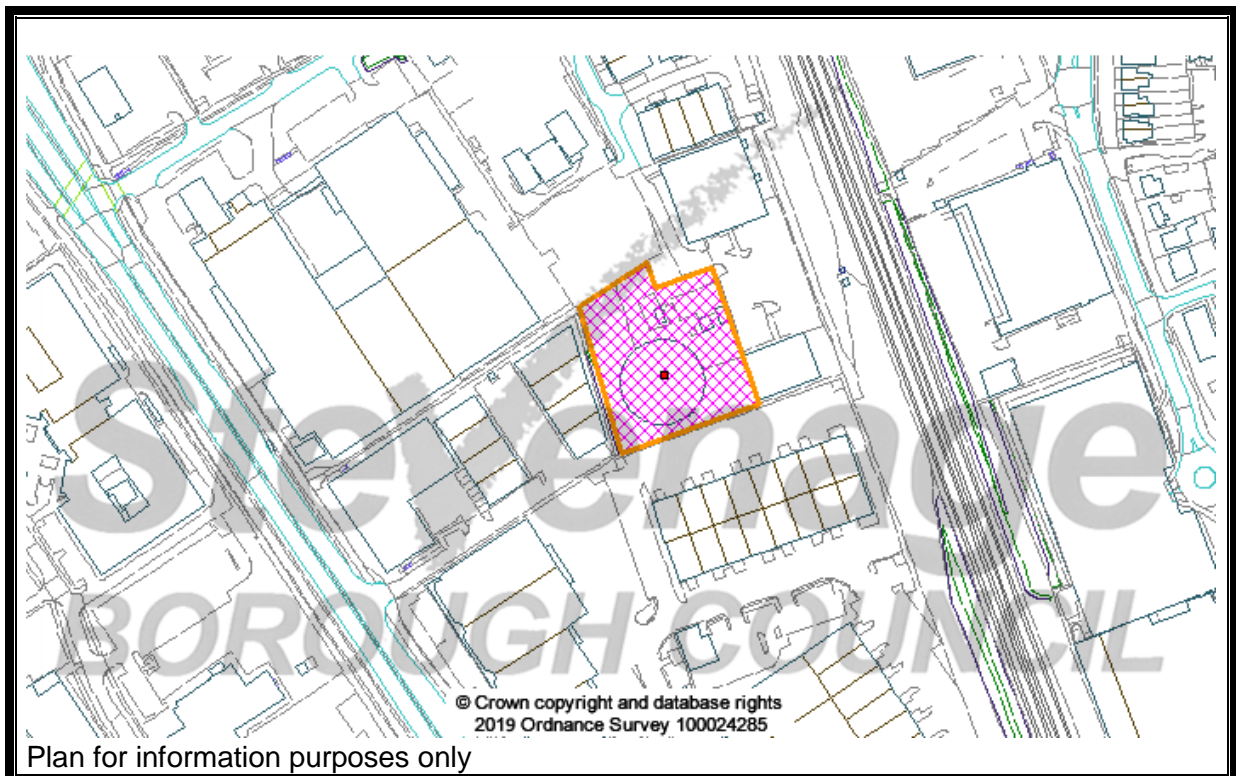


Meeting:	Planning and Development Committee	Agenda Item:
Date:	5 October 2021	
Author:	Ailsa Davis	01438 242747
Lead Officer:	Zayd Al-Jawad	01438 242257
Contact Officer:	Ailsa Davis	01438 242747

Application No:	21/00071/FPM
Location:	Land South of Norton Road, Stevenage
Proposal:	Erection of industrial unit comprising a workshop and offices with external parking area
Drawing Nos.:	A101; A103 rev A; A104; A201; A202 rev A; 47162-DR-D-101A
Applicant:	Generator Power Ltd
Date Valid:	5 February 2021
Recommendation:	GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION



1. SITE DESCRIPTION

- 1.1 The application site comprises a 0.48 hectare vacant site, formerly in use as a gas depot which has been demolished and the gas holder removed. The site has been cleared, pending further development subject to planning permission. The site is located at the end

of Norton Road and is surrounded on all sides by industrial warehouse units and Stevenage Bus Depot to the north.

- 1.2 There are no significant planning constraints associated with the site. The site is wholly within Flood Zone 1 meaning there is a very low probability of fluvial flooding. The site is not within an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty nor is it within a Conservation Area, Site of Special Scientific Interest, Air Quality Management Area, Special Landscape Area, Local Green Space or any other national/local environmental or ecological designations.
- 1.3 The site is designated as falling within the Gunnels Wood Employment Area within the adopted Local Plan (2019).

2. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

- 2.1 18/00180/PADEMO – Prior approval for the demolition of gasholders on site. Prior approval not required.
- 2.2 00/00567/PATELE – Erection of a 15 metre lattice mast supporting six sector antennae and two 600mm dishes an equipment cabin and ancillary development within a fenced compound. Prior approval not required.
- 2.3 99/00436/FP – Demolition of existing buildings and erection of two industrial/storage buildings Classes B1, B2 and B8 with ancillary offices and car parking. Granted planning permission.
- 2.4 The site was previously used as a gas works depot operated by Transco until a planning application was submitted to the LPA for the decommissioning and removal of the large gas cylinder and associated buildings in 2018. The gas cylinder and buildings were consequently demolished to leave a vacant site, with just the remains of the floor slabs now showing. The site was purchased by Generator Power Ltd (the applicant) in December 2020.

3. THE CURRENT APPLICATION

- 3.1 This application is seeking planning permission for the erection of a 1348sq.m industrial warehouse unit in Class B2 (General Industry) use comprising a workshop and offices with external parking area providing 20no. parking spaces and 6no. HGV spaces. The unit would be run by Generator Power Ltd and be used as a workshop for generators and associated equipment and storage of generators, plant and equipment.
- 3.2 The building itself would comprise a new steel framed portal building with a dual pitched roof comprising steel sheet cladding, powder coated aluminium windows and a mixture of brickwork and steel sheet cladding on the external elevations. The building would follow a colour palette to suit the applicant's corporate identity, which is utilised on their other sites around the country. The Design and Access Statement contains some computer generated images showing what the building would look like in context.
- 3.3 The building would be sited at the southern end of the site, with the yard area in front and the car parking located along the eastern boundary and adjacent to the western elevation of the building. The proposed HGV parking would be located in the north western corner of the site. The existing vehicular access in the north eastern corner of the site would continue to be used.
- 3.4 The application comes before Committee for consideration as it is a major commercial application.

4. PUBLIC REPRESENTATIONS

- 4.1 The proposal has been publicised by way of letters to adjoining properties and a site notice. In addition, the application has also been advertised in the Local Press. No representations have been received.

5. CONSULTATIONS

5.1 Hertfordshire County Council as Highway Authority

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

5.2 Thames Water

- 5.2.1 No objection, subject to a condition requiring a Piling Method Statement to be submitted and approved due to the proposed works being in close proximity to underground sewerage utility infrastructure. Piling has the potential to significantly impact / cause failure of local underground sewerage utility infrastructure. Thames Water has also asked for the applicant to apply for a Groundwater Risk Management Permit for discharging groundwater into a public sewer.

5.4 Hertfordshire County Council as Lead Local Flood Authority

- 5.4.1 We understand this application seeks full planning permission for a major development, and we have assessed the additional information submitted to support to this application. We understand that the existing drainage network on site had no other connections and was found to only serve the site. It is noted that the drain is to be abandoned as part of the development proposal. We acknowledge the applicant has now proposed and included a perforated pipe filter drain to run along the eastern boundary to help intercept existing low risk surface water flooding.
- 5.4.2 We note that two separator systems are proposed to provide the appropriate treatment train before the discharge point for the site. We understand that an assessment was undertaken to demonstrate that in principles a proprietary oil separator and hydrodynamic vortex separator would meet the requirements for the removal of total suspended solids, hydrocarbons, copper, and zinc. We note that following a review of the additional submitted information we are in a position to recommend conditions should the LPA decide to grant planning permission.

5.5 Environment Agency

- 5.5.1 The previous land use at this site as a Gas Depot suggests the potential presence of contamination. Since the site is situated in a vulnerable groundwater area on principal and secondary aquifers these proposals need to be dealt with in a way which protects the underlying groundwater. Where land contamination may be an issue for a prospective development we encourage developers to employ specialist consultants/contractors working under the National Quality Mark Scheme.
- 5.5.2 We recommend that the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework and National Planning Policy Guidance are followed. This means that all risks to groundwater and surface waters from contamination need to be identified so that appropriate remedial action can be taken. We expect reports and Risk Assessments to be prepared in line with our Approach to Groundwater protection (commonly referred to as GP3) and the updated guide Land contamination: risk management (LCRM). LCRM is an update to the Model

procedures for the management of land contamination (CLR11), which was archived in 2016.

5.5.3 In order to protect groundwater quality from further deterioration:

- No infiltration based sustainable drainage systems should be constructed on land affected by contamination as contaminants can remobilise and cause groundwater pollution (e.g. soakaways act as preferential pathways for contaminants to migrate to groundwater and cause pollution).
- Piling or any other foundation designs using penetrative methods should not cause preferential pathways for contaminants to migrate to groundwater and cause pollution.

5.6 Council's Planning Policy Section

5.6.1 The proposal seeks to provide new B2 floorspace in a designated employment area. The proposal has taken the opportunity to provide cycle parking in a central location. Opportunities should be explored with regard to SuDS on site. The proposed development accords with a number of policies in the Stevenage Borough Local Plan.

5.7 Council's Environmental Health Section

5.7.1 No comment.

5.8.1 Herts Fire and Rescue (Water Officer)

5.8.1 Require a fire hydrant. The closest hydrant is 110m away from the proposed building.

5.9 UK Power Networks

5.9.1 No comment.

5.10 Affinity Water

5.9.1 No comment.

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 July 2021. This largely reordered the policy substance of the earlier 2012 version of the NPPF albeit with some revisions to policy. The Council are content that the policies in the Local Plan are in conformity with the revised NPPF and that the Local Plan should be considered up to date

for the purpose of determining planning applications. The NPPF provides that proposals which accord with an up to date development plan should be approved without delay (para.11) and that where a planning application conflicts with an up to date development plan, permission should not usually be granted (para.12). This indicates the weight which should be given to an up to date development plan, reflecting the requirements of section 38(6) of the 2004 Act. 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 Adopted Local Plan

Policy SP1: Presumption in favour of sustainable development;
 Policy SP2: Sustainable development in Stevenage;
 Policy SP8: Good design;
 Policy SP11: Climate change, flooding and pollution
 Policy IT4: Transport Assessment and Travel Plans
 Policy IT5: Parking and access;
 Policy EC4: Remainder of Gunnels Wood;
 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 NH5: Trees and Woodland

6.4 Supplementary Planning Documents

Parking Provision and Sustainable Transport SPD (2020);
 Stevenage Design Guide SPD (2009)
 Developer Contributions SPD (2021)
 The Impact of Development on Biodiversity SPD (2021)

6.5 Community Infrastructure Levy Charging Schedule

6.5.1 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 floor space of a development.

Community Infrastructure Levy

6.5.2 The development is liable for Community Infrastructure Levy under the Council's adopted Charging Schedule (2020) at £0/m². The CIL Charging Schedule specifies a payment for new floor space in line with the following rates (plus appropriate indexation):

<i>Development Type</i>	<i>CIL Rate (£ per square meter)</i>	
	<i>Zone 1: Stevenage Central, Stevenage West Urban Extension and North of Stevenage Extension</i>	<i>Zone 2: Everywhere else</i>
<i>Residential</i>		
<i>Market housing</i>	<i>£40/m²</i>	<i>£100/m²</i>
<i>Sheltered housing</i>	<i>£100/m²</i>	
<i>Extracare housing</i>	<i>£40/m²</i>	
<i>Retail development</i>	<i>£60/m²</i>	
<i>All other development</i>	<i>£0/m²</i>	

- 6.5.3 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.
- 6.5.4 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. APPRAISAL

- 7.1 The main issues for consideration in the determination of this application are its acceptability in land use policy terms, design/appearance/layout, flood risk and drainage, climate change mitigation, landscaping and biodiversity, neighbouring amenities, pollution and hazardous substances, means of access/parking, local employment and apprenticeships and construction impacts.

7.2 Land Use Policy Considerations

- 7.2.1 As identified by the Local Plan proposals map, the application site falls within the Gunnels Wood Employment Area, however it falls outside of the Gunnels Wood Edge of Centre Zone and Industrial Zone. Policy EC4 'Remainder of Gunnels Wood' is therefore the relevant land use policy to consider. The policy states planning permission will be granted within the Gunnels Wood Employment Area where:

- a. Development (including changes of use) is for use classes B1(b) research and development, B1(c) light industry, B2 general industry and / or B8 storage and distribution;
- b. (Re-)Development of the site would not prejudice the provision of an appropriate number and range of jobs across the Employment Area as a whole; and
- c. On sites over two hectares in size, any proposals for B8 development are either part of a mixed-use scheme providing a range of acceptable uses or essential to the continued operation of an existing use.

- 7.2.2 The proposed unit would be used as a workshop for generators and associated equipment and storage of generators, plant and equipment run by the applicant, Generator Power Ltd. This would fall within planning use class B2 'General Industry'. The proposal would therefore comply with criterion (a) of policy EC4. The development of the site would create new jobs and would not prejudice the provision of an appropriate number and range of jobs across the Employment Area as a whole. The proposal is also in accordance with criterion (b). Criterion (c) is not relevant as the application site is less than 2 hectares in size.

- 7.2.3 The principle of the proposed industrial unit in this location is therefore, considered acceptable in land use policy terms, subject to satisfying design, transport and environmental policies.

7.3 Design and Appearance

- 7.3.1 Paragraph 126 of the NPPF states that "The creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve". It goes on to state that "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".

- 7.3.2 Paragraph 130 of the NPPF sets out a number of requirements for new development, including that development:
- will function well and add to the overall quality of an area;
 - is visually attractive as a result of good architecture; layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;
 - is sympathetic to local character and history;
 - establishes or maintains a strong sense of place;
 - optimises the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development;
 - creates places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users.
- 7.3.3 Paragraph 131 of the NPPF places great importance on the role of trees in helping to shape quality, well designed places “Trees make an important contribution to the character and quality of urban environments, and can also help mitigate and adapt to climate change”.
- 7.3.4 Paragraph 134 of the NPPF states that “Development that is not well designed should be refused, especially where it fails to reflect local design policies and government guidance on design, taking into account any local design guidance and supplementary planning documents such as design guides and codes”. Local Plan Policies SP8 ‘Good Design’ and GD1 ‘High Quality Design’ also seek to ensure new development achieves the highest standards of design. Policy GD1 sets out generic design requirements that will be applied to all development.
- 7.3.5 The proposed scheme has been designed so as to align with the adjacent employment units and provide direct vehicular and pedestrian access from Norton Road. The layout would preserve the openness in front of the other units at the end of Norton Road and provide a suitable yard for parking and storage to suit the applicant’s requirements. The scale of the proposed building has been designed to appear in keeping with the adjacent units is typical of this type of small scale industrial development with a 6m eaves height.
- 7.3.6 In terms of design, the proposed building would comprise a new steel framed portal building with a dual pitched roof made of steel sheet cladding, powder coated aluminium windows and a mixture of brickwork and steel sheet cladding on the external elevations. The building would follow a colour palette to suit the applicant’s corporate identity, comprising Goosewing grey and Patina green cladding trim which is utilised on their other sites around the country. The Design and Access Statement contains some computer generated images showing what the building would look like in context.
- 7.3.7 Landscaping is to be provided to the Eastern boundary, through the use of grass and shrub planting. The boundary to the West of the site currently consists of self-seeding shrubs and bushes. These would be trimmed back and retained, if found to be in reasonable condition. Low energy lighting would be provided adjacent to each entrance/exit door, with a bulkhead LED low energy light fitting. The parking area would be illuminated by low energy LED perimeter lights and building mounted lighting to cover the yard area.
- 7.3.8 It is considered the proposed design of the building is appropriate for its intended purpose as an industrial unit within an existing employment area. The design, external materials and colour palette would appear in keeping with the adjoining units within the wider area and the scale of the building would not appear out of proportion or overbearing when viewed from Norton Road. On the basis this is an existing employment site, it is considered the proposed design is acceptable.
- 7.3.9 The proposal would be in accordance with paragraphs 126, 130,131,132 and 134 of the NPPF in respect of design, Policies SP8 and GD1 – High Quality Design of the Local Plan (2019) and Stevenage Design Guide (2009).

7.4 Access, Highways and Parking

Vehicle Access and Highway Safety

- 7.4.1 The proposed development would be served from the extension of the local access road of Norton Road; the particular section of road served by the development is a private street that is not maintainable at the public's expense. The service road has sufficient capacity to accommodate large vehicles likely to use the development. Hertfordshire County Council (HCC) as Highways Authority research indicates that in the last 5 years there have been no vehicle collisions along Six Hills Way in the vicinity of the access to Norton Road. HCC as Highway Authority have raised no objection to the application proposal, which is considered acceptable in terms of vehicle access and highway safety.

Parking

- 7.4.2 In terms of proposed parking, 20 car parking spaces are provided (10 standard and 10 overflow). Two of the spaces would provide electric vehicle charge points and there is provision for 1 disabled parking space adjacent to the building entrance. A total of 6 HGV spaces are also proposed. Covered cycle parking is provided. Vehicle tracking is shown on the proposed site plan, which confirms vehicles would be able to access the carpark, turn and exit in a forward gear. The Highway Authority has confirmed there is sufficient room within the service yard for the manoeuvring of articulated and other large vehicles to enable them to turn around and egress the access in forward gear.
- 7.4.3 In terms of the parking requirements for the proposed use of the building as use class B2 'General Industry', the Council's Parking Provision SPD (2020) requires 1 space per 50sqm gross floor area. The gross floor area of the proposed building is stated within the application form to be 1348sq.m, which creates a requirement for 27 parking spaces. In some areas of the town, the ease of access by passenger transport and access to daytime public parking allows for lower levels of parking to be provided for private non-residential uses. Adoption of the above standard without further reduction would over-provide in locations where non-car accessibility is good or, just as importantly, can be improved. The site falls within Non-residential Accessibility Zone 1, where 0-25% of the maximum car parking provision would be allowed. This equates to 0 - 6.75 (rounded up to 7 spaces). The provision of 20 parking spaces and 6 HGV spaces would therefore exceed this requirement. Notwithstanding this, the proposed development is considered to provide sufficient off-street parking to accommodate the operational demand of the development.
- 7.4.4 In terms of electric vehicle (EV) charging, the Parking Provision SPD (2020) requires a minimum of 20% of new parking on the site to have access to an active EV charging point. A total of 2 EV charging spaces would be provided, which does not meet the policy requirement. A minimum of 4 EV charging spaces are required. This can be secured via a planning condition.
- 7.4.5 With regards to parking for disabled motorists, the Parking Provision SPD requires one space for each employee who is a disabled motorist and 5% of total provision to be provided as disabled parking for visiting disabled motorists, plus 5% of total provision for conversion to future disabled spaces. At this stage, the number of employees who are disabled motorists is not known. The applicant is therefore providing 1 disabled parking space from the outset, adjacent to the building entrance. There is space to convert other parking spaces in the future. It is considered this approach is acceptable.
- 7.4.6 In terms of cycle parking, the minimum requirement set out within the Parking Provision SPD is 1 long term (staff) space per 500sqm and 1 short term (visitor) space per 1,000sqm. Hence the scheme would be required to provide a minimum of 3 long term spaces, and 1 short term space. It is proposed to provide a secure covered cycle store to the north of the

parking spaces along the eastern site boundary. However it is not stated within the application submission how many spaces would be provided. The location of the cycle store is considered acceptable. The provision of a minimum of 4 lockable 'Sheffield' style parking loops can be sought via a planning condition.

- 7.4.7 It is considered the proposed parking arrangements, and, subject to a condition on the cycle parking, would comply with Local Plan Policy IT5 'Parking and Access' and the proposal is considered acceptable in this regard.

Trip generation, Distribution, Impact

- 7.4.8 In terms of the traffic impact that the development has on the local highway network, the Highway Authority considers the traffic generation would not increase significantly the original trip rates to the development. The traffic generated by the new development is unlikely to affect the overall performance of the existing junction onto Six Hills Way. It has been considered that in comparison to the original traffic generation to the development, the development would not alter the overall impact on the adjacent highways.

- 7.4.9 HCC as Highway Authority has considered that the proposal would not increase the traffic generation or the vehicle movement to the development and would not have a severe effect on the safety and operation of the adjoining highways.

Loading and Servicing, Waste Collection

- 7.4.10 All loading, servicing and waste collections would take place within the application site yard using the existing entrance. A refuse store is located next to the cycle store adjacent to the site entrance to be accessible to the waste collection vehicle.

7.5 Biodiversity and Trees

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

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

- 7.5.2 As the application site was previously used as a gas works depot and is now vacant with just the remains of the floor slabs showing, it is considered it would meet exception criteria iv and v above as 100% of the site was previously developed and does not contain any protected habitats. On this basis, there would be no requirement to achieve a 10% biodiversity net gain on the site.

- 7.5.3 Landscaping would be provided to the eastern boundary, through the use of grass and shrub planting. The boundary to the west of the site currently consists of self-seeding shrubs and bushes. These would be trimmed back and retained, if found to be in reasonable condition. The proposed site plan also shows three trees, two in the south west corner of the site and one adjacent to the site entrance. The two trees in the south west corner are existing, to be retained and the one adjacent to the site entrance is proposed.
- 7.5.4 The above landscaping arrangements are considered to enhance the biodiversity and visual amenity of this industrial site and would accord with Section 15 of the NPPF and policies SP12 and NH5 of the Local Plan (2019).

7.6 Flood Risk and Drainage

- 7.6.1 A Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy dated April 2020 has been submitted alongside this application. The report reviews the drainage and flood risk issues associated with the proposed development and sets out the drainage strategy. The report states that the application site is located within Flood Zone 1 and that flood risk from all other sources is low. The development of the site for an industrial building (use class B2) is therefore appropriate as set out by the 'flood risk vulnerability classification' contained within the Planning Practice Guidance. The Report sets out details in respect of surface water and foul water drainage.
- 7.6.2 The proposed drainage scheme makes use of an attenuation tank with a final discharge into an existing private surface water manhole on site, before a discharge into the Thames Water Surface Water Sewer at a rate of 5l/s. Thames Water has confirmed the sewer has capacity for the proposed discharge rate. Greenfield runoff rates for the site have been calculated. Due to site constraints, the Lead Local Flood Authority have accepted that meeting the greenfield runoff rates would be impractical and have agreed the proposed 5l/s discharge rate.
- 7.6.3 Following the submission of additional information at the request of the LLFA to overcome their previous objections, the LLFA are now satisfied that the proposed development would not increase the risk of flooding within or surrounding the site, subject to conditions. It is considered the proposal accords with Section 14 of the NPPF and policies SP11 and FP2 of the Local Plan (2019).

7.7 Climate Change Mitigation

- 7.7.1 The proposed building has been designed with consideration of the effects of climate change and the ways in which the proposal can be made more sustainable for the future. Simplified Building Energy Model (SBEM) is used in England for non-domestic buildings in support of the National Calculation Methodology (NCM), the Energy Performance of Buildings Directive (EPBD) and the Green Deal. This is used as the basic target for compliance. In addition to this basic level of compliance and subject to detailed design, the applicant is considering the use of the following energy saving technologies and renewable sources of energy:
- Photo voltaic solar power - Array of 30kw to rear roof pitch
 - Air source heat pumps for the offices central heating
 - Water saving sanitary ware, taps and showers
 - SUD's compliant surface water drainage - as submitted
 - Timber sourced from FSC renewable sources
- 7.7.2 It is considered the information provided within the application demonstrates that the proposed development would accord with the requirements of policies SP2 and FP1 of the

Local Plan (2019) in relation to sustainable construction and climate change mitigation and is acceptable.

7.8 Pollution and Hazardous Substances

7.8.1 Whilst this is a proposal for a building in class B2 general industry use, the proposed workshop for generators and associated equipment and storage of generators, plant and equipment would not involve the use or storage of any hazardous substances. The proposal would not therefore raise any issues to be considered under Policy FP6 'Hazardous Installations' or FP7 'Pollution'.

7.8.2 The site is located within an existing employment area and therefore the proposal would meet the tests of Policy FP7 'Pollution', as it would not have unacceptable impacts on (i) the natural environment, general amenity and the tranquillity of the wider area, including noise and light pollution; (ii) health and safety of the public and (iii) the compliance with statutory environmental quality standards.

7.9 Impact on Residential Amenity

7.9.1 The application site is located within the Gunnels Wood Employment Area and is surrounded by similar industrial / employment uses. The proposal would not raise any issues in terms of impact on neighbouring residential amenity, as there are no residential buildings in close proximity to the site.

7.10 Local Employment and Apprenticeships

7.10.1 The recently adopted Developer Contributions SPD (2021) introduces a requirement that developers of major development will enter into a legal agreement with the Council to:

- i. attempt to fill 5% to 10% of construction jobs on-site associated with their development with Stevenage residents,
- ii. attempt to fill one apprenticeship position per 10 construction jobs on-site with a Stevenage resident or student (with a cap for requirement of 10 apprenticeships),
- iii. report whether or not they met these requirements, and provide a financial contribution in lieu of not achieving either or both targets.

7.10.2 The above SPD was adopted during the course of the determination of this application. As such, the applicant has not submitted a Local Employment Strategy to demonstrate how the above targets would be met. It is considered the submission of a Local Employment Strategy could be secured via a planning condition, where the local employment targets could be agreed with the applicant prior to commencement of development above slab level. The condition could be worded to ensure the development is carried out in accordance with the agreed targets.

7.11 Construction Impacts

7.11.1 Construction would take place within the confines of the application site, accessed from Norton Road. There are no residential properties on Norton Road that would be affected by the construction impacts of the development.

7.12 Other Matters

Human Rights and Equalities

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 Building Regulations Approved Documents and the Equality Act have been referred to during the scheme design. The site is generally level, which would provide easy access for wheelchair users. There is suitable off street private parking within the application site giving safe space for parking for all people. A footpath is generally provided around the perimeter of the building, with a ramped/level access to the principal entrance door. The front parking area links directly onto Norton Road, giving pedestrians and vehicles good access to the site. Access for emergency services is via Norton Road, into the private parking area.

8. CONCLUSIONS

- 8.1 The planning application proposes to construct a new industrial unit comprising a workshop and offices with external parking area (use class B2 general industry). The application site is located within the Gunnels Wood Employment Area and therefore the principle of the proposal is considered acceptable in land use policy terms. An assessment of the proposal has also been carried out against national and local design, transport and environmental policies and found to be acceptable.
- 8.4 The proposal is in conformity with the NPPF, the Development Plan and the Council's adopted Supplementary Planning Documents. There are no other material planning considerations which indicate that policies in the plan should be outweighed and that planning permission should not be given.
- 8.5 Given the above, it is recommended that planning permission is granted subject to the conditions set out in section 9 of this report.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.1 That planning permission be GRANTED, subject to the following conditions:-
- 1 The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans:
- A101; A103 rev A; A104; A201; A202 rev A; 47162-DR-D-101A

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 building works required to implement this permission shall be carried out only between the following times:

0730 to 1800 Mondays to Fridays

0800 to 1300 Saturdays

And not at all on Sundays and Bank Holidays.

The hours specified relate to activities which are audible at the site boundary.

REASON:- To satisfactorily protect the operation of adjoining businesses.

- 4 No piling shall take place until a Piling Method Statement (detailing the depth and type of piling to be undertaken and the methodology by which such piling will be carried out, including measures to prevent and minimise the potential for damage to subsurface sewerage infrastructure, and the programme for the works) has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority in consultation with Thames Water. Any piling must be undertaken in accordance with the terms of the approved piling method statement.

REASON:- The proposed works will be in close proximity to underground sewerage utility infrastructure. Piling has the potential to significantly impact / cause failure of local underground sewerage utility infrastructure.

- 5 The development hereby permitted shall be completed in accordance with the external materials specified within the Design and Access Statement revision B by Richard Jagger Architectural Design dated 16 September 2021 submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority.

REASON:- To ensure a satisfactory appearance for the development.

- 6 All hard and soft landscaping shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details as set out in drawing number A103 rev A to a reasonable standard in accordance with the relevant British Standards or other recognised Codes of Good Practice.

REASON:- To ensure a satisfactory appearance for the development.

- 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 completion of the development.

REASON:- To ensure a satisfactory appearance for the development.

- 8 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.

- 9 All car parking spaces shown on drawing number A103 rev A shall be provided, marked out and hard surfaced ready for use prior to the first occupation of the building and shall be retained in that form and kept available for those purposes thereafter.

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.

- 10 Prior to the first occupation of the building hereby permitted, the development shall include provision for 4 active electric vehicle charging points.
REASON:- To ensure construction of a satisfactory development and to promote sustainable development in accordance with Policies 5, 19 and 20 of Hertfordshire's Local Transport Plan (adopted 2018).
- 11 Prior to the first occupation of the building hereby permitted, 1 disabled parking space shall be included in the overall vehicle parking provision with the bays extending beyond the standard minimum with a 1.2m strip of additional width to be provided along each side creating a total minimum bay size of 3.6m x 6m, complete with the International Symbol for Access with the safety zone/aisle between the bays marked with hatchings.
REASON:- To ensure that adequate parking facilities are available within the site for all users.
- 12 A minimum of 4 lockable 'Sheffield' style cycle parking loops shall be provided within the covered cycle parking shown on drawing number A103 rev A prior to first occupation of the building and shall be retained in that form and kept available for those purposes thereafter.
REASON:- To ensure that adequate cycle parking is available within the site.
- 13 The measures to address adaptation to climate change as set out within the Design and Access Statement revision B by Richard Jagger Architectural Design dated 16 September 2021 shall 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.
- 14 The development permitted by this planning permission shall be carried out in accordance with the principles of the approved Flood Risk & Drainage Assessment produced by RJ Design, dated April 2020 and the following mitigation measures:
1. Limiting the surface water runoff generated by the critical storm events so that it will not exceed 5l/s for all rainfall events up to and including the 1 in 100 year plus 40% climate change event.
2. Providing storage in an underground attenuation tank to ensure no increase in surface water runoff volumes for all rainfall events up to and including the 1 in 100 year plus climate change event.
3. The surface water from the site will discharge from a private network into a Thames Water surface water sewer.
The drainage scheme shall be fully implemented prior to occupation and subsequently in accordance with the timing/phasing arrangements embodied within the scheme, or within any other period as may subsequently be agreed, in writing, by the Local Planning Authority.
REASON:- To prevent flooding by ensuring the satisfactory disposal and storage of surface water from the site. To reduce the risk of flooding to the proposed development and future occupants.
- 15 No drainage works shall take place until a detailed surface water drainage scheme for the site based on the principles as set out in condition 1 and the Flood Risk & Drainage Assessment produced by RJ Design, dated April 2020, has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall subsequently be implemented in accordance with the approved details. The scheme shall include:
1. Final detailed post development calculations/modelling in relation to surface water for all rainfall events up to and including the 1 in 100 year return period including a 40% allowance for climate change.
2. Final detailed drainage plan including the location and provided volumes of all SuDS features, pipe runs, invert levels and discharge points. The areas of informal flooding should also be included on the detailed plan.

3. Full Assessment of proposed SuDS treatment and management stages for all surface water runoff from the entire development site.

4. Final detailed engineered drawings of the proposed SuDS features including cross section drawings, their size, volume, depth and any inlet and outlet features including any connecting pipe runs.

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

16 Upon completion of the drainage works, a management and maintenance plan for the SuDS features and drainage network must be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall include:

1. Provision of complete set of as built drawings including the final drainage layout for site drainage network.

2. Maintenance and operational activities for the lifetime of the development.

3. Arrangements for adoption and any other measures to secure the operation of the scheme throughout its lifetime.

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

17 If, during development, contamination not previously identified is found to be present at the site, then no further development 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. The remediation strategy shall be implemented as approved with a robust pre and post monitoring plan to determine its effectiveness.

REASON:- To ensure that the development does not contribute to unacceptable concentrations of pollution posing a risk to public water supply from previously unidentified contamination sources at the development site and to prevent deterioration of groundwater and/or surface water.

18 No above ground works shall take place until a Local Employment Strategy prepared with reference to section 10 of the Council's Developer Contributions SPD (2021) is submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be completed in accordance with the agreed local employment targets.

REASON:- To ensure that the benefits of the development contribute to the economic growth of the town and subsequently benefit the town's residents and workforce.

19 No above ground works shall take place 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.

REASON:- To ensure adequate water infrastructure provision is made on site for the local fire service to discharge its statutory firefighting duties.

INFORMATIVES

1. 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.

2. Storage of materials: The applicant is advised that the storage of materials associated with the construction of this development should be provided within the site on land which is not public highway, and the use of such areas must not interfere with the public highway. If this is not possible, authorisation should be sought from the Highway Authority before construction works commence. Further information is available via the website <https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/highways-roads-and-pavements/highways-roads-and-pavements.aspx> or by telephoning 0300 1234047.
3. 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 <https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/highways-roads-and-pavements/highways-roads-and-pavements.aspx> telephoning 0300 1234047.
4. Road Deposits: 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.
5. A Groundwater Risk Management Permit from Thames Water will be required for discharging groundwater into a public sewer. Any discharge made without a permit is deemed illegal and may result in prosecution under the provisions of the Water Industry Act 1991. We would expect the developer to demonstrate what measures he will undertake to minimise groundwater discharges into the public sewer. 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.
6. To obtain advice regarding current Building Regulations please contact Hertfordshire Building Control Ltd. by emailing us at buildingcontrol@hertfordshirebc.co.uk or phoning us on 01438 879990.

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

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

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

Excavation for foundations
Damp proof course
Concrete oversite
Insulation
Drains (when laid or tested)
Floor and Roof construction
Work relating to fire safety
Work affecting access and facilities for disabled people
Completion

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

10. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

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 and Sustainable Transport (2020), Stevenage Design Guide SPD (2009), Developer Contributions SPD (2021) and The Impact of Development on Biodiversity SPD (2021)
3. Stevenage Borough Local Plan 2011-2031 adopted 2019.
4. Hertfordshire County Council's Local Transport Plan 4 adopted May 2018.
5. Responses to consultations with statutory undertakers and other interested parties referred to in this report.
6. Central Government advice contained in the National Planning Policy Framework July 2021 and Planning Policy Guidance March 2014.