

# Planning and Regulation

Head of Planning and Regulation: Zayd Al-Jawad

## APPENDIX H

Your Ref: Article 4  
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Date: 20 July 2022

Dear Sir/Madam,

### **Public consultation: Article 4 Direction relating to conversion of Class E(g)(i) (office) and Class E(g)(iii) (light industrial) to Class C3 (dwelling house)**

We would like you to have your say on a public consultation that begins today, 20 July 2022, about whether we should ask office and light industrial developers to apply for planning permission if they want to turn their employment premises into residential housing.

The consultation relates to the employment sites within Gunnels Wood and Pin Green Employment Areas that were previously subject to an Article 4 Direction which removed permitted development rights to convert offices and light industrial units to residential housing in Gunnels Wood and Pin Green. Because the Government have updated the Use Class Order, the old Article 4 Direction has become void and the Council has reviewed its approach and whilst we still believe that it is important to protect the employment areas from residential development, we think we can take a more targeted approach.

### **What will the Article 4 Direction do?**

Currently offices and light industrial units can be converted into residential housing without the need for planning permission; this is known as permitted development. This means the council has no power to ensure sufficient facilities are provided for the increased number of residents, or that residents don't impact on employment and vice versa.

An Article 4 Direction would take away these permitted development rights from the office and light industrial units and require a planning application to be submitted for all conversions of such buildings to residential housing.

### **Will this stop office and light industrial conversions to residential housing taking place?**

No. An Article 4 Direction would only require planning permission to be sought; it would not automatically allow the Council to refuse office and/or light industrial units

conversion applications without the appropriate consideration that we give every planning application

### **How can I have my say?**

Formal notification of the Direction, including a map defining the area covered, is enclosed. A copy of the Direction can also be viewed at:

- Stevenage Borough Council Offices in Danestrete;
- Stevenage Central Library at Southgate;
- Old Town Library at 38 High Street; and
- Council's website at [www.stevenage.gov.uk/](http://www.stevenage.gov.uk/).

Any view on the Article 4 Direction may be made from 20 July 2022 until 17 August 2022, via:

- our consultation portal at <https://forms.office.com/r/f43GmYRR6X>;
- by email to [planningpolicy@stevenage.gov.uk](mailto:planningpolicy@stevenage.gov.uk); or
- by post to Planning Policy Team, Stevenage Borough Council, Daneshill House, Danestrete, Stevenage, Hertfordshire, SG1 1HN.

### **What happens next?**

Any views will be used to inform Council's decision as to whether to confirm the Direction. If confirmed, the Article 4 Direction would come into force on 01 October 2022.

If you have any questions regarding this consultation please contact the Planning Policy team using the details above.

Yours faithfully



Deborah Coates  
Principal Planning Officer  
Stevenage Borough Council