

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

Date: 11 January 2022

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Application No: 21/01264/FPM

Location: Station Car Park North, Lytton Way, Stevenage.

Proposal: Construction of Multi Storey Car Park and Secure Cycle Stores to provide 622 car parking spaces of which 30no. are accessible "Blue Badge" spaces 80 secure cycle spaces, and 27 motorcycle spaces with associated hard and soft landscaping works. Up to 25% of car parking spaces are to be provided with active Electric Vehicle charging point and up to 50% of car parking spaces are to be provided with passive Electric Vehicle charging infrastructure for future activation to suit demand. The MSCP is six storeys tall with a central photovoltaic canopy on the open top deck.

Drawing Nos.: 210311-FTK-MSCP-XX-DR-AX-30604; 210311-FTK-MSCP-XX-DR-AX-30603; 210311-FTK-MSCP-XX-DR-AX-30602; 210311-FTK-MSCP-XX-DR-AX-30601; 210311-FTK-MSCP-XX-DR-AX-30504; 210311-FTK-MSCP-XX-DR-AX-30503; 210311-FTK-MSCP-XX-DR-AX-30502; 210311-FTK-MSCP-XX-DR-AX-30501; 210311-FTK-MSCP-XX-DR-AX-30106; 210311-FTK-MSCP-XX-DR-AX-30105; 210311-FTK-MSCP-XX-DR-AX-30104; 210311-FTK-MSCP-XX-DR-AX-30103; 210311-FTK-MSCP-XX-DR-AX-30102; 210311-FTK-MSCP-XX-DR-AX-30101; 210311-FTK-MSCP-XX-DR-AX-30100; 210311-FTK-MSCP-XX-DR-AUTHOR-90603; 210311-FTK-MSCP-XX-DR-AX-90602; 210311-FTK-MSCP-XX-DR-AX-90601; 210311-FTK-MSCP-XX-DR-AX-90102; 210311-FTK-MSCP-XX-DR-AX-90101; 210311-FTK-MSCP-XX-DR-AX-90100; Arbtech AIA 01; Arbtech TPP 01;

Applicant: Stevenage Borough Council

Date Valid: 26 November 2021

Recommendation: GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION.



1. SITE DESCRIPTION

- 1.1 The site is located on the western side of Lytton Way, close to its roundabout junction with Fairlands Way. The site is bounded to the west by Stevenage Train Station and associated railway lines, as well as the footway and cycleway connection running north south from Six Hills Way to the Old Town. The Station entrance and stairwells are located to the south of the site, along with the station drop-off point, taxi drop-off and cycle parking facilities. There are also northbound bus stops located outside this part of the station. To the north is an area of landscaping beyond the large retaining wall which emphasises the ground level differences between the site and the highway beyond. The site is currently used as surface long stay car parking for the station. There are some mature trees within the site, with landscaping generally located around the perimeter of the site.
- 1.2 The area is close to the town centre and forms part of the wider town centre regeneration plans for Stevenage. The site is designated as part of a Major Opportunity Area (MOA) (Policy TC4) in the Local Plan, and also abuts two other MOA's at the Leisure Park to the west of the railway and

2. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

- 2.1 The site has historic records for a multi-storey car park (MSCP) dating from 2007 and 2010. Planning permission 07/00306/FP was granted permission for the erection of a MSCP in October 2007. The permission was subsequently extended by the then extension of time applications under planning permission 10/00449/EOT, approved in November 2010.

3. THE CURRENT APPLICATION

- 3.1 The application seeks planning permission for the erection of a six-storey MSCP with associated access road, disabled parking, electric vehicle charging, cycle parking, drainage and landscaping.

- 3.2 The site would be accessed utilising the existing surface car park entrance off Lytton Way. The existing barriers would be removed creating equal width entrance and exit lanes, with barriers located to the south of the site providing two lanes for queuing. Disabled parking would be provided at surface level external of the MSCP, with cycle parking accessed from the train station side of the site.
- 3.3 The application is being considered at Planning and Development Committee as it is a major application.

4. PUBLIC REPRESENTATIONS

4.1 The application has been publicised by neighbour letter, the placement of four site notices and an advert in the local paper. There has been 1 response received at the time of writing this report.

4.2 Objections –

I am a Fellow of the Institution of Highways and Transportation and a Stevenage resident for the last 38 years. For many years I commuted from Stevenage Station and used the northern car park. In the evening peak it is currently difficult to exit the car park when there are two exit lanes joining three lanes on Lytton Way. With this proposal there will only be one exit lane from the car park and only two lanes on Lytton Way to join. The applicant's own Transport Assessment indicates that the queues on Lytton Way will extend 282m back from the Fairlands Way roundabout, 175m metres beyond the exit from the car park. It is clear from this that cars leaving the car park will be trying to push into a slow moving queue of traffic and are likely to stop across the bus lane, not only blocking the movement of buses but creating a safety hazard. The applicant's modelling does not suggest that getting out of the car park will be a problem. This is because they have assessed the car park exit on its own and not considered the impact of adjacent junctions and queuing. The correct way of modelling this situation would be to use a micro simulation model like VISSIM.

As a Transport professional I feel I have to make these observations. I don't hold out much hope that the Council will take any notice particularly as they are the applicant and this proposal is a key element of the wider SG1 Masterplan.

4.3 Any further representations received will be reported at the committee meeting.

5. CONSULTATIONS

5.1 Hertfordshire County Council as Highways Authority

5.1.1 The Highway Authority note the submission of materials in support of the planning application, including the Transport Assessment (TA), dated November 2021. The Highway Authority notes the pre-application advice scoping meeting with the applicant's transport consultant, Markides Associates. The Highway Authority is content to note that the resulting TA is consistent with the scope agreed within the pre-application meeting held with the applicant's transport consultant.

5.1.2 The Highway Authority has considered the proposals for a MSCP to the north of Stevenage railway station. The proposals are also considered in the wider context of the Stevenage town centre regeneration where significant relevant changes are being made to town centre car parking. It is considered that the increase in trips owing to the proposals replacing the existing surface level car park with a larger MSCP do not have a material impact on the local highway network, in particular when considered against the net change in car parking numbers across the town centre.

5.1.3 The location of the proposed car park on the edge of the town centre is well placed to benefit from the excellent links on foot to both the Old and New Towns. In summary, the Highway Authority does not wish to restrict the grant of planning permission, subject to the aforementioned planning Conditions and Advisory Notes.

5.2 Wood Group UK Ltd (Drainage Consultants)

5.2.1 Drainage Strategy – Currently, there is a private surface water drainage network at the site that discharges to the Thames Water surface water network at the west of the site. A Drainage Survey Report is provided in Appendix D of the FRA. This report shows there should be a connection to a Thames Water sewer manhole '4251', though it is noted in the FRA that there are three existing manholes serving the site. However, the survey was abandoned due to mass root ingress (100% cross sectional area loss) in the drain, which was impassable by the CCTV inspection equipment. One of the assessments from the surveying company states 'Grade 5: Best practice suggests that this pipe is at a high risk of backing up or causing flooding.'

5.2.2 The drainage strategy proposal is based on attenuation and discharge into Thames Water surface water sewer network at a final restricted drainage rate of 2 l/s. Thames Water has confirmed that, subject to conditions, they have sufficient capacity, and no objections, to receiving this proposed rate. The restriction of the discharge rate to 2 l/s would provide a betterment to the existing situation which is estimated by the applicant to be an unrestricted rate (modified rational method, 15 min winter event estimates 1 in 1 year = 36.1 l/s, 1 in 30 year = 121.9 l/s and 1 in 100 year = 188.9 l/s). The HR Wallingford UK SUDS tool, Qbar estimate for the site is 0.75 l/s, the 1 in 1 year is 0.64 l/s and a 1 in 100 year of 2.39 l/s.

5.2.3 The proposals are to replace much of the existing, private, drainage network within the site. Water will be collected from the roof, as well as the internal drainage of 'dripped flows from each floor. The collected flows will be routed through a catchpit, for sediment control and a by-pass petrol interceptor before entering attenuation crates/tanks beneath the car park. A 'Quick Storage Estimate' calculation has been performed using MicroDrainage, for the 1 in 100 year return period rainfall event with 40% climate change allowance, using a controlled release rate of 2 l/s to estimate a requirement for a total attenuation volume of 423m³. A maintenance schedule has been outlined which is based on CIRIA SuDS guidance.

5.2.4 The drainage strategy considered both discharge of the runoff via infiltration and to a watercourse, but both are deemed not possible. Firstly, infiltration is discounted due to a historic BGS borehole record for the site identifying a 7m thick layer of brown clay. Secondly, the nearest watercourse, the Langley Brook, is identified as being 1.7 km from the site. Therefore, discharge to a sewer is deemed the most practical solution.

5.2.5 It is noted, however, that a geo-environmental site assessment has been undertaken, which included a borehole and five window samples across the site (See Figure 2 of the geo-environmental report for locations). The results of these surveys (Appendix F, page 5 of part 4 of the geo-environmental report) indicate that the ground under the site consists of approximately 0.4m of made ground on top of glaciofluvial deposits. The glaciofluvial deposits consists of sand, gravels and clay. Within the borehole a falling head test was also undertaken that demonstrates that infiltration is likely to be an option for the disposal of runoff.

5.2.6 The Drainage Strategy in Appendix I consists of annotated CAD drawing, which shows the collection network to be established as the car park which is routed to a subsurface tank. There are several annotations on the drawing that state:

- 'Existing connection to Thames Water network to be maintained.'
- 'Existing manhole and outgoing pipe to be repaired or replaced as required.'

- 'All petrol interceptors to be fitted with oil level alarms and to terminate in customer services or staff reception (to be agreed with architect/client). All interceptors to be vented.'

5.2.7 Based on the review of the proposal set out in the FRA/DS we recommend conditions to the Local Planning Authority, should planning permission be granted.

5.3 Network Rail

5.3.1 Network Rail own, operate and develop Britain's railway infrastructure. Our role is to deliver a safe and reliable railway. All consultations are assessed with the safety of the operational railway in mind and responded to on this basis. Following assessment of the details provided to support the above application, Network Rail has no objection in principle to the development, but below are some requirements which must be met,

Former Railway Land

5.3.2 This site may have been former railway land. It is incumbent upon the applicant to investigate all the covenants and understand any restrictions relating to the site which may take precedence over planning conditions. Please note that the comments contained in this response to the council do not constitute formal agreement of any existing covenants.

Works in Proximity to the Operational Railway Environment

5.3.3 Development Construction Phase and Asset Protection -
Due to the proximity of the proposed development to the operational railway boundary, it will be imperative that the developer liaise with our Asset Protection Team (contact details below) prior to any work taking place on site to ensure that the development can be undertaken safely and without impact to operational railway safety. Details to be discussed and agreed will include construction methodology, earthworks and excavations, use of crane, plant and machinery, drainage and boundary treatments. It may be necessary for the developer to enter into a Basic Asset Protection Agreement (BAPA) with Network Rail to ensure the safety of the operational railway during these works.

Boundary Treatments, Landscaping and Lighting

5.3.4 Lighting -
Where lighting is to be erected adjacent to the operational railway, the potential for train drivers to be dazzled must be eliminated. In addition, the location and colour of lights must not give rise to the potential for confusion with the signalling arrangements on the railway.

Additional Requirements

5.3.5 Glint and Glare -
Details of any reflective surfaces such as glazing or metal proposed in the construction of the car park should be provided in order that we may ascertain the effect the proposal will have on the operation of the adjacent railway particularly in terms of signal sighting and driver distraction. Glare from reflective surfaces can dazzle and distract train drivers and conflict with railway signals. The applicant should supply further details on this point before we can comment further.

5.4 SBC Arboricultural Manager

5.4.1 No comments received at the time of drafting this report.

5.5 Environmental Health

5.5.1 No comments received at the time of drafting this report.

5.6 Stevenage Borough Council Planning Policy

5.6.1 No comments received at the time of drafting this report.

5.7 Stevenage Borough Council Car Parks Department

5.7.1 No comments received at the time of drafting this report.

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 and 2019 versions 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

The PPG contains guidance supplementing the NPPF and with which Members are fully familiar. The PPG is a material consideration to be taken into account together with the National Design Guide (2019) which has the same status as the PPG.

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

Policy SP1: Presumption for Sustainable Development;
Policy SP2: Sustainable Development in Stevenage;
Policy SP3: A Strong, Competitive Economy;
Policy SP5: Infrastructure;
Policy SP6: Sustainable Transport;
Policy SP8: Good Design;
Policy SP11: Climate Change, Flooding and Pollution;
Policy GD1: High Quality Design;

Policy TC4: Station Gateway MOA;
Policy IT4: Transport Assessments and Travel Plans;
Policy IT5: Parking and Access;
Policy IT6: Sustainable Transport;
Policy IT8: Public Parking Provision;
Policy FP1: Climate Change;
Policy FP2: Flood Risk in FZ1;
Policy FP7: Pollution

6.5 Supplementary Planning Documents

Parking Provision and Sustainable Transport SPD (2020)
Developer Contributions SPD (March 2021)
Impact of Development on Biodiversity SPD (March 2021)

6.6 Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

Stevenage Borough Council adopted a Community Infrastructure Levy Charging Schedule in 2020. This allows the Council to collect a levy to fund infrastructure projects based on the type, location and floorspace of a development. The proposal would fall within 'all other development' of the respective charging schedule table. This would mean the scheme is liable for CIL but would not be required to pay monies as the charge is set at £0 per square metre.

7. APPRAISAL

7.1.1 The main issues for consideration in the determination of this application are its acceptability in land use policy terms, CIL and S106, design, layout and impact on the character and appearance of the area, impact on the amenity of neighbouring properties, impact on the railway network, impact on the highway network, access, parking, drainage and flooding, trees, landscaping, biodiversity and contamination.

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

7.2 Land Use Policy Considerations

7.2.1 The provision of a multi-storey car park (MSCP) is a key criterion of Local Plan Policy TC4 for the Town Centre Station Major Opportunity Area (MOA). The redevelopment of the train station area is key for the long term sustainability, vitality and strong economy of Stevenage. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)(July 2021) is clear in its aim to build a strong and competitive economy. Paragraph 81 states that Local Authorities should do this by creating conditions, in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt, with significant weight being given to the need to support economic growth and productivity. Furthermore, when looking at town centre vitality, Paragraph 86 of the NPPF states that 'planning policies and decisions should support the role that town centres play at the heart of local communities, by taking a positive approach to their growth, management and adaptation'.

7.2.2 It is appreciated that the provision of a MSCP will not specifically meet these criterions. However, the Local Plan clearly outlines the objectives of the Station MOA as a whole (including a new station building and entrance, reconfiguring Lytton Way and seeing the demolition of the Arts and Leisure Centre) to allow for better connections from the train station in to the town centre, which is currently completely segregated by Lytton Way and the Arts and Leisure Centre.

- 7.2.3 Furthermore, the existing arrangements of surface level car parks squeezed between Lytton Way, the railway line and the Police Station tot eh north of Lytton Way, and the train station itself should be addressed to provide a more welcoming sight for patrons entering and leaving Stevenage by train. Policy TC4 states that planning permission will be granted for –
- A regenerated train station;
 - New bus station;
 - High-density Use Class C3 residential units;
 - New multi-storey or basement car parking;
 - New Use Class B1 office premises;
 - A new Use Class C1 hotel; and
 - New Use Class A1 and Use Class A3 restaurant and café uses.
- 7.2.4 The provision of a MSCP in this allocated station location will provide a key component of the MOA and is therefore considered to accord with the policy and is considered acceptable in principle.

7.3 CIL and S106

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

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

As a major development the scheme would be liable for CIL. However, no payment is considered to be required as the proposal falls in to the all other development category which has a rate of £0 per square metre of floorspace.

- 7.3.2 In March of this year the Council adopted their Developer Contributions SPD to set out the Council’s approach to the use of S106 agreements to secure developer contributions from new developments. One of the requirements of the SPD seeks developers of major sites to enter into a S106 to provide a Local Employment Strategy, attempting to employ local residents and provide apprenticeship opportunities. Where this is not possible, the SPD requires that the developer provide a financial contribution in lieu of not achieving either or both targets set out in the SPD. The applicant has agreed to enter into a S.106 agreement to secure a Local Employment Strategy for this development.

7.4 Design, Layout and impact on the character and appearance of the area

Policy background

- 7.4.1 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”.

7.4.2 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.

7.4.3 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”.

7.4.4 Paragraph 132 of the NPPF states that applicants “should work closely with those affected by their proposals to evolve designs that take into account of the views of the community. Applications that can demonstrate early, proactive and effective engagement with the community should be looked on more favourably than those that cannot”.

7.4.5 Policy SP8 of the adopted Local Plan (2019) requires new development to achieve the highest standards of design and sustainability which can deliver substantial improvements to the image and quality of the town’s built fabric. Policy GD1 of the Local Plan generally requires all forms of development to meet a high standard of design which includes form of built development, elevational treatment and materials along with how the development would integrate with the urban fabric, its relationship between buildings, landscape design and relevant aspects of sustainable design.

7.4.6 The National Design Guide (2019) which was published by National Government is a material consideration in the determination of planning applications. It sets out that Buildings are an important component of places and proposals for built development are a focus of the development management system. However, good design involves careful attention to other important components of places. These include:

- the context for places and buildings;
- hard and soft landscape;
- technical infrastructure – transport, utilities, services such as drainage; and
- social infrastructure – social, commercial, leisure uses and activities.

7.4.7 A well-designed place is unlikely to be achieved by focusing only on the appearance, materials and detailing of buildings. It comes about through making the right choices at all levels, including:

- the layout;
- the form and scale of buildings;
- their appearance;
- landscape;
- materials; and
- their detailing.

7.4.8 The Guide further iterates that all developments are made up of these components put together in a particular way. As such, the choices made in the design process contribute towards achieving the ten characteristics and shape the character of a place. For reference, these ten characteristics are as follows:-

- Context – enhances the surroundings;
- Identity – attractive and distinctive;
- Built form – a coherent pattern of built form;
- Movement – accessible and easy to move around;
- Nature – enhanced and optimised;
- Public spaces – safe, social and inclusive;
- Uses – mixed and integrated;
- Homes and buildings – functional, healthy and sustainable;
- Resources – efficient and resilient;
- Lifespan – made to last.

Proposal

7.4.9 The proposed site layout includes the utilisation of the existing single vehicle access slightly south of the centre of the eastern boundary. Vehicles would enter the site and turn immediately left (south) where two lanes run parallel to two barriers. Vehicles would then make a 180 degree turn to head northwards towards the MSCP, with cycle parking running the length of the southern boundary. Disabled bays are located on the northerly approach to the MSCP, with motorised two wheel vehicle parking outside of the MSCP in this surface level parking area also. The southern elevation of the MSCP includes both the vehicle entrance and exit's, with a tower in the south western corner providing lift and stairwell access for pedestrians. Pedestrian access in the form of a stairwell only is provided in the north eastern corner of the building.

7.4.10 The MSCP itself would be six storeys in height with the top level having an elevation height of approximately 17.5m. The lift shaft would have a height of approximately 19.1m in the south western corner of the building only. The external appearance of the buildings would incorporate both different metallic finishes on the main MSCP elevations, with the south western and north eastern pedestrian accesses being finished in golden coloured precast concrete panels, utilising both a grooved texture and smooth finish.

7.4.11 The design context of the main eastern and western elevations seeks to re-create the famous car park in Liverpool that depicts a famous picture of screaming The Beatles fans. This image is created using punctuated steel, with differing sized holes within the metal, and using lighter and darker shades of steel across the elevation. The effect from further away is that of a picture. The design has come about after significant consultation by the Council's Regeneration Team with Senior members and the Council's Leader.

7.4.12 The images to be portrayed on the western elevation showcase Stevenage's standing in the historic Mars landings, and the production of such equipment in the Stevenage offices of Airbus and other world renown businesses resident in the town. These would be seen from anyone passing through the town on the train, and from users of the train station, Leisure Park and industrial units and offices off Fulton Close. The eastern elevation which faces and can be seen from the Tesco on the eastern side of Lytton Way would show the town's motto 'The heart of a town lies in its people'.

7.4.13 The two 'end' elevations facing south and north would be finished with a perforated aluminium and expanded mesh panels creating a 3D triangular and diamond pattern. This creates texture, form and visual interest. A MSCP has a very specific purpose and it can be difficult to create visually attractive buildings, given their nature, scale and typically prominent positions. The proposed design is considered acceptable and with the use of varying materials and finishes the building is deemed to be of a high quality. The Design and Access

Statement submitted shows the design evolution of the MSCP and its context and impact on the setting of the wider area.

- 7.4.14 Whilst there are no buildings of this size within close proximity of the site, it is recognised that this area of Stevenage is characterised by a variety of larger buildings, including the Leisure Park to the south west, the offices and units on Fulton Close, the Train Station building, the Police Station to the south, residential high rise flats to the north of Fairlands Way and Lytton Way, The Tesco Superstore to the east on the opposite side of Lytton Way, and the Arts and Leisure Centre also on the eastern side of Lytton Way.
- 7.4.15 Subsequently, whilst the six storey building is going to have a significant visual impact on the site, especially given its current surface level appearance, the impact is not considered to be detrimental such that a refusal is warranted. Moreover, the scheme meets a key policy requirement for the Station Gateway as identified in the adopted Local Plan.

7.5 Impact on the Amenity of Neighbouring Properties

- 7.5.1 The only nearby building that would be impacted by the proposed development is the Train Station itself. This includes the covered concourse leading from the main station entrance, waiting areas and café offering towards the bridge connection to the east of Lytton Way and the Arts and Leisure Centre. The MSCP is of sufficient distance from the train station that it would not adversely impact its users.

7.6 Impact on the Railway Network

- 7.6.1 The site is separated from the railway line and associated platforms at Stevenage Train Station by the footway/cycleway that runs north/south to the subways at Fairlands Way and Six Hills Way. Whilst not physically adjacent Network Rail land, they have been consulted on the application and have provided comments in return. They raise no objection in principle subject to the imposition of conditions relating to a Development Construction Phase and Asset Protection to ensure adequate consideration has been given to construction methodology, earthworks and excavations, use of crane, plant and machinery, drainage and boundary treatments.
- 7.6.2 Furthermore, conditions have been requested relating to lighting and materials to ensure the proposal does not cause a potential distraction to drivers through glint and glare, dazzling the drivers. These conditions are considered to be reasonable and should be imposed if members are minded to approve the application.

7.7 Impact on the Highway Network and Access

- 7.7.1 Paragraph 110 of the NPPF sets out four points by which applications should ensure compliance. These are –
- a) appropriate opportunities to promote sustainable transport modes can be – or have been – taken up, given the type of development and its location;
 - b) safe and suitable access to the site can be achieved for all users;
 - c) the design of streets, parking areas, other transport elements and the content of associated standards reflects current national guidance, including the National Design Guide and the National Model Design Code; and
 - d) any significant impacts from the development on the transport network (in terms of capacity and congestion), or on highway safety, can be cost effectively mitigated to an acceptable degree.
- 7.7.2 The NPPF follows up these points in Paragraph 111 by stating that ‘development should only be prevented or refused on highway grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe.’

7.7.3 The proposal would utilise the existing 'in' 'out' access off Lytton Way to the north of the train station drop off and taxi area. The TA does acknowledge the planned wider highway works in this area, including further works agreed as part of the new bus interchange being constructed on the eastern side, and southbound side of Lytton Way.

7.7.4 Works that will be impacted by the proposed development are the agreed alterations to the bus lane, including a bus gate. The TA has shown these changes in its modelled plans and the bus lane proposals are fully considered when establishing the likely impact of the MSCP development on nearby junctions.

Trip Generation

7.7.5 The TA presents a clear methodology for assessing the trip generation of the proposed car park, including examination of existing survey data and car parking which is being displaced as part of the SG1 Masterplan and bus station proposals in order to examine the overall impact of the proposed MSCP. The resulting assessment work considers the impact of the MSCP and examines the changes to the other town centre car parks. It is noted that the proposed 626 space MSCP is designed to replace the existing 339 space surface level car park, an increase of 287 car parking spaces.

The TA presents the trip generation exercise, as summarised below:

Table 3.1 Existing Car Park Arrivals and Departures

	Arrivals	Departures	Peak Occupancy
Weekday			
07:00-08:00	124	0	304 (90%)
08:00-09:00	64	3	
17:00-18:00	15	57	
18:00-19:00	14	71	
Saturday			
08:00-09:00	2	3	2

Table 6.1 Proposed MSCP Rail Commuter-based Trip Generation - Weekday

Time	Arrivals	Departures	Total
07:00-08:00	124	3	127
08:00-09:00	64	0	64
17:00-18:00	15	57	72
18:00-19:00	14	71	85
Daily	386	382	768

Table 6.2 Town Centre Car Park Trip Generation Transfer - Weekday

Time	Arrivals	Departures	Total
07:00-08:00	94	4	98
08:00-09:00	125	8	133
17:00-18:00	25	90	115
18:00-19:00	67	65	132
Daily	523	541	1,064

Table 6.3 Proposed MSCP Total Trip Generation - Weekday

Time	Arrivals	Departures	Total
07:00-08:00	218	7	225
08:00-09:00	189	8	197
17:00-18:00	40	147	187
18:00-19:00	81	136	217
Daily	909	923	1,832

7.7.6 The local highway authority has noted that from surveys conducted in July 2021 that the utilisation of the existing car park remains below pre-pandemic levels, and as such, survey data taken before the pandemic has been used to form the base of the future demand of the car park. The displacement of car parking from other town centre car parks (that are being closed), has been added to these figures and the methodology for attributing a transfer of car parking trips is satisfactory. In summary, the Highway Authority is content to accept the trip generation. The consultant's exercise to forecast future demand at the car park, both using existing (pre-pandemic) demand and examining the impact of trips displaced from other town centre car parks (to be closed) is reasonable.

Junction Modelling

7.7.7 As Table 7.2 below notes, a number of car parks are being removed with the regeneration proposals, including car parking accessed from the southbound Lytton Way carriageway.

Table 7.2 Peak Hour Demand of Car Parks to be Removed with Regeneration

Car Park	Parking Provision to be removed	AM Peak (08:00-09:00)				PM Peak (17:00-18:00)			
		Arrivals		Departures		Arrivals		Departures	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Southgate	211	70	39%	10	91%	2	6%	63	49%
Swingate South	89	42	23%	0	0%	15	43%	27	21%
Swingate	13	9	-	4	-	34	-	35	-
Danesgate	76	34	19%	0	0%	4	11%	19	15%
Leisure Centre	90	33	18%	0	9%	14	40%	20	16%
Total² (Excl. Swingate)	479	179	100%	11	100%	35	100%	129	100%

7.7.8 The proposals have been considered in the context of the wider Masterplan proposals for SG1 in terms of the changes in overall parking numbers and the attendant effect on the local highway network. It is noted that for both the new bus interchange (accessed from Lytton Way) and the SG1 Masterplan proposals that extensive modelling work was undertaken modelling the Stevenage town centre area. The local highway authority further notes that the west side of Lytton Way is characterised by large areas of car parking. The redistribution of some car parking trips, for example, from car parks (formally) accessed from the eastern side of Lytton Way such as Swingate, Danesgate and the Leisure Centre to the proposed MSCP is likely to have little material effect on the local highway network, including on existing travel patterns in terms of car park usage.

Pedestrian Access

7.7.9 There is no footway on the Lytton Way site frontage and at the southern edge of the car park; there is currently an area of footway which connects into the railway station. Drawing number 014-FTK-MSCP-XX-SK-A-9040-P0 contained within the TA illustrates the proposed pedestrian link to the south of the site into the railway station. It is noted that to achieve a zebra crossing from the development site into the railway station will rely upon third party land outside of the public highway. Some changes will need to be made to the current arrangements within the Network Rail (Stevenage railway station) car park forecourt, such as the location of one of the cycle parking stores. The Highway Authority seeks further understanding on how pedestrian access may be achieved for persons wishing to access the footpath/cycleway which runs parallel to the railway line. As noted within the TA document, the car park is not intended for the exclusive usage of rail commuters, and some users may wish, for example, to use the footpath/cycleway to access the Old Town. It is noted that the footpath/cycleway running parallel to the proposed MSCP and railway forms a part of the highway network maintainable at public expense. A condition is proposed to be imposed to seek this information.

Car Park Management Plan

7.7.10 In keeping with other significant planning applications within the town centre, including the new bus interchange and the SG1 Masterplan, the local highway authority has recommended the inclusion of a Car Park Management Plan through imposition of a condition on any approval. This shall seek to coordinate the usage of the proposed MSCP with the other car parks available within the town centre. The highway officer also notes that the plan should present a plan to inform the public of changes to the existing parking arrangements during the construction period and direct users to alternative car parking facilities.

Construction

7.7.11 The local highway authority has recommended the imposition of a planning Condition requiring the provision of a Construction Traffic Management Plan, taking account of the changes made to Lytton Way as a result of the bus station planning application and ensuring that the proposals do not prejudice this route in any way, including the consideration of any necessary traffic management measures. The Highway Authority further notes on the site's western frontage the presence of the footpath/cycleway (forming a part of the public highway), and structures including a retaining wall (given the level difference between the existing surface level car park and footpath/cycleway). The document should seek to ensure that any necessary works that could be undertaken from this side are fully considered, including the necessary investigation of potential highway structures such as the retaining wall. The proposals should also seek to ensure that the existing route may continue to be facilitated safely.

7.8 Parking

7.8.1 The MSCP proposes a total of 626 parking spaces, including disabled spaces. The Council's adopted Parking Standards and Sustainable Transport Supplementary Planning Document

was adopted in September 2020 and sets out the Council's strategy for the promotion of sustainable modes of transport. As such many developments, predominantly in the town centre should seek to reduce parking numbers.

- 7.8.2 Clearly, the provision of a MSCP goes against this ethos. However, the Local Plan clearly outlines the need for a better car parking provision at the train station where people can continue their journeys in a sustainable fashion, either on the train, or by foot in to the town centre. The MSCP proposal also allows for non-car modes of transport including cycling, motorised two wheelers, and close proximity access to direct bus links throughout the Borough.
- 7.8.3 Table 5 within the SPD clarifies the provision required of non-residential uses. For Rail Stations the SPD advises that each case is assessed on its own merits. There is not therefore a set provision, as one might find with residential, retail or commercial uses. The application has been supported by a Transport Assessment which has demonstrated the extent of public parking provision in the town centre, and, has also shown the occupancy of the existing car park from February 2020 prior to the main extent of lockdowns as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. This showed the main use of the car park by commuters, with a 90% occupancy of the car park on weekdays.
- 7.8.4 The proposed MSCP replaces the existing 339 space surface level car park. The increased number of spaces to be provided takes account of the closure of nearby public surface level car parks which form part of the wider Town Centre regeneration. It is envisaged that the proposed MSCP will be used by more than just commuters, allowing for parking for town centre users, especially when the improved pedestrian connections to the town centre come forward as per the Local Plan aims and as identified in the planning permission for the Bus Interchange which is under construction.
- 7.8.5 Of the 626 spaces proposed, 30 are dedicated disabled bays which accords with the 5% provision required under the SPD. Furthermore, some of these disabled spaces are dedicated electric vehicle charging points (EVCP), making up some of the required 20% of EVCP required within the SPD. It is disappointing that the TA provided fails to acknowledge the Council's adopted SPD and in particular the provision of EVCP within the scheme. However, notwithstanding this overlook, the proposed floor plans clearly show the intent to provide EVCP on the ground, first and second floors, with a total of 118 spaces within the MSCP marked as being EVCP's. This provision is 8 spaces short of a policy compliant 125.2 spaces. There is obviously allowance within the MSCP to increase the number of EVCP spaces to meet the 20% requirement, and thus it is not considered a reason to refuse the application.
- 7.8.6 The SPD also includes details on the provision of spaces for powered two-wheeler vehicles such as motorbikes and mopeds. The SPD states that developers should be expected to allow for around 5% of the total stock of publicly accessible vehicle parking spaces to be for motorcycle use. The proposal includes the provision of 25 motorcycle spaces which is just under the 5% advisement, but is considered acceptable in this case, complementing the existing provision at the train station.
- 7.8.7 In terms of cycle parking there is no specified provision for a MSCP. The proposal includes 87 standard cycle parking spaces, with non-standard spaces also proposed for cycles such as cargo cycles, trikes, etc. The cycle parking provision does not form part of the MSCP itself and would be located on the southern side of the site, accessed from the existing drop-off/taxi area at the station, allowing for direct access on the nearby cycleway which is considered more acceptable for connectivity purposes.

7.9 Drainage

- 7.9.1 Following the service announcement of the Lead Local Flood Authority that they are currently not providing a consultation service because of extreme resourcing issues and severe workload backlogs, the Council have appointed Wood Group UK Ltd to undertake drainage and flooding assessments of planning applications on the Council's behalf.
- 7.9.2 The proposed development seeks to utilise attenuation and discharge into an existing Thames Water sewer at a rate of 2 l/s. Agreement to this has been given by Thames Water subject to the imposition of conditions. This is noted in the Drainage Assessment submitted. The assessment carried out by Woods examines the possibility of infiltration, stating this was possibly ruled out too quickly as a possible means of drainage, and whilst accepting that the attenuation and discharge as a means of drainage is acceptable, and would sufficiently allow for drainage of the proposal, Woods do recommend that further consideration of infiltration is given by the applicant.
- 7.9.3 The LPA have been advised that conditions should be imposed if it is minded to grant permission for the proposed MSCP. These conditions would include seeking further details of the consideration of infiltration; detailed design of surface water run-off; and adoption and maintenance.

7.10 Trees, Landscaping and Biodiversity

- 7.10.1 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
- 7.10.2 Policy NH5 of the adopted Local Plan (2019) states that development proposals will be expected to protect and retain individual trees within the development site and should include new planting where appropriate.
- 7.10.3 The application site clearly has limited biodiversity as existing due to its use as a surface level car park. The boundaries are largely marked with small trees and landscaping, with more notable mature trees located to the north of the existing car park. These trees are sited in an area of the car park that does not form part of this application site, and thus are not affected by the proposal. There are some smaller trees which are currently located on small kerbed areas and to the front of the site adjacent Lytton Way which are marked as being removed, as well as some groups of trees and landscaping on the western boundary. The application has been supported by an Ecology Report and Arboricultural Tree Survey and Method Statement.

- 7.10.4 The Ecology Report does not undertake a Defra Matrix examination of the existing Biodiversity due to the site being identified as previously developed land where there would not be significant loss of habitat. It does, however, assess the likely impact on wildlife at the site, including making an assessment on bat roosting and bird nesting. The likelihood of bat roosting is noted as poor, with bird nesting possible but low. It is proposed to include soft landscaping as part of the development, to provide an offset to the trees to be removed. Furthermore as a Council owned and led scheme the development will be subject to the provision of a 3 to 1 replanting ratio, to be agreed and implemented by the Council's Tree Manager.
- 7.10.5 Comments from the Council's Tree Manager had not been received at the time of drafting this report. However, with a suitable landscaping plan to be approved, it is considered the proposal would not result in an unacceptable Biodiversity and Ecological development, subject to suitably worded conditions.

7.11 Sustainability and Climate Change

- 7.11.1 The application has been supported by a Design and Access Statement which considers sustainability and technology. The MSCP has been designed to include photo-voltaic solar panels on the roofs of the cores and above the centre ramp on the top deck. The electricity generated is for use within the MSCP, contributing towards the demand of the lighting and the EVCP facilities. Generated power can also be stored in the on-site secure battery room, to be used out of daylight hours or when demand exceeds live supply from the panels.
- 7.11.2 The sustainability and technology design principles continue to elaborate and propose the following further measures –
- Low energy LED lighting with motion sensors;
 - Natural ventilation;
 - Modular construction system including steel frame circa. 15% lower embodied carbon than a concrete frame structure;
 - Future reuse and recycling of a modular, lean frame system.
- 7.11.3 Given the very simple use of the building, and the absence of heating, mechanical ventilation or similar, the proposed measures to alleviate carbon production and reduce the developments impact on climate change are considered to be acceptable.

7.12 Contaminated Land

- 7.12.1 The whole of the site is previously developed and has been used for the purposes of parking vehicles. There is therefore some potential for contamination from petrol and diesel, however small. The application has been accompanied by Geo-environmental Assessments which have been considered. The drainage details include the provision of petrol filters to protect groundwater.
- 7.12.2 The results of the site investigation contained in the assessment indicate that relevant contaminant linkages are absent based on laboratory testing. Therefore, the site is suitable for the end purpose. The assessment continues to advise that if unforeseen contamination be encountered during development that relevant measures are undertaken through consultation with a specialist. Appropriate conditions can be imposed to ensure this occurs should contamination be found during the construction phase of the development with suitable remediation measures to be agreed in writing by the Council.

7.13 Human Rights and Equalities

- 7.13.1 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.

- 7.13.2 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. 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
- 7.13.3 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.
- 7.13.4 It is not considered the proposed development would impact upon the protected characteristics under the Equality Act. This is because the proposal actively provides disabled parking positioned in the main car parks of each unit, in addition, buildings will have level access for wheel chair users as well as internal lifts, etc.

8. CONCLUSIONS

- 8.1 The provision of a MSCP in this station location is in accordance with adopted policy. The scale, design and layout of the MSCP is considered to be of high quality and whilst visually intrusive in the landscape is not detrimental to the character and appearance of the area. The proposed parking arrangements meet the requirements as set out in the Parking Standards SPD for disabled parking, EVCP, motorised two wheelers, and standard and non-standard cycle parking. Other matters pertaining to drainage, landscaping and impact on the local highway have all been found to be acceptable.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.1 That planning permission be GRANTED subject to the signing of a S106 Agreement in respect of the following –
- Local employment and apprenticeships;
 - S278 highway works.

And subject to the following conditions, with any amendments to the head of terms and/or conditions listed in this report, be delegated to the Assistant Director of Planning and Regulation:-

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

210311-FTK-MSCP-XX-DR-AX-30604; 210311-FTK-MSCP-XX-DR-AX-30603; 210311-FTK-MSCP-XX-DR-AX-30602; 210311-FTK-MSCP-XX-DR-AX-30601; 210311-FTK-MSCP-XX-DR-AX-30504; 210311-FTK-MSCP-XX-DR-AX-30503; 210311-FTK-MSCP-XX-DR-AX-30502; 210311-FTK-MSCP-XX-DR-AX-30501; 210311-FTK-MSCP-XX-DR-AX-30106; 210311-FTK-MSCP-XX-DR-AX-30105; 210311-FTK-MSCP-XX-DR-AX-30104; 210311-FTK-MSCP-XX-DR-AX-30103; 210311-FTK-MSCP-XX-DR-AX-30102; 210311-FTK-MSCP-XX-DR-AX-30101; 210311-FTK-MSCP-XX-DR-AX-30100; 210311-FTK-MSCP-XX-DR-AUTHOR-90603; 210311-FTK-MSCP-XX-DR-AX-90602; 210311-FTK-MSCP-XX-DR-AX-90601; 210311-FTK-MSCP-XX-DR-AX-90102; 210311-FTK-MSCP-XX-DR-AX-90101; 210311-FTK-MSCP-XX-DR-AX-90100; Arbtech AIA 01; Arbtech TPP 01.

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 (including site clearance) until a detailed Construction Management Plan (CMP) has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Thereafter the construction of the development shall only be carried out in accordance with the approved Plan. The Construction Management Plan shall include details of the following:

- a) Phasing of the development of the site, including all highway works;
- b) Construction vehicle numbers, type, routing;
- c) Traffic and pedestrian management requirements;
- d) Construction and storage compounds (including areas designated for car parking);
- e) Siting and details of wheel washing facilities;
- f) Cleaning of site entrances, site tracks and the adjacent public highway;
- g) Timing of construction activities to avoid school pick up/drop off times;
- h) Provision of sufficient on-site parking prior to commencement of construction activities;
- i) Hoarding, fencing, gates and any necessary footway closures;
- j) Demonstrate consultation with the Asset Protection Project Manager at Network Rail;
- k) Details of consultation and complaint management with local businesses and neighbours; and
- l) A Site Waste Management Plan (SWMP) including mechanisms to deal with environmental impacts such as air quality and dust control measures, noise and vibration restriction measures, light and odour and predicted and latterly actual waste arisings and how this is to be managed and where it is sent to.

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

- 4 No development shall take place until a detailed surface water drainage scheme has been prepared, submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme should consider infiltration as a means of discharge in accordance with BRE Digest 365.

REASON:- To prevent flooding by ensuring the satisfactory storage of and disposal of surface water from the site and to reduce the risk of flooding to the proposed development and future users.

5 No development shall take place until a final design of the drainage scheme for the site based on the principles set out in Condition 4, 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 before the development is occupied. The scheme shall include:

- Updated surface water drainage calculation and modelling for all rainfall events up to and including the 1 in 100 year plus climate change event, including infiltration options;
- If infiltration is demonstrated to be impractical, and the current proposal to discharge to sewer is maintained, demonstrate that there is sufficient gradient and self-cleansing velocities along the connecting pipe between the outfall/flow control structure at the attenuation tank and the connection to Thames Water's sewer, in accordance with the Sewers for Adoption guidance;
- Updated full detailed surface water drainage plan showing the proposed discharge point to Thames Water sewer, the location of the proposed SuDS features, the pipe runs, size and node numbers;
- Detailed engineering drawings of the proposed SuDS features including their, size, volume, depth and any inlet and outlet features including any connecting pipe runs, node numbers along with all corresponding detailed calculations/modelling;
- In case of informal flooding within the site this should be shown on a plan including extent and depth;
- Exceedance flow paths for surface water for events greater than the 1 in 100 year + climate change.

REASON:- To prevent flooding by ensuring the satisfactory storage of and disposal of surface water from the site and to reduce the risk of flooding to the proposed development and future users.

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

- Provision of complete set of as built drawings including the final drainage layout for site drainage network;
- Maintenance and operational activities for the lifetime of the development;
- 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.

7 No development shall take place until the developer shall has complied fully with the requirements of the Department for Transport's DMRB Standard BD 2: Technical Approval of Highway Structures. The Approval in Principle and Design and Check Certification, accompanied by full structural details, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. All works shall proceed in accordance with the details submitted and Construction Compliance certification and documentation submitted to the Local Planning Authority.

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

8 The multi-storey car park hereby approved shall be constructed in accordance with the materials and finishes as set out in Drawing numbers 210311-FTK-MSCP-XX-DR-AX-30501, 210311-FTK-MSCP-XX-DR-AX-30502, 210311-FTK-MSCP-XX-DR-AX-30503 and 210311-FTK-MSCP-XX-DR-AX-30504 to the satisfaction of and unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

REASON:- To ensure the development has an acceptable appearance.

9 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.

10 No development shall take place until details of any external lighting have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The details should ensure that there is no potential for train drivers to be dazzled by the location and colour of any proposed lighting at the site.

REASON:- To ensure the train drivers on the adjacent railway line and within Stevenage railway station do not become dazzled by any external lighting to the detriment of railway safety and the safety of users of the train station and trains passing through Stevenage railway station and in the interests of light pollution.

11 No development shall take place until details of any reflective surfaces such as glazing and/or metal proposed in the construction of the car park has been agreed by Network Rail to ensure that the proposal will not have a detrimental impact on the operation of the adjacent railway particularly in terms of signal sighting and driver distraction. The development shall thereafter be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

REASON:- To ensure the safety and operational needs and integrity of the railway.

12 Prior to the use of the development hereby permitted, the vehicular access shall be provided and thereafter retained at the position shown on the approved plan drawing number 210311-FTK-MSCP-00-DR-AX-30100 Rev P3. Arrangement shall be made for surface water drainage to be intercepted and disposed of separately so that it does not discharge from or onto the highway carriageway.

REASON:- To ensure satisfactory access into the site and avoid carriage of extraneous material or surface water from or onto the highway.

13 Prior to the commencement of the use hereby permitted, a visibility splay measuring 2.4m x 66m shall be provided to each side of the access where it meets the highway and such splays shall thereafter be maintained at all times free from any obstruction between 600mm and 2m above the level of the adjacent highway carriageway.

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

14 Prior to first occupation/use of the development, a Car Parking Management Plan relating to public car parking shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. It shall include the following:

- i. Details of car parking allocation and distribution;
- ii. Operational details, and integration with other Stevenage Borough Council managed car parks within the town centre area;
- iii. Scheme for signing car park and any real time capacity information system;
- iv. Provision for Electric Vehicle Charging Points (which will serve as dual charging points with the capacity) in accordance with the approved plans;
- v. Details of the infrastructure that will be provided as part of the development and subsequently, both within the site and off site as necessary, to enable the capacity of vehicle charging provision to be increased to an agreed figure in the future; and
- vi. Monitoring required of the Car Park Management Plan to be submitted to and approved in writing in accordance with a time frame to be agreed by the Local Planning Authority.

The Car Parking Management Plan shall be fully implemented before the development is first occupied or brought into use (and updated at stages to be agreed through the Masterplan

build out), in accordance with a timeframe agreed by the Local Planning Authority, and thereafter retained for this purpose.

REASON:- In the interests of highway safety and to ensure sufficient available on-site car parking and the provision of adequate electric vehicle charging points that meets the needs of occupiers of the proposed development and in the interests of encouraging the use of sustainable modes of transport.

- 15 Notwithstanding the details indicated on the approved drawings no on-site works above slab level shall commence until a detailed scheme for the offsite highway improvement works to include pedestrian access to the railway station and footpath/cycleway (on the site's western boundary), have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Prior to first use of the car park, the scheme(s) shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details.

REASON:- To ensure construction of a satisfactory development and that the highway improvement works are designed to an appropriate standard in the interest of highway safety and amenity.

- 16 Prior to the first occupation of the development hereby permitted full details of the secure and covered cycle parking stores shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Details shall also include how the stores are to be managed and maintained. The cycle stores shall thereafter be completed and ready for use in accordance with the approved details and thereafter retained for the sole use of cycle parking.

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

- 17 The development hereby approved shall be constructed in accordance with the measures to address adaptation to climate change as laid out in the Design and Access Statement to include the following:

- Low energy LED lighting with motion sensors;
- Natural ventilation;
- Modular construction system including steel frame circa.

These measures shall then be 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.

- 18 No development shall take place until a scheme of hard and soft landscaping has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall thereafter be completed in accordance with the approved plans.

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

- 19 All planting, seeding and turfing comprised in the approved landscaping details as agreed under condition 18 of this approval shall be carried out in the first planting and seeding seasons following the first occupation of the development hereby permitted or, the completion of the approved development whichever is the sooner.

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

- 20 All hard surfacing comprised in the approved landscaping details as specified in condition 19 of this approval shall be carried out prior to first occupation of the development hereby permitted or, the completion of the approved development, whichever is the sooner.

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

- 21 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.

- 22 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.
- 23 All areas of hedges, scrub or similar vegetation where birds may nest which are to be removed as part of the development, are to be cleared outside the bird-nesting season (March - August inclusive) or if clearance during the bird nesting season cannot be reasonably be avoided, a suitably qualified ecologist will check the areas to be removed immediately prior to clearance and advise whether nesting birds are present. If active nests are recorded, no vegetation clearance or other works that may disturb active nests shall proceed until all young have fledged the nest.
REASON:- Nesting birds are protected from disturbance under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (As amended).
- 24 Following removal of the identified trees in the Arboricultural Method Statement (AMS) and before any development commences, including any site clearance, all retained trees identified in the AMS shall be protected in accordance with the details as approved in the AMS. The protection measures shall be maintained until the conclusion of all site and building operations, unless otherwise agreed by the Local Planning Authority
REASON:- To ensure that the retained tree(s) are not damaged or otherwise adversely affected during site operations.
- 25 In the event that contamination is found at any time when carrying out the approved development that was not previously identified it must be reported in writing immediately to the Local Planning Authority. An investigation and risk assessment must be undertaken and where remediation is necessary a remediation scheme must be prepared in accordance with the requirements of condition 26 which is subject to the approval of the Local Planning Authority. Following completion of measures identified in the approved remediation scheme a verification report must be prepared, which is subject to the approval in writing of the Local Planning Authority in accordance with condition 27.
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.
- 26 In the event that contamination is found at any time when carrying out the approved development that was not previously identified, a detailed remediation scheme to bring the site to a condition suitable for the intended use by removing unacceptable risks to human health, buildings and other property and the natural and historic environment must be prepared, and is subject to the approval in writing of the Local Planning Authority. The scheme must include all works to be undertaken, proposed remediation objectives and remediation criteria, timetable of works and site management procedures. The scheme must ensure that the site will not qualify as contaminated land under Part 2A of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 in relation to the intended use of the land after remediation.
REASON:- To prevent harm to human health and pollution of the water environment in accordance with Government policy set out in the National Planning Policy Framework.

- 27 In the event that contamination is found at any time when carrying out the approved development that was not previously identified, as required under condition 25, the approved remediation scheme must be carried out in accordance with its terms prior to the commencement of development other than that required to carry out remediation, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The Local Planning Authority must be given two weeks written notification of commencement of the remediation scheme works. Following completion of measures identified in the approved remediation scheme, a verification report that demonstrates the effectiveness of the remediation carried out must be produced and is subject to the approval in writing of the Local Planning Authority.
REASON:- To prevent harm to human health and pollution of the water environment in accordance with Government policy set out in the National Planning Policy Framework.

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 lead to improvements to the scheme. The Council has therefore acted pro-actively in line with the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework (paragraph 38) and in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015.

INFORMATIVE

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 Hertfordshire County Council as Highways Authority

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

- 3 **Hertfordshire County Council as Highways Authority**
Parking and Storage of materials: The applicant is advised that all areas for parking, storage, and delivery of materials associated with the construction of this development should be provided within the site on land which is not public highway, and the use of such areas must not interfere with the public highway. If this is not possible, authorisation should be sought from the Highway Authority before construction works commence. Further information is available via the website: <https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/highways-roads-and-pavements/business-and-developer-information/development-management/highways-development-management.aspx> or by telephoning 0300 1234047.
- 4 **Hertfordshire County Council as Highways Authority**
Obstruction of public highway land: It is an offence under section 137 of the Highways Act 1980 for any person, without lawful authority or excuse, in any way to wilfully obstruct the free passage along a highway or public right of way. If this development is likely to result in the public highway or public right of way network becoming routinely blocked (fully or partly) the applicant must contact the Highway Authority to obtain their permission and requirements before construction works commence. Further information is available via the website: <http://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/transtreets/highways/> or by telephoning 0300 1234047.
- 5 **Hertfordshire County Council as Highways Authority**
Debris and deposits on the highway: It is an offence under section 148 of the Highways Act 1980 to deposit compost, dung or other material for dressing land, or any rubbish on a made up carriageway, or any or other debris on a highway to the interruption of any highway user. Section 149 of the same Act gives the Highway Authority powers to remove such material at the expense of the party responsible. Therefore, best practical means shall be taken at all times to ensure that all vehicles leaving the site during construction of the development and use thereafter are in a condition such as not to emit dust or deposit mud, slurry or other debris on the highway. Further information is available by telephoning 0300 1234047.
- 6 **Network Rail**
Fail Safe Use of Crane and Plant: All operations, including the use of cranes or other mechanical plant working adjacent to Network Rail's property, must at all times be carried out in a "fail safe" manner such that in the event of mishandling, collapse or failure, no materials or plant are capable of falling within 3.0m of the nearest rail of the adjacent railway line, or where the railway is electrified, within 3.0m of overhead electrical equipment or supports.
- With a development of a certain height that may/will require use of a crane, the developer must bear in mind the following. Crane usage adjacent to railway infrastructure is subject to stipulations on size, capacity etc. which needs to be agreed by the Asset Protection Project Manager prior to implementation.
- 7 **Network Rail**
Excavations/Earthworks: All excavations/ earthworks carried out in the vicinity of Network Rail property/ structures must be designed and executed such that no interference with the integrity of that property/ structure can occur. If temporary works compounds are to be located adjacent to the operational railway, these should be included in a method statement for approval by Network Rail. Prior to commencement of works, full details of excavations and earthworks to be carried out near the railway undertaker's boundary fence should be submitted for the approval of the Local Planning Authority acting in consultation with the railway undertaker and the works shall only be carried out in accordance with the approved details. Where development may affect the railway, consultation with the Asset Protection Project Manager should be undertaken. Network Rail will not accept any liability for any settlement, disturbance or damage caused to any development by failure of the railway infrastructure nor for any noise or vibration arising from

the normal use and/or maintenance of the operational railway. No right of support is given or can be claimed from Network Rail's infrastructure or railway land.

8 **Network Rail**

Security of Mutual Boundary: Security of the railway boundary will need to be maintained at all times. If the works require temporary or permanent alterations to the mutual boundary the applicant must contact Network Rail's Asset Protection Project Manager.

9 **Network Rail**

Demolition: Any demolition or refurbishment works must not be carried out on the development site that may endanger the safe operation of the railway, or the stability of the adjoining Network Rail structures. The demolition of buildings or other structures near to the operational railway infrastructure must be carried out in accordance with an agreed method statement. Approval of the method statement must be obtained from Network Rail's Asset Protection Project Manager before the development can commence.

10 **Network Rail**

Vibro-impact Machinery: Where vibro-compaction machinery is to be used in development, details of the use of such machinery and a method statement should be submitted for the approval of the Local Planning Authority acting in consultation with the railway undertaker prior to the commencement of works and the works shall only be carried out in accordance with the approved method statement.

11 **Network Rail**

Scaffolding: Any scaffold which is to be constructed within 10 metres of the railway boundary fence must be erected in such a manner that at no time will any poles over-sail the railway and protective netting around such scaffold must be installed.

12 **Network Rail**

Bridge Strikes: Applications that are likely to generate an increase in trips under railway bridges may be of concern to Network Rail where there is potential for an increase in 'Bridge strikes'. Vehicles hitting railway bridges cause significant disruption and delay to rail users. Consultation with the Asset Protection Project Manager is necessary to understand if there is a problem. If required there may be a need to fit bridge protection barriers which may be at the developer's expense.

13 **Network Rail**

Abnormal Loads: From the information supplied, it is not clear if any abnormal loads will be using routes that include any Network Rail assets (e.g. bridges and level crossings). We would have serious reservations if during the construction or operation of the site, abnormal loads will use routes that include Network Rail assets. Network Rail would request that the applicant contact our Asset Protection Project Manager to confirm that any proposed route is viable and to agree a strategy to protect our asset(s) from any potential damage caused by abnormal loads. I would also like to advise that where any damage, injury or delay to the rail network is caused by an abnormal load (related to the application site), the applicant or developer will incur full liability.

14 **Network Rail**

Two Metre Boundary: Consideration should be given to ensure that the construction and subsequent maintenance can be carried out to any proposed buildings or structures without adversely affecting the safety of, or encroaching upon Network Rail's adjacent land, and therefore all/any building should be situated at least 2 metres from Network Rail's boundary. This will allow construction and future maintenance to be carried out from the applicant's land, thus reducing the probability of provision and costs of railway look-out protection, supervision and other facilities necessary when working from or on railway land.

15 **Network Rail**

Encroachment: The developer/applicant must ensure that their proposal, both during construction, and after completion of works on site, does not affect the safety, operation or integrity of the operational railway, Network Rail and its infrastructure or undermine or damage or adversely affect any railway land and structures. There must be no physical encroachment of the proposal onto Network Rail land, no over-sailing into Network Rail airspace and no encroachment of foundations onto Network Rail land and soil. There must be no physical encroachment of any foundations onto Network Rail land. Any future maintenance must be conducted solely within the applicant's land ownership. Should the applicant require access to Network Rail land then must seek approval from the Network Rail Asset Protection Team. Any unauthorised access to Network Rail land or airspace is an act of trespass and we would remind the council that this is a criminal offence (**s55 British Transport Commission Act 1949**). Should the applicant be granted access to Network Rail land then they will be liable for all costs incurred in facilitating the proposal.

16 **Network Rail**

Access to the Railway: All roads, paths or ways providing access to any part of the railway undertaker's land shall be kept open at all times during and after the development.

10. **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 to 2031 adopted 2019.
3. Stevenage Borough Council Supplementary Planning Documents – Parking Provision adopted October 2020, Developer Contributions adopted March 2021, Impact of Development on Biodiversity adopted March 2021.
4. Responses to consultations with statutory undertakers and other interested parties referred to in this report.
5. Hertfordshire County Council's Local Transport Plan 4 adopted May 2018
6. Central Government advice contained in the National Planning Policy Framework July 2021 and Planning Policy Guidance March 2014.