nearest principal park in relation to this proposed development. This (as well as others) will be freely accessible to those residents from East Herts. For the south-western part of the site, the nearest play area and sport facilities will also be at Chells Park. SBC seeks a financial contribution from the developer to carry out improvements to Chells Park. In addition, they may look to channel this on delivering improvements to outdoor sport and children's play facilities.
- 3.6.12 Further clarification is requested regarding maintenance of the landscaped elements within this development. SBC would not seek to adopt the maintenance of

land and play facilities that fall outside the Stevenage boundary and the proposals for maintenance by a management company are noted.

3.6.13 Proposals should also look to incorporate swift boxes into the design where possible. It is also recommended liaising with the Herts Middlesex Wildlife Trust to determine how the scheme can be designed to favour Sparrow populations which are known to be in decline.

3.7 Relevant planning policies

3.7.1 In the determination of planning applications development must be in accordance with the statutory development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. For Stevenage the statutory development plan comprises:

- Hertfordshire Waste Development Framework 2012 and Hertfordshire Waste Site Allocations Development Plan Document (adopted 2012 and 2014);
- Hertfordshire Minerals Local Plan 2002 – 2016 (adopted 2007); and
- The Stevenage District Plan Second Review 2004.

3.7.2 The Council has now reached an advanced stage in the preparation of a new Stevenage Borough Local Plan 2011-2031. The Plan has been used as a material consideration in the determination of all planning applications registered on or after Wednesday 6 January 2016. The Plan has now been through the Examination process and the Inspector's Report was received in October 2017. This recommended approval of the Plan, subject to modifications proposed. The Plan is currently subject to a holding direction placed upon it by the Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government (MHCLG), which prevents its adoption whilst MHCLG are considering whether or not to call it in.

3.7.3 The National Planning Policy Framework sets out that decision-takers may give weight to relevant policies in emerging plans according to their stage of preparation, the extent to which there are unresolved objections to relevant policies, and their degree of consistency with policies in the National Planning Policy Framework. In considering the policy implications of any development proposal, the Local Planning Authority will assess each case on its individual merits, and, bearing in mind the positive Inspector's Report, significant weight will be afforded to policies within the emerging Local Plan.

3.7.4 A revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published in July 2018. The NPPF sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. Annex 1 of the NPPF provides guidance on how existing local plan policies which have been prepared prior to the publication of the NPPF should be treated. Paragraph 213 of the NPPF applies which states that due weight should be afforded to the relevant policies in the adopted Local Plan according to their degree of consistency with it.

3.7.5 Planning law requires that applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The NPPF is itself a material consideration and includes a presumption in favour of sustainable development. Given the advice that the weight to be given to relevant policies in the local plan will depend on their degree of consistency with the NPPF, it will be necessary for EHDC, in determining this application, to assess the consistency of the relevant local plan policies with the NPPF.

3.7.6 In addition to the NPPF, advice in Planning Practice Guidance must also be taken into account. It states that, where the development plan is absent, silent or the relevant policies are out of date, paragraph 11 of the National Planning Policy Framework requires the application to be determined in accordance with the presumption in favour of sustainable development unless otherwise specified. The relevant policies in SBC's District Plan Second Review 2004 and Draft Local Plan 2011 – 31 are:-

Stevenage District Plan Second Review 1991 – 2011 (adopted 2004)

Policy TW1: Sustainable Development;
Policy TW4: New Neighbourhood Centres;
Policy TW8: Environmental Safeguards;
Policy TW9: Quality in Design;
Policy TW10: Crime Prevention;
Policy TW11: Planning Requirements;
Policy EN13: Trees in new developments;
Policy EN27: Noise Pollution;
Policy EN29: Light Pollution;
Policy EN36: Water Conservation;
Policy EN38: Energy Conservation and Supply;
Policy T12: Bus Provision;
Policy T13: Cycleways;
Policy T14: Pedestrians;
Policy L6: Leisure facilities in neighbourhood centres;
Policy L9: Play Centres;
Policy L14: Children's Play Space;
Policy L15: Outdoor Sports provision in residential developments;
Policy L16: Children's Play space provision in residential developments;
Policy L17: Informal open space provision in residential developments;
Policy L18: Open space maintenance;
Policy L21: Footpath, Cycleway and Bridleway Network;
Policy L23: Access to the Countryside;
Policy SC5: Social and Community Provision in New Developments;
Policy SC13: Provisions in Major New Developments;
Policy SC14: Nursing Homes and Residential Homes.

Stevenage Borough Local Plan 2011 – 2031 Publication Draft January 2016

Policy SP1: Presumption in favour of sustainable development;
Policy SP2: Sustainable Development in Stevenage;
Policy SP5: Infrastructure;
Policy SP6: Sustainable Transport;
Policy SP8: Good Design;
Policy SP9: Healthy Communities;
Policy SP11: Climate Change, Flooding and Pollution;
Policy SP12: Green infrastructure and the natural environment;
Policy IT1: Strategic development access points;
Policy IT3: Infrastructure;
Policy IT4: Transport assessments and travel plans;
Policy IT5: Parking and access;

Policy IT6: Sustainable Transport;
Policy IT7: New and improved links for pedestrians and cyclists;
Policy GD1: High Quality Design;
Policy FP1: Climate Change;
Policy FP2: Flood Risk in Flood Zone 1;
Policy FP5: Contaminated Land;
Policy FP7: Pollution;
Policy HC4: New health, social and community facilities;
Policy HC8: Sports facilities in new developments;
Policy HC9: Former Barnwell East secondary school;
Policy NH5: Trees and woodland;
Policy NH7: Open space standards.

Principle of development

3.7.7 As the East Hertfordshire District Plan has now been formally adopted following the lifting of the Holding Direction by the Secretary of State (SoS) for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG), the land is no longer designated as Metropolitan Green Belt. It is thus appropriate for it to be considered for a residential led development incorporating approximately 600 homes together with a care home and assisted living provision, education facilities including a 2FE Primary School with early years facility, a neighbourhood centre, increased access arrangements to Gresley Way and provision of a serviced Travelling Showpeople site for five plots, subject to not having a detrimental impact on the infrastructure and wider environment of Stevenage and the specific issues raised in this report.

3.7.8 More detailed comments are noted below under the following main headings:

- Affordable housing
- Access and highways issues
- Education provision
- Health provision
- Design and neighbourhood issues
- Environmental concerns
- Financial considerations

Affordable housing

3.7.9 Policy EOS1 iii (b) of the East Hertfordshire District Plan (2018) sets out that development East of Stevenage should provide affordable housing in accordance with Policy HOU3. This policy sets out a requirement that up to 40% of homes on developments of over 15 units should be affordable. Paragraph 64 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2018) stipulates that for major developments involving the provision for housing, at least 10% of the homes should be made available for affordable home ownership (including shared ownership, equity loans, other low cost homes which are 20% below local market value and rent to buy).

3.7.10 The proposed development indicates provision of affordable housing in excess of NPPF requirements and this is supported. Notwithstanding this provision, Stevenage Borough Council recommends that East Hertfordshire District Council seeks a number of Section 106 financial contributions to mitigate the impact the development

would have on local infrastructure and services within the Borough as noted in section 3.7. 36 below.

Access and highway issues

- 3.7.11 SBC has significant concerns as to whether Stevenage Road, due to its limited width, will be able to accommodate the additional traffic which would be generated by this proposed development. EHDC in conjunction with Hertfordshire County Council (HCC) as the Highways Authority, will need to consider that the proposed development does not significantly affect the operation of the highway network and generate highway safety issues with regard to the four new and improved junctions planned for Gresley Way.
- 3.7.12 SBC is committed to encouraging walking and cycling and the reduction of the use of the private vehicle, and seeks the highest possible provision of facilities to promote these modes. Cycle parking should be encouraged, and links should be made to take advantage of Stevenage's cycleway network.
- 3.7.13 EHDC should consider implementing parking restrictions throughout the site to protect verges, footways, junctions and the school frontage and along the proposed spine road to ensure these roads are entirely clear of parked vehicles. Such restrictions in place should assist in turning excess parking demand into a modal shift towards more sustainable forms of transport.
- 3.7.14 SBC would expect to be involved in discussions with HCC regarding all aspects of highways provision for the proposed development. This should include validation of any traffic modelling used and the determination of any mitigation measures to reduce traffic impact in the areas.

Education provision

- 3.7.15 Concern may be expressed with regard to the provision of adequate education facilities for the pupil yield of the proposed development. The application includes proposals for primary and pre-school provision, and the Council urges EHDC to ensure by planning conditions the appropriate size and nature of education facilities required so that undue pressure is not placed on existing provision within Stevenage.
- 3.7.16 Further to the above, there are also substantive concerns as to the impact this development would have on existing and future infrastructure such as schools (both primary and secondary). This is because the evidence base which supports Stevenage Borough Local Plan 2011 – 2031, Publication Draft – January 2016, identifies that the infrastructure within the district boundary of Stevenage can only support the growth of Stevenage over the Local Plan period.
- 3.7.17 It is important to note that secondary school capacity within north and east Stevenage is already a concern and is currently without a solution based on the proposals for both EHDC and North Hertfordshire District Council Local Plans. This development would add further pressure within this area and Stevenage Borough Council needs to be assured that sufficient primary and secondary school places would be made available to meet any demand arising from the proposed development.

3.7.18 The Stevenage Borough Local Plan, and any new schools being provided within the Borough, do not make allowance for additional needs from outside the Borough. As such, the necessary infrastructure would need to be provided within EHDC and extensive consultation should be undertaken with Hertfordshire County Council as Education Authority regarding future provision.

Health provision

3.7.19 SBC is concerned that sufficient provision is made for the provision of GP and other health services and facilities to serve the proposed new development. Services are already over-subscribed within this part of the Borough, and negotiations with the CCG are necessary to determine the detailed requirements of future residents which should be incorporated into the proposed development.

Design and neighbourhood principles

3.7.20 Stevenage has, since its inception as the first New Town, been a leader in the promotion of neighbourhood principles for new development; seeking to incorporate community objectives into the design and implementation of residential areas and the necessary services and facilities. SBC is concerned that these principles are not adequately reflected in the outline proposals and seeks further clarification to ensure that these principles are included in the detailed proposals for reserved matters.

3.7.21 SBC seeks a high quality of design for the proposed residential development, local centre and community facilities following the concept of a new neighbourhood with its own identity which reflects Stevenage neighbourhood principles. It is also important that development engages with Stevenage and countryside to the east.

3.7.22 The neighbourhood hub needs to be designed to ensure that it is viable, but in a central location and with strong non-vehicular routes to be sustainable. Lower densities around the periphery of the site help to reduce the impact on the countryside and rural setting.

3.7.23 It is noted that the proposed development incorporates a considerable level of landscaping, open space and recreational areas and this is welcomed. It is important that hedgerows and similar features including water bodies are protected.

Biodiversity and protected species

3.7.24 EHDC is required to comply with the requirements of Regulation 9(5) of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010. Also, the County Council must *'have regard to the requirement of the Habitats Directive so far as they may be affected by [the decision whether to grant planning permission]'* and it is an offence to deliberately disturb wild animals of any European protected species, or to damage or destroy a breeding site or resting place of any such an animal of such a species.

3.7.25 The development may contravene Article 12 of the Habitats Directive, by amounting to a disturbance in accordance with the Article. EHDC should not grant planning permission unless the development is likely to be licensed by Natural England if the development affects protected species as defined under EU and UK law. To assess the likelihood of a licence being granted it is necessary to satisfy three tests, known as derogation powers, as follows:

- the development should be permitted for imperative reasons of overriding public interest of a social or economic nature;
- there must be no satisfactory alternative, and
- favourable conservation status of the European Protected Species in their natural range must be maintained.

3.7.26 The application site is not a designated nature conservation site such as Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) or a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). In addition, the site is not a designated wildlife site. Notwithstanding this, due to the presence of mature green infrastructure, semi improved grasslands and tall ruderal scattered and around the development site combined with its overall setting, there is potential that protected species such as badgers, bats and birds could be affected by the development proposal.

3.7.27 EHDC should seek to ensure that for any protected species affected by the proposal, suitable mitigation measures should be agreed in conjunction with the District Council's ecologist. SBC will seek the protection, retention and improvements, where possible, of the interspersed hedgerows and mature trees as well as mature bund along Gresley Way. Furthermore, EHDC should look at controlling external lighting to ensure that foraging bats are not affected if the development was to be approved.

3.7.28 In addition to the above, to improve biodiversity on the site, SBC recommends the developer installs bat and bird boxes across the development. Moreover, EHDC should look at the provision of native mature landscaping to be incorporated into the development as part of biodiversity improvements. SBC welcomes the creation of suitable water habitats which will benefit local wildlife.

3.7.29 In terms of trees and landscaping, paragraph 175 of the NPPF (2018) states that local planning authorities should apply the principle, with regard to veteran and ancient trees, that if a development results in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats permission should be refused unless there are wholly exceptional reasons and a suitable compensation strategy exists.

3.7.30 The arboricultural impact assessment which was submitted by the applicant (Hayden's Arboricultural Consultants, report reference:- 5600 revision A dated 21/12/2018), identified large areas of existing category B (moderate quality with an estimated life expectancy of 20 years) trees and hedgerows which form the western boundary of the application site (the mature vegetation bund along Gresley Way) are to be removed. This is to facilitate the construction of the three traffic light controlled junctions and the vehicle access to serve the travelling show people.

3.7.31 It is considered that whilst there is a need to remove some of the vegetation to create new vehicle accesses into the proposed development site, SBC has a substantive concern that removal of such large areas of mature vegetation would have a detrimental impact on the visual amenities of the area as viewed from Gresley Way. This particular area of mature vegetation creates a rural backdrop against the more urban characteristics of Stevenage and the Council objects to the proposal in its current form unless more of the vegetation along Gresley Way can be retained.

Flooding and drainage

3.7.32 Although the application site is defined in the Environment Agency Maps as falling within Flood Zone 1 (Site of low probability of flooding) it is subject to surface water flooding. The topography of the site is such that it falls from west to east where it has been identified that there are a number of surface water pathways which run through the application site.

3.7.33 Given the above, the proposed drainage strategy to support the proposed development has to be designed to accommodate surface water runoff of a 1 in 100 year storm event plus a 40% allowance for climate change to ensure the development does not exacerbate flooding in the area. Consideration should be given to the use of green walls, green roofs, water butts and grey water harvesting systems; this will not only help to reduce potential surface water flooding but increase biodiversity within the development as well.

Heritage and Archaeology

3.7.34 In terms of impact heritage assets in Stevenage, the application site is not located in close proximity to any listed building nor does the site adjoin a designated conservation area. Furthermore, the site is not located within or in close proximity to a designated Area of Archaeological Significance as defined in the Stevenage District Plan (2004) or the Emerging Local Plan (2016).

3.7.35 The applicant's Archaeological Evaluation Report, notes the paucity of archaeological evidence on the site and that no further investigation is required. Notwithstanding that, and in the absence of trial trenching, it is recommended that advice is sought from Hertfordshire County Council's Archaeological Section to determine whether or not the development has any impact on archaeological remains.

Financial considerations

3.7.36 The Council recommends that the following financial contributions be sought from the developer, if permission is to be granted, towards:

- secondary education in the Borough;
- improvements to Stevenage Town Centre Library;
- improvements to youth facilities within Stevenage;
- provision of additional GP services in Stevenage; to be discussed in conjunction with the NHS and East of England CCG;
- improvements to the junction of the A602 and Gresley Way;
- provision of a shared footway and cycleway along Gresley Way between Six Hills Way and Fairlands Way;
- improvements to local bus services;
- enhancements for both indoor and outdoor sports provision within Stevenage (e.g. 3G/4G sports pitches, improvements to swimming pool facilities and sports halls) (To be discussed in conjunction with Sport England);
- highway restrictions along Gresley Way
- a proportionate financial contribution of £1500.00 towards the costs of signage at the three new junctions on Gresley Way
- a financial contribution of £5000.00 to enable Stevenage Borough Council to implement parking restrictions on Gresley Way

4. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDED COURSE OF ACTION

- 4.1 The Council makes this representation to EHDC to ensure that its concerns are fully addressed and transmitted for the consideration of the above application.

5. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

- 5.1 The application file, forms, plans and supporting documents having the reference number relating to this item.
- 5.2 Stevenage District Plan Second Review 1991-2011.
- 5.3 Stevenage Borough Local Plan 2011-2031 Publication Draft.
- 5.4 Central Government advice contained in the National Planning Policy Framework July 2018 and Planning Policy Guidance March 2014.
- 5.5 Representations made by SBC to the East Herts District Plan, December 2016;
- 5.6 Memorandum of Understanding between Stevenage Borough Council and East Herts District Council concerning the East Herts District Plan.