

Meeting: Planning and Development Committee
Agenda Item:

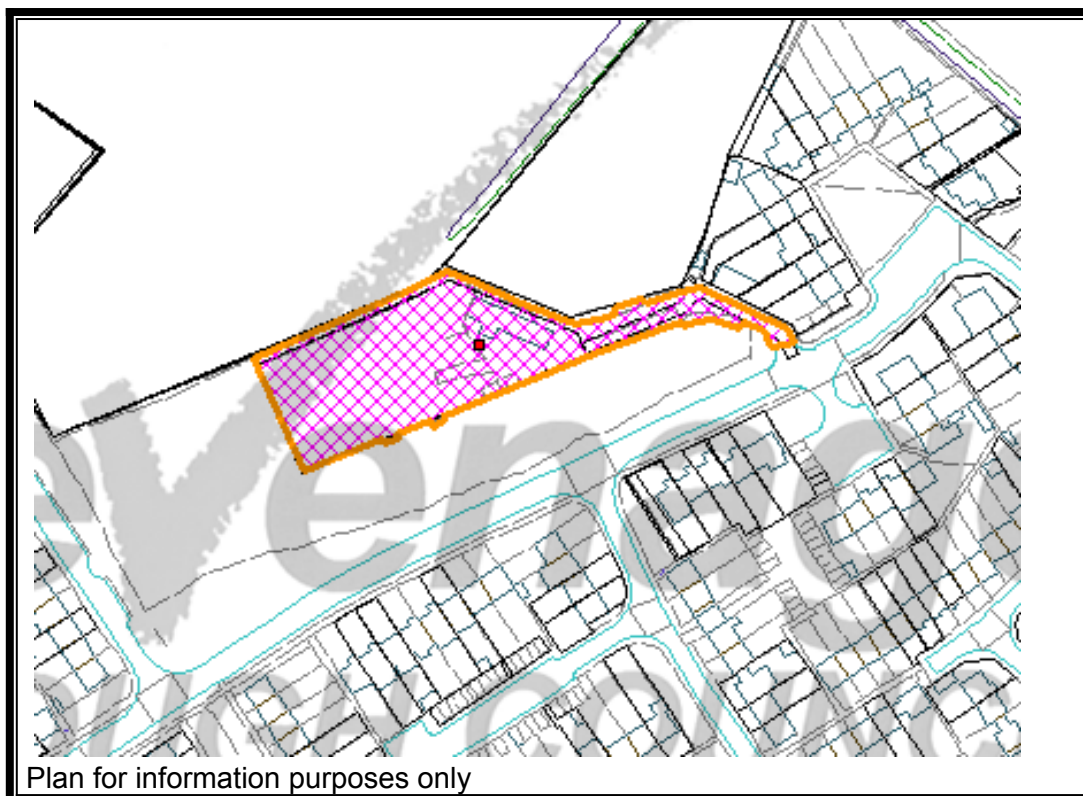
Date: 4 November 2020

Author: Rebecca Elliott 01438 242836

Lead Officer: Zayd Al-Jawad 01438 242257

Contact Officer: Rebecca Elliott 01438 242836

Application No:	20/00053/FPM
Location:	Former Chells Play Area, Eliot Road, Stevenage
Proposal:	Construction of 13no. semi-detached and terraced dwellings along with associated parking, landscaping and earthworks.
Drawing Nos.:	H51-ER-107 ELEVATIONS PLOTS 3-5; H51-ER-109 ELEVATIONS PLOTS 8-11; H51-A-22-DR-AR-001 DENBY FLOOR PLANS AND ELEVATIONS; H51-ER-001-N TECHNICAL SITE LAYOUT; H51-ER-002-G BOUNDARY TREATMENTS; H51-ER-003-G REFUSE STRATEGY; H51-ER-004-G STOREY HEIGHTS; H51-ER-005-G MATERIALS LAYOUT; H51-ER-006-B LAND PURCHASE PLAN; 19045-CIV-001-A05 LEVELS; 19045-CIV-002-A02 DRAINAGE STRATEGY; 19045-CIV-055-A03 HIGHWAY DETAILS ; 19045-CIV-005-A05 ACCESS ROAD DRAINAGE; 27691 R1 TOPOGRAPHICAL; C86188-JNP-XX-DR-C-7001B REFUSE SWEEP PATH; C86188-JNP-XX-DR-C-7002B SITE ACCESS GENERAL ARRANGEMENT; C86188-JNP-XX-DR-C-7004 ESTATE CAR SWEEP PATH; P19-2341-01B LANDSCAPE MASTERPLAN
Applicant:	Keepmoat Homes
Date Valid:	24 January 2020
Recommendation:	GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION



1. SITE DESCRIPTION

- 1.1 The application site measures 0.26ha in area and sits within Six Acre Wood to the north of Eliot Road. The Eliot Road allotments bound the site to the north and north east, with Nobel School bordering the north western side of the wooded area. These areas make up the adjacent Green Link. Residential properties off Eliot Road are sited to the north east/east of the site access, with further residential properties off Eliot Road to the south and on the opposite side of the wood and highway. To the south west the site and woodland abut a large area of green open space and highway verge. The former play centre on the site has been demolished and the site is level with various trees and shrubs in place.
- 1.2 The area is predominantly residential in character, with mainly terraced dwellings located along the highway or around areas of green open space. Parking is typically in parking bays or on street. The nearest amenities are located in The Glebe off Chells Way to the north west of the site. Nobel Secondary school is located due north and accessed off Mobbsbury Way, with Camps Hill Community Primary School located on the western side of Chells Way at the end of Eliot Road. The site is also located close to the Green Link consisting of woodland that extends from Dryden Crescent to Chells Park and Gresley way.

2. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

- 2.1 None relevant

3. THE CURRENT APPLICATION

- 3.1 The current application seeks planning permission for the erection of 13no. semi-detached and terraced dwellings with associated parking, landscaping and earthworks.
- 3.2 The application comes before the Planning and Development Committee as it is classed as Major development.

4. PUBLIC REPRESENTATIONS

- 4.1 The application has been publicised by neighbour letters, the posting of two site notices and an advertisement has been placed in the local newspaper. The objections raised in summary (copies of all comments are available in full on the Council's website) are –
- Loss of the green space in the woodland area
 - Existing heavy traffic problems on Eliot Road
 - Existing access road un-adopted and the properties that back on to this site, there are concerns about who would pay for upkeep and continued access to their properties
 - No parking on the access road, would this be maintained with double yellow lines
 - Nuisance from construction i.e. noise, dust, dirt, traffic;
 - Impact on the trees surrounding the site was not clear;
 - When proposed as modular houses, concerns of how these would be delivered within the constrained site.

5. CONSULTATIONS

5.1 Natural England

- 5.1.1 Based on the plans submitted, Natural England considers that the proposed development will not have significant adverse impacts on statutorily protected nature conservation sites or landscapes.

5.2 Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust

- 5.2.1 In assessing the Defra metric spreadsheet and it is a fair assessment of the ecological impact of the development. In order to deliver a net gain in biodiversity the applicant must exceed the baseline value by 10%. This is $0.94 + 0.094 - 0.19$ (the onsite mitigation score) = 0.84 habitat units. The applicant can either source these through a broker or provide the funds to the local planning authority to do this, as per Webb Rise. Using the Warwickshire offset cost calculator, if scrub is selected as the compensatory habitat, which I would suggest is appropriate, the required offset cost is £14,224. If the applicant wants to go down this route it will need to be secured by S106 as before.
- 5.2.2 The required surveys have been completed and are satisfactory. The reasonable avoidance strategies put forward to avoid impacts on protected species are satisfactory e.g. badgers, nesting birds, reptiles, and should be implemented through the decision. A condition can be imposed to secure this.
- 5.2.3 The use of free hanging bird and bat boxes is not preferable. These are not permanent and very vulnerable to theft or vandalism. Instead of these boxes, integrated bat and bird boxes should be used i.e. built into the brickwork of the buildings. A condition can be imposed to secure this.

5.3 Affinity Water

- 5.3.1 The proposed development site is located within an Environment Agency defined groundwater Source Protection Zone (GPZ) corresponding to Whitehall Pumping Station. This is a public water supply, comprising a number of Chalk abstraction boreholes, operated by Affinity Water Ltd. The construction works and operation of the proposed development site should be done in accordance with the relevant British Standards and Best Management Practices, thereby significantly reducing the groundwater pollution risk. It should be noted that the construction works may exacerbate any existing pollution. If any pollution is found at the site then appropriate monitoring and remediation methods will need to be undertaken.

5.4 Hertfordshire County Council Highways

- 5.4.1 The County Council as Highway Authority consider the proposal would not have a severe residual impact on the safety and operation of the adjoining highways and would not wish to restrict the grant of planning permission subject to conditions and informatives.

5.5 Lead Local Flood Authority

- 5.5.1 From a brief assessment of the documents provided most recently, we would be happy with the most recent proposals. This would be subject to condition.

5.6 Environmental Health

5.6.1 Noise Impacts

- 5.6.1.1 Noise is a material planning consideration that can have a significant impact not only on the amenity of residential occupiers, but can also have commercial implications for businesses if not suitably considered and controlled at the planning and development stage. It is therefore essential to ensure that any significant noise sources that could have an adverse noise impact on the amenity of residential occupiers or potentially restrict commercial operations are robustly considered and assessed as appropriate. In considering the potential impacts of noise on the proposed development, Environmental Health Officers will have due regard to relevant policy, standards and guidance, which include:

- The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF);
- The Noise Policy Statement for England (NPSE);
- Planning Policy Guidance - Noise.
- Pro-PPG Guidance 2017
- BS4142:2014
- BS8233:2014

Please note that this is not an exclusive list and other standards and guidance may be appropriate in given situations.

5.6.2 Contaminated land

5.6.2.1 A watching brief must be kept during initial site preparation works to identify any potentially contaminated materials likely to be present. In the event contamination is found during site clearance and/or construction phase of the development, undertake an appropriate investigation and provide a remediation strategy for Stevenage Borough Council to agree in writing accordingly.

5.6.3 Construction Impacts

5.6.3.1 Construction activities, both on and off site, by their nature can be noisy and intrusive for neighbouring occupiers, particularly in terms of noise, vibration, air quality (dust), smoke, odour and light. Noise and vibration can arise in particular from piling operations, groundworks and excavations and plant & machinery and their associated activities. Early morning deliveries can also give rise to disturbance if not properly controlled and managed.

5.6.3.2 Dust from site operations can also be an issue, particularly during periods of sustained dry weather. Environmental Health expect developers to control the impact from the construction phase of their development by implementing suitable mitigation measures and following best practices in accordance with BS5228:2009 Part 1 (noise) and Part 2 (vibration), where appropriate. Environmental Health also seek to ensure that the environmental impacts of construction works are suitably controlled through their powers under Part III of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 (statutory nuisances) and section 60 of the Control of Pollution Act 1974. In the latter case, hours of work for noisy construction works are limited to the following times only:

- 7:30am to 6:00pm on Weekdays
- 8:00am to 1:00pm on Saturdays
- At no times on Sundays or Public Holidays

Where considered appropriate due to the scale of the development and construction project, the Developer may be required to formulate and implement a Construction Management Plan.

5.7 Hertfordshire County Council Waste and Minerals

5.6.1 A Site Waste Management Plan (SWMP) should be provided up front or as required by condition to collate information on and set out management strategies for waste arisings during demolition and construction so that building materials from recycled and secondary sources can be used within the development. The total volumes of waste during enabling works (demolition) and construction works should also be summarised.

5.8 Hertfordshire County Council Growth and Infrastructure

5.8.1 Based on the information provided to date we would seek the provision of fire hydrant(s), as set out within HCC' Planning Obligations Toolkit. All developments must be adequately served by fire hydrants in the event of fire. The County Council as the Statutory Fire Authority has a duty to ensure firefighting facilities are provided on new developments. HCC therefore seek

the provision of hydrants required to serve the proposed buildings by the developer through standard clauses set out in a Section 106 legal agreement or unilateral undertaking.

5.9 Parks and Amenities

5.9.1 Given the loss of the area, the new biodiversity provision can be accommodated on SBC land in close proximity. The proposed area will improve local ecological connectivity and its creation will provide opportunities for local pupil's environmental education.

5.10 Council's Arboriculture Manager

5.10.1 I've studied this application, visited the site and can confirm that from an arboriculture view point the proposed development is possible. My main concerns relate to the impact that the construction/roadworks would have on the retained trees and woodland but also the impact of the retained trees onto the future properties.

5.10.2 Firstly, therefore, I would suggest that we ask to see further details for the construction of the access roads to gauge the impact on the remaining trees. Secondly, I note that a large amount of trees have already been removed, some within the site and some not. Whilst I would be keen to limit any further tree removal, in order for this development to work, I would suggest extensive reduction works are carried out around the whole perimeter of the site (the buffer zone of 4-5 metres outside the development boundary line).

5.10.3 For individual trees, the reduction should be by 30-40% back to suitable growth points whilst for the woodland edge, a similar top and side reduction and re-shaping of the woodland canopy. This work should be carried out by the developer before the commencement of any of the road/construction work.

5.10.4 My final point is concerning the newly proposed access road through the existing woodland. Providing that this is essential to the success of the development, I wouldn't be completely against it but would suggest a slightly altered route, from Eliot Road. Please see attached photo. In my view, the old Hornbeam coppice stool T40 (dark green on the right in the photo) is much more valuable than the nearby semi-mature trees therefore would move the entrance a few metres to the right and keep T40.

6. RELEVANT PLANNING POLICIES

6.1 Background to the Development Plan

6.1.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 provides that the decision on the planning application should be in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. For Stevenage the statutory development plan comprises:

- The Stevenage Borough Council Local Plan 2011-2031
- Hertfordshire Waste Development Framework 2012 and Hertfordshire Waste Site Allocations Development Plan Document (adopted 2012 and 2014); and
- Hertfordshire Minerals Local Plan 2002 – 2016 (adopted 2007).

6.2 Central Government Advice

6.2.1 A revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published in February 2019. This largely reordered the policy substance of the earlier 2012 version of the NPPF albeit with some revisions to policy. The Council are content that the policies in the Local Plan are in conformity with the revised NPPF and that the Local Plan should be considered up to date for the purpose of determining planning applications. The NPPF provides that proposals which

accord with an up to date development plan should be approved without delay (para.11) and that where a planning application conflicts with an up to date development plan, permission should not usually be granted (para.12). This indicates the weight which should be given to an up to date development plan, reflecting the requirements of section 38(6) of the 2004 Act. The NPPF and the PPG, with which Members are fully familiar, are both material considerations to be taken into account in determining this application.

6.3 Planning Practice Guidance

6.3.1 National Design Guide (2019).

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

SP1 Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
SP2 Sustainable Development in Stevenage
SP5 Infrastructure
SP6 Sustainable Transport
SP7 High Quality Homes
SP8 Good Design
SP11 Climate Change, Flooding and Pollution
SP12 Green Infrastructure and natural environment
IT5 Parking and Access
HO1 Housing Allocations
HO7 Affordable Housing Targets
HO8 Affordable Housing Tenure, Mix and Density
HO9 House Types and Sizes
HO11 Accessible and Adaptable Housing
GD1 High Quality Design
FP1 Climate Change
FP2 Flood risk in Flood Zone 1
NH4 Green Links
NH5 Trees and Woodland
NH7 Open Space Standards

6.5 Supplementary Planning Documents

Parking Provision Supplementary Planning Document January 2020.
Stevenage Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document January 2009.

6.6 Community Infrastructure Levy Charging Schedule

6.6.1 Stevenage Borough Council adopted a Community Infrastructure Levy Charging Schedule in 2020. This allows the Council to collect a levy to fund infrastructure projects based on the type, location and floorspace of a development.

7 APPRAISAL

7.1 The main issues for consideration are the acceptability in land use policy terms, affordable housing S106 and CIL provision, design and layout, impact on the character and visual amenity of the area, impact on neighbour amenity, impact on amenity of occupiers, highways implications, parking provision, and other matters including waste, drainage and climate change.

7.2 Acceptability in Land Use Policy Terms

- 7.2.1 The NPPF states at paragraph 7 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".
- 7.2.2 Paragraph 61 of the NPPF 2019 requires that the planning system should deliver, inter alia, a mix of housing particularly in terms of tenure and price to support a wide variety of households in all areas. Paragraph 68 of the NPPF sets out that small and medium sites can make an important contribution to meeting housing requirements in an area, and this includes supporting the development of windfall sites.
- 7.2.9 Paragraph 67 of the NPPF (2019) states that planning policies should identify a supply of specific deliverable sites for years one to five of the plan period, and specific deliverable sites or broad locations for growth, for years 6 to 10 and where possible, for years 11 to 15. Paragraph 73 of the same document states that "Local Planning Authorities should identify and update annually a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide a minimum of five years' worth of housing against their housing requirement set out in adopted strategic policies".
- 7.2.10 Paragraph 117 of the NPPF stipulates that planning policies and decisions should promote the effective use of land in meeting the need for homes such as through the use of brownfield sites (previously developed land) and the development of underutilised land.
- 7.2.11 Turning to the adopted Local Plan (2019), the site is an allocated housing site under Policy HO1/10 for approximately 16 units. The proposal includes the provision of 13 dwellings with associated gardens, parking and access. The proposals would therefore be in accordance with policy, providing numbers towards the Council's five year land supply of deliverable housing.

7.3 Design and Layout

- 7.3.1 The site is long and narrow in a landscape form, with an existing access off Eliot Road to the south east. Surrounded by woodland on the western and southern boundaries, the northern boundary is bounded by trees and the southernmost boundary of the Nobel School, with local allotments located to the north east and north of the access road. To the east are residential properties located off Eliot Road who also have rights over the most eastern part of the access road.
- 7.3.2 The proposed layout utilises the existing access, with revisions to accord with the requirements of local highway authority, and continues with an access road along the southern boundary of the site before turning right and carrying on north until it reaches the north western boundary. Five dwellings, consisting of a terrace of three and a pair of semi-detached dwellings are located on the western side of the site facing eastwards in to the site. The remaining eight dwellings, consisting of two pairs of semi-detached units and a row of four terraced units sit centrally within the narrow site facing southwards on to the access road.
- 7.3.3 Each dwelling would have rear garden space, with small frontages facing on to shared footways, small parcels of landscaping and allocated parking bays. The dwellings themselves are all two storey, side gable design with dual pitch roofs and standard fenestration and general vernacular. They are proposed to be constructed using Modern Methods of Construction (MMC), a closed panel timber frame construction. The external walls would be completed in Wetherby buff multi stock with Monier Redland roof tile for the terraced dwellings and Wetherby light red multi stock brick with Mini Stonewold slate grey roof riles. A flat roof

porch projection of white finish with grey top would sit over the front entrance of a black composite front door and white UPVC double glazed plain casement windows. Fascias and soffits would be white UPVC, with black half round guttering and circular fall pipes.

- 7.3.4 The simplicity of the design, whilst integrating small design features such as the stone porch detailing, is considered acceptable for this small residential development. Details of the exact external materials can be conditioned to ensure a high quality of development. Given the size of the site and its narrow restrictions, the use of parking laybys is considered acceptable to utilise the space efficiently to accommodate an optimum level of housing.

7.4 Impact on the Character and Appearance of the Area

- 7.4.1 The site is currently not visible from the public realm, in particular along Eliot Road, because of the wide bank of woodland to its south east, south and south west boundaries. Views from Nobel School are also limited because of existing trees and vegetation. Primarily the only external views would be from the access road entrance off Eliot Road and to the rear of No's 19 – 27 Eliot Road. The existing access road appears more of a private drive/track before opening out to the wider site. The proposals would not therefore adversely impact the street scene.

- 7.4.2 Previously the site has been used by the Redemption Church for youth facilities and formerly had portable st type structures sited by the north east boundary. These have since been removed and the site has become overgrown with grass and shrubs. Some works to trees will be required to allow adequate room for construction, but given the site is allocated for housing, the introduction of 13 dwellings of the proposed design is not considered to detrimentally impact the character and appearance of the area.

7.5 Amenity of Neighbouring Properties

- 7.5.1 In assessing the impact of the proposal on the amenity of neighbouring properties, the nearest residential properties are located to the east of the site and back on to the access road. No's 19-27 Eliot Road have rear accesses on to the access road, but views are largely blocked down the main access into the site by the large double garage to the rear of number 25 Eliot Road. Furthermore, these properties are approximately 84m from the nearest dwelling within the development, and these are well screened by the tree belt surrounding the site. The proposals would not therefore have an adverse impact on any existing neighbouring properties.

7.6 Amenity of Future Occupiers

- 7.6.1 The adopted local plan outlines prescribed space standards for new dwellings, which are nationally prescribed standards, as set out in the Department for Communities and Local Government document 'Technical housing standards - nationally described space standards' 2015.
- 7.6.2 The minimum internal sizes of the proposed units have been annotated on the proposed layout plan. Each two bedroom dwelling would be 80 square metres and labelled as a 2 bed 4 person dwelling and the three bedroom dwellings would be 84 square metres and labelled a 3 bedroom 4 person dwelling. These sizes meet the minimum standards.

- 7.6.3 Room size standards for bedrooms are also considered in the technical standards, determining how many persons the unit can accommodate and also in terms of acceptable living environments. These standards state that a double bedroom should be 11.5 square metres minimum with a minimum width of 2.75m and that where a second (or more) bedroom(s) is proposed it should have a minimum of 7.5 square metres and width of 2.15m. A second double should be at least 2.55m wide with the same 11.5 square metres minimum floor space. The bedroom sizes as measured exceed the sizes stated above and accord with the stated bedroom and person ratio within the standards.
- 7.6.4 The Stevenage Design Guide recommends that where possible external amenity space should be provided. Each dwelling proposes a rear garden area ranging from 37 sqm to 71 sqm. The Council's Design Guide seeks 50 sq.m of garden space for semi-detached and terraced properties. In this instance, the overall length is not problematic as there are no back to back relationships in which to maintain privacy distances. Whilst some properties are under the 50 sqm requirement, increasing these gardens would significantly affect the layout of the site and thus its viability in providing housing, in particular affordable housing. Therefore, on balance, the garden sizes for seven of the proposed houses are considered acceptable in this case, with the provision of 100% affordable housing having the greater weight. However, to ensure the garden spaces proposed are retained, for those properties where the garden sizes are below standard, or just over, a condition can be imposed restricting permitted development rights for outbuildings and extensions to allow the Council to control the impact on external amenity areas in the future.
- 7.6.5 There are no relationships between the proposed dwellings that would impact on privacy in respect of the Council's separation distances. The layout of the properties is such that all properties would have front and rear facing windows, apart from the odd hallway/stairwell or bathroom side window on those properties with outer walls.

7.7 Landscaping

- 7.7.1 The application has been accompanied by a landscape masterplan, Arboricultural Impact Assessment, Arboricultural Method Statement and an Arboricultural Survey. The details have been assessed by the Council's Arboricultural and Conservation Manager. The proposals show the need to carry out cutting back of trees on the adjacent Council owned Six Acre Wood. It is noted some works were carried out earlier this year separate from the planning application process.
- 7.7.2 The proposed works to trees and protection measures for those trees to be retained and within close proximity of the site are considered acceptable, with conditions to be imposed to ensure these measures are undertaken as approved. The proposed landscaping is also considered acceptable with tree planting on site as well as small areas of grass and shrub planting between parking areas and to the front of dwellings. In terms of concerns raised about construction traffic, further details are suggested to be sought in order to protect the retained trees. A large amount of trees have been removed as separate to the planning process, some within the site and some not, it would therefore be preferable to limit any further tree removal. However, in order for this development to work, it is suggested that extensive reduction works would need to be carried out around the whole perimeter of the site.
- 7.7.3 Lastly concerns have been raised by the Tree Manager regarding utilities access through the existing woodland to the south of the site, as these are works are essential to the success of the development, no objection is raised. However, an alternative route is sought to protect and an old Hornbeam coppice stool (T40), so it is advised that utilities access is move to protect this tree.

7.8 Highways and Parking

- 7.8.1 The site is accessed by an existing private road to the rear of No's 17 – 25 Eliot Road, and with access to these properties and the allotments to the north east of the site also. The proposed development would use the existing access, upgraded to accord with the local highway authority. This would see the existing single track being widened from to 4.8m, with pedestrian access along the northern edge and into the site where it is proposed to be shared surface for vehicles and pedestrians. Footpaths are proposed from parking areas to the dwelling's front doors and garden accesses.
- 7.8.2 The application has been accompanied by a Swept Path analysis to ensure that a refuse vehicle and any emergency vehicles can enter and exit the site in a forward gear. This has been agreed by the local highway authority. Furthermore the proposed visibility splays for pedestrians and vehicles at the access and within the development are acceptable.
- 7.8.3 The size of development is not considered to generate significant trips and the TRICS data provided would not present the proposed use as having an unacceptable impact on local highway conditions. The site is within reasonable proximity of the No.1 bus service on Chells Way, along with access to the local cycle network, in particular once on Fairlands Way, to the north of Chells Way. These modes of transport are within an appropriate distance to be considered useable by occupiers of the development and therefore provide opportunities for future occupiers to travel by more sustainable modes than the private car.
- 7.8.4 The Council's Parking Standards SPD, adopted earlier this month, designates the site as a Residential Zone 3 which can allow for 75-100% provision. Given the dwelling breakdown there would be a need to provide 18 or 19 car parking spaces for residents and 4 number visitor spaces. The proposal has been amended in line with the new guidance. This results in a reduction of spaces than the requirement under the former 2012 standards. The provision of 23 spaces on site is acceptable, with all spaces meeting the minimum size requirements as identified by the local highways authority.
- 7.8.5 The promotion of a modal shift from private car travel is an important factor in the Council's newly adopted SPD. The requirement to provide a greater number of cycle parking spaces forms part of this shift. No provision for cycle parking has been shown on the submitted plans but there is adequate room in gardens (even in the reduced gardens, some form of provision can be provided without affecting the level of amenity space provided) for sheds or cycle storage and it is considered acceptable to impose a condition requesting further details of cycle parking for the development.
- 7.8.6 Due to the tightly constrained nature of the site and restricted access, prior to the proposed access works being completed, it is considered necessary and reasonable to condition the submission of a Construction Management Plan to include details pertaining to construction traffic numbers, routes, timings and a strategy for vehicles to enter the site and specifically the delivery of the timber frames for the proposed MMC construction.

7.9 Waste

- 7.9.1 The proposed site plan shows the provision of bin storage areas in rear gardens with acceptable routes of no more than 30m for residents to pull them kerbside for collection. SBC Waste Management has confirmed that bin collection points are not required for such a small development with adequate room for a refuse vehicle to manoeuvre in the site to enter and exit in a forward gear.
- 7.9.2 The proposed works would see some levelling within the site due to areas of soil built up as part of the former children's play area use. This is necessary to make the site flat for development. It is proposed to impose a condition seeking a Site Waste Management Plan to be submitted and approved prior to commencement of works to ensure materials created from the

excavation/levelling works are appropriately removed and where possible reused as part of the scheme. Additionally, it will be important to ensure that the SWMP details waste created during construction and how this will be adequately dealt with.

7.10 Drainage

- 7.10.1 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 a 0.1% chance of flooding from seas or rivers which is typically less than 1 in 1000 annual probability of flooding. Therefore, all developments are generally directed to Flood Zone 1.
- 7.10.2 The site is located within an Environment Agency defined groundwater Source Protection Zone (GPZ) corresponding to Whitehall Pumping Station. This is a public water supply, comprising a number of chalk extraction boreholes, operated by Affinity Water. Affinity Water have confirmed that the construction works and operation of the proposed development site should be done in accordance with the relevant British Standards and Best Management Practices, thereby significantly reducing the groundwater pollution risk.
- 7.10.3 The Lead Local Flood Authority has assessed the application and, following an initial holding objection, have considered in principle are content with the revised details and conditions will be imposed based on their recommendations upon receipt. Members will be updated prior to the meeting or to give the Assistant Director of Planning and regulation in conjunction with the Chairman delegated powers to impose those conditions before issuing any permission if members were minded to approve the application.

7.11 Climate Change

- 7.11.1 Policy SP11 of the adopted Local Plan specifies the Council's position on climate change and energy conservation. Much of this can be addressed through building techniques and the materials proposed. The applicant has indicatively suggested that the following techniques are likely to be used on site:
- The proposed development utilises Modern Methods of Construction (MMC) for all 13 dwellings with timber frame construction. There are a number of advantages to MMC timber frame construction over conventional construction methods.
 - The potential for a 30% improvement in the speed of construction of new homes along with advances in improving quality and energy efficiency due to the off-site manufacture of key components – the timber frame panels being pre insulated with membrane applied and service battens constructed.
 - This modern method of constructing housing and other buildings uses advanced breathable membranes, insulation and vapour control layers along with careful detailing to ensure durability.
 - The strategy follows a 'fabric first' approach to constructing energy efficient buildings, with insulation standards, thermal bridging and air leakage all meeting Building Regulation requirements and incorporated into the timber frame off-site manufacture.
 - All gas fired boilers will meet a minimum standard of 40 mgNOx/Kwh.

However, it is recommended that a condition be imposed to any grant of permission to secure this.

7.12 Biodiversity offsetting

- 7.12.1 Given the location of the site in Six Acre Wood the application has been assessed by Natural England and the Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust (HMWT). The proposals are not considered to adversely affect local wildlife given the previous use on site. It has been advised that the houses should be constructed to include integrated bird and bat boxes and details in the Biodiversity and Ecology Reports confirm the provision of these in accordance with the advice given by HMWT.

7.12.2 The applicant has provided reports in respect of the loss of the existing biodiversity levels on the site, and has undergone the required matrix and metric calculations to present a Biodiversity offsetting calculation. Simply put this states how much biodiversity habitat has to be provided on a different site to offset the loss of this site to built development. As part of this process the Council have identified a nearby site at Camps Hill that can satisfactorily accommodate the required offset of 0.2 hectares and this will be appropriately secured and conditioned as part of the S106 process.

8 CONCLUSIONS

8.1 It is considered that the redevelopment of this allocated site for the provision of 13no. affordable homes, with associated access, landscaping, car and cycle parking is acceptable and accords with the relevant local plan policies. The design and layout of the proposed development, including gardens, bin storage and landscaping, is acceptable. Access and parking arrangements are considered acceptable in accordance with the local highway authority and the Council's newly adopted Parking Provision and Sustainable Transport SPD Other matters including drainage are acceptable and where applicable can be appropriately controlled through imposition of conditions.

9 RECOMMENDATION

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

- The provision of 100% affordable housing;
- Biodiversity offsetting;
- S278 Highway works;
- Fire Hydrants;

The detail of which would be delegated to the Assistant Director of Planning and Regulation in liaison with the Council's appointed solicitor.

9.2 The proposal be subject to the following conditions:-

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

- H51-ER-107 ELEVATIONS PLOTS 3-5;
- H51-ER-109 ELEVATIONS PLOTS 8-11
- H51-A-22-DR-AR-001 DALBY FLOOR PLANS
- H51-ER-001-N TECHNICAL SITE LAYOUT
- H51-ER-002-G BOUNDARY TREATMENTS
- H51-ER-003-G REFUSE STRATEGY
- H51-ER-004-G STOREY HEIGHTS
- H51-ER-005-G MATERIALS LAYOUT
- H51-ER-007-A SITE LOCATION PLAN
- 19045-CIV-001-A05 LEVELS
- 19045-CIV-002-A09 DRAINAGE STRATEGY
- 19045-CIV-055-A03 HIGHWAY DETAILS
- 19045-CIV-005-A08 ACCESS ROAD DRAINAGE
- 27691 R1 TOPOGRAPHICAL
- C86188-JNP-XX-DR-C-7001B REFUSE SWEEP PATH
- C86188-JNP-XX-DR-C-7002D SITE ACCESS GENERAL ARRANGEMENT
- C86188-JNP-XX-DR-C-7004 ESTATE CAR SWEEP PATH SHEET 1 OF 2

- C86188-JNP-XX-DR-C-7005 ESTATE CAR SWEEP PATH SHEET 2 OF 2
- P19-2341-01B LANDSCAPE MASTERPLAN

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 development shall take place above slab level until samples / details of the materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the dwellings 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.
4. 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.
5. 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.
6. All hard surfacing comprised in the approved details of landscaping shall be carried out within three months of 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.
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. No tree shown retained on the approved plans, or subsequently approved landscaping scheme, shall be cut down, uprooted or destroyed, nor shall any retained tree be topped or lopped within five years of the completion of development without the written approval of the Local Planning Authority.
REASON:- To ensure the protection of those trees which should be retained in the interests of visual amenity.
9. Before any development commences, including any site clearance or demolition works, any retained trees on the site or in close proximity of the boundary edge in Six Acre Wood shall be protected by fencing or other means of enclosure in accordance with a detailed scheme submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Such protection as may be agreed shall be inspected and approved by the Local Planning Authority prior to the commencement of the work and maintained until the conclusion of all site and building operations.

REASON:- To ensure that the retained tree(s) are not damaged or otherwise adversely affected during site operations.

10. No removal of trees, scrubs or hedges shall be carried out on site between 1st March and 31st August inclusive in any year, unless searched before by a suitably qualified ornithologist.
REASON:- Nesting birds are protected from disturbance under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (As amended).
11. No development shall take place until full details (in the form of scaled plans and / or written specification) have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority to illustrate the following: a) Roads, footways. B) Foul and surface water drainage. C) Visibility plays. D) Access arrangements. E) Parking provision in accordance with the adopted standard. F) Turning areas.
REASON:- To ensure suitable, safe and satisfactory planning and development of the site.
12. Prior to the first occupation of the development hereby permitted the car parking spaces as detailed on Drawing number H51-ER-001-N shall be laid out, demarcated, levelled, surfaced and drained in accordance with the approved plan and retained thereafter available for the specific use of car parking.
REASON:- To ensure adequate off-street parking provision is available at all times so that the development does not prejudice the free flow of traffic or the conditions of general safety.
13. No development shall take place until details of Electric Vehicle Charging has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Details shall include provision of all new car parking to have at least a Passive Electrical Vehicle Charging Point and that a minimum of 20% of the car parking spaces have access to an active EV charging point and details of the EV charging points to be provided. The approved Electric Vehicle Charge Points shall be installed in accordance with the approved details and thereafter permanently retained.
REASON:- In order to provide facilities to charge electric vehicles and to help reduce the impact of vehicle emissions on the local environment.
14. Prior to first occupation of the development hereby approved the details of the type, design of and secure storage of 2 per 2 bed dwelling and 3 per 3 bed dwelling cycle parking spaces should be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Residents cycle parking should be in the form of lit, lockable and weather resistant cycle lockers or stores and be sited away from bin stores. Cycle parking shall be fully completed to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority before first occupation of the new development.
REASON:- To ensure the provision of appropriate levels of cycle parking spaces in accordance with adopted guidance and to promote a modal shift in transport means.
15. No development shall take place until a Construction Management Plan has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The Plan shall be based on the Hertfordshire's Construction Management Template for all matters pertaining to Highways, as well as a Site Waste Management Plan detailing dust control measures, vibration restriction measures, predicted and latterly actual waste arisings and how this is to be managed and where it is sent to. The development shall thereafter be carried out in accordance with the approved Plan.
REASON:- In order to protect highway safety and the amenity of other users of the public highway and rights of way, and in the interests of the amenity of nearby residential properties in particular No's 19-27 Eliot Road.
16. No development above slab level shall take place until details of measures to address adaptation to climate change and energy efficiency 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.
REASON:- To ensure the development is adaptable to climate change through provision of energy and water efficiency measures.

17. No site clearance or construction work relating to this permission shall be carried out on any Sunday, Public or Bank Holiday nor at any other time, except between the hours of 0730 and 1800 on Mondays to Fridays and between the hours of 0800 and 1300 on Saturdays, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. These times apply to work which is audible at the site boundary.
REASON: - To safeguard the amenities of the occupiers of neighbouring properties.
18. As this is a previously developed site there may be a risk of the land containing contaminants. If, during development, contamination not previously identified is found to be present at the site then work shall cease and the Local Planning Authority shall be informed immediately. No further development (unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority) shall be carried out until a remediation strategy detailing how this contamination will be dealt with has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority and subsequently undertaken and the Local Planning Authority have confirmed it has been undertaken to its satisfaction.
REASON:- To ensure that the site does not pose any risk to human health or the water environment by demonstrating that the requirements of the approved verification plan have been met and that remediation of the site is completed.
19. No development shall commence until details of the model, and location of 4 integrated bat boxes and 4 integrated bird boxes has been supplied to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. These should be incorporated into the brickwork of the dwellings, placed as high as possible and orientated predominantly to the south for bat boxes and to the north for bird boxes. They shall be fully installed prior to occupation and retained as such thereafter.
REASON:- In the interests of promoting wildlife habitats on site and to restrict the impact of the development on local wildlife.
20. Notwithstanding the provisions of Classes B and C of Part 1, Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (or any Order revising, revoking or re-enacting that Order with or without modification) no loft conversions including dormer windows / roof extensions, or roof lights and openings shall be constructed on the dwellinghouse(s) hereby permitted unless permission is granted on an application made to the Local Planning Authority.
REASON:- To enable the Local Planning Authority to fully consider the effects of development normally permitted by that Order to ensure sufficient parking is available.
21. Notwithstanding the provisions of Class A and E of Part 1, Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (or any Order revising, revoking and re-enacting that Order with or without modification), no extensions shall be constructed on the dwellinghouses and no outbuildings shall be erected in the rear gardens of the dwellinghouses hereby permitted unless permission is granted on an application made to the Local Planning Authority.
REASON:- To ensure adequate external garden space is retained in accordance with the Council's adopted Design Guide and Policy GD1 of the Local Plan 2011-2031.

INFORMATIVES

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 .

Highways -

Prior to commencement of the development the applicant is advised to contact 0300 1234 047 to arrange a site visit to agree a condition survey of the approach of the highway leading to the development likely to be used for delivery vehicles to the development. Under the provisions of Section 59 of the Highways Act 1980 the developer may be liable for any damage caused to the public highway as a result of traffic associated with the development. Herts County Council may require an Officer presence during movements of larger loads, or videoing of the movements may be considered.

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 bus stop upgrades. The requirement as part of the offsite S278 works is to: provide two Kassel Kerbs and two real time information screens at the existing two bus stops located in A1155 Fairlands Way. The details should be included as part of the S278 drawing as part of the required highway network in conjunction with the development. 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 <http://www.hertsdirect.org/services/transtreets/highways/> or by telephoning 0300 1234 047.

The works shall be fully completed to the satisfaction of the Highway Authority before first occupation of the new development. Reason: So that all users of the development can safely walk to and from the site, in compliance with paragraphs 108 and 110 of the NPPF. The details should be included as part of the s278 drawing as part of the required highway work in conjunction with the development. 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 <http://www.hertsdirect.org/services/transtreets/highways/> or by telephoning 0300 1234047.

It is an offence under section 148 of the Highways Act 1980 to deposit mud or other debris on 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. Therefore, best practical means shall be taken at all times to ensure that all vehicles leaving the site during construction of the development are in a condition such as not to emit dust or deposit mud, slurry or other debris on the highway. Further information is available via the website <https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/highways-roads-and-pavements/highways-roads-and-pavements.aspx> or by telephoning 0300 1234047.

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

Planning permission has been granted for this proposal. The Council acted pro-actively through positive engagement with the applicant at the pre-application stage and during the determination process which 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.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

1. The application file, forms, plans and supporting documents having the reference number relating to this item.
2. Stevenage Borough Local Plan 2011-2031.
3. Stevenage Borough Council Supplementary Planning Documents – Parking Provision adopted January 2012; Stevenage Design Guide 2009.
4. Hertfordshire County Council Local Transport Plan LTP4 2018-2031
5. Central Government advice contained in the National Planning Policy Framework February 2019 and the National Planning Practice Guidance 2014, as amended.
6. Responses to consultations with statutory undertakers referred to in this report.
7. Responses to third party consultations referred to in this report.