

# Housing Development

## Assistant Director – Ash Ahmed

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Stevenage Borough Council  
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Contact: Ash Ahmed  
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Web:  
Date: 30<sup>th</sup> June 2023

Dear Ailsa,

### **RE: Community Provision at Shephall View - 22/00965/FPM**

I am writing in order to provide context and rationale for the proposed development. Particularly in relation to the proposed demolition of the redundant or temporarily occupied buildings on this site.

As developer, we have sought to involve the Council's responsible and authoritative departments in these proposals and these departments (Cooperative Neighbourhood Team and Finance & Estates) have led on discussions with the community groups since September 2021. The level of resources and time allocated to this task signals the importance to which Stevenage Borough Council takes this matter.

There are 3 separate buildings affected and these will be dealt with in turn. Two of the buildings are already closed to the public and are now vacant.

Firstly, we can confirm that Noah's Ark Nursery (providing support to 90 children on a full-time basis all year round) has relocated to alternative premises at Chells Park Pavilion on a commercial lease. Their original building was converted from a garage block and had become too small for their uses. Noah's Ark Nursery formally surrendered their lease on the 29 of June 2023.

Secondly, we can confirm that the Stevenage Sea Cadets group have relinquished their keys as of 31 March 2023 and the site is now closed for public use due to concerns over health and safety. The Sea Cadets are currently in the process of finalising the formal surrender of their lease, with their notice to vacate having expired on 31 March 2023. The building was in significant disrepair and in a dilapidated state. Appendix 1 details photographs regarding the condition of the building as part of a report commissioned on 7 August 2022.

The advertised hours of the Sea Cadets when they were in occupation of the building was a combined total of five hours a week over three nights of the week. Outside of these hours, the building was not readily available for public use. Given the number of alternative community buildings available for use by community groups and the limited usage that this asset experienced combined with the required cost of repairs the Estates department have deemed this to be an asset that is no longer needed.

Thirdly, we can confirm that 5<sup>th</sup> Scout Group, lease is set to be terminated on 31 August 2023 and the Council's Estates Department has confirmed that the building is in a state of disrepair. This is confirmed by a survey report dated 7 September 2022 found at Appendix 2. The current model of providing such premises on a peppercorn rent and expecting a group of volunteers to maintain it has resulted in the asset suffering disrepair and degradation. As a result, notice has been served

on this group that this building will be taken back by the Landlord. The advertised hours of the 5<sup>th</sup> Scout Group are three nights per week for approximately 2 hours per night, meaning a total of 6 hours per week. Outside of these hours, the building is not readily available for public use. The building is therefore considered surplus to requirements and beyond economic repair by the Council's Finance and Estates department.

Both the 5<sup>th</sup> Scout Group and the Stevenage Sea Cadets have been offered access to alternative locations. At present, both parties are considering an offer to share facilities at the Pin Green Play Centre, Hampson Park, Webb Rise, Stevenage, SG1 5QU. This venue is in many ways superior to the current venue enjoyed by the community group and accessible in terms of location being only a distance of one mile away from the current premises. Alongside this, work has been carried out to enhance the access that the Sea Cadets enjoy to Fairlands Valley Lake to improve the provision of one of its core activities.

It should be noted that if this venue (Pin Green Play Centre) is not considered desirable, the Scouts do presently have access to 10 other venues located in Stevenage. Appendix 3 details these locations and proximity to the current site. A number of sites are deemed to be easily accessible.

Appendix 4 details the location of 30 alternative community buildings within the town. It is considered reasonable that a group offering activities for (circa) 6 hours per week should be able to find alternative venues from this that are currently on offer. Officers from the Council's Cooperative & Neighbourhood department continue to liaise with the groups and are working actively to facilitate their location with both operational and financial assistance. We also note that a number of other uniform groups (Brownies & Guides) in Stevenage operate out of these premises that are available on a hire basis.

The buildings under consideration here are surplus to requirements and simply not needed to meet the published and operational needs of the community groups concerned. As already documented, significant effort has been made to find alternate accommodation for the groups, with an offer currently under consideration. Alongside this, these buildings were not in operation and available for community use for over 90% of potential day time operating hours. This coupled with the wealth of alternative Council assets and the fact that the Scouts enjoy access to 10 other buildings demonstrates that these buildings are surplus to requirements. This is also the view of the Council's Cooperative and Neighbourhood team who are confident that suitable alternative access can be provided to these groups.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A. Ahmed', with a large, stylized flourish at the end.

Ash Ahmed  
Assistant Director Development  
Stevenage Borough Council



Condition Schedule  
Photographic Condition Schedule

Property and Investment

Stevenage Sea Cadet Building, Shephall View, Stevenage, SG1 1RP

Date 07/08/2022 Weather – Sunny with showers

Surveyor – Neil Philips MRICS



Photo 1 – Front elevation



Photo 2 – Mortar joints to blockwork cracked and falling out.



Photo 3 – main entrance door with rotting at low level



Photo 4 – Blockwork cracked adjacent to window



Photo 5 – Left side elevation



Photo 6 – Cracked glazing to window



Photo 7 – Concrete wall panels with damp staining at low level

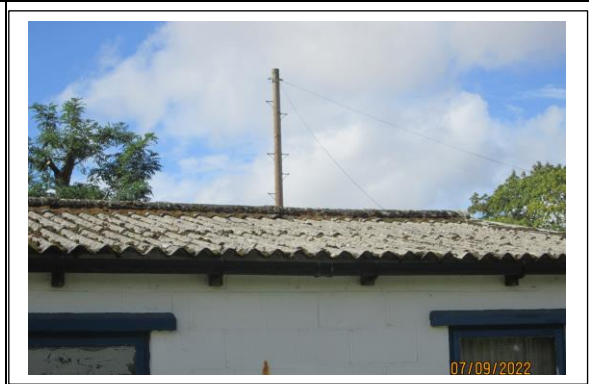


Photo 8 – Corrugated asbestos cement roof



Photo 9 – Poor weathering detail at roof junction



Photo 10 – Fire exit doors and timber panels rotting at low level



Photo 11 – Gutter unsupported and leaking



Photo 12 – Concrete panels damaged



Photo 13 – Dilapidated timber sheds



Photo 14 – Rotting timber doors and fascia



Photo 15 – Rear elevation



Photo 16 – Timber cladding rotted and falling out



Photo 17 – Right side elevation

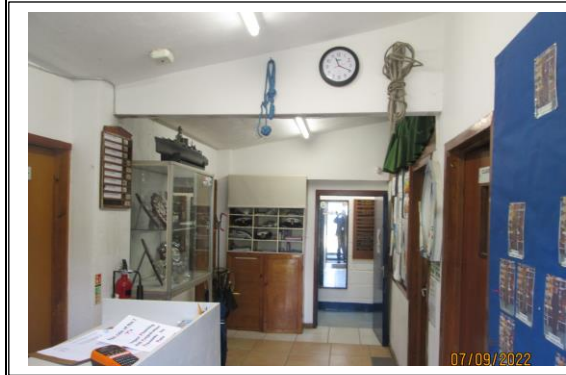


Photo 18 – Main entrance reception



Photo 19 – Artex ceiling finish flaking



Photo 20 – Ceiling edge detail falling away due to water ingress



Photo 21 – Shower with tile damage



Photo 22 – Water damage to Artex ceiling



Photo 23 – Damp ingress to column and wall



Photo 24 – Electric supply head leaking bitumin due to overheating



Photo 25 – Main electric meter and boards with loose cables



Photo 26 – Main hall. – Note puddles due to water leaks



Photo 27 – Main roof truss out of alignment



Photo 28 – Damaged ceiling panel and corrosion to steel truss



Photo 29 – Ceiling panels bowed and falling out



Photo 30 – Fire exit doors with obsolete panic bars





Photo 31 – Large gap in main roof



Photo 32 – Evidence of water ingress below ridge detail



Photo 33 – Evidence of water ingress at eaves



Photo 34 – Ceiling panels water stained and bowed



Photo 35 – Main hall



Photo 36 – Electrical heater and spur position below leaking roof



Photo 37 – Pipes stored between roof trusses creating additional imposed load



Photo 38 – Electric light ceiling rose close to area of water ingress



Photo 39 – Kitchen sink base unit cupboards damaged



Photo 40 – Extensive damp ingress behind door causing plaster to de-bond



Photo 41 – Ceiling damage and corrosion to roof truss



Photo 42 - Cooking area with cooker point and sockets close to oven and hob

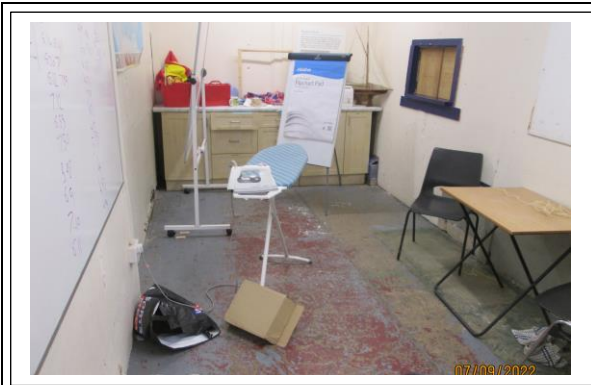


Photo 43 – Floor paint worn and floor screed in poor condition



Photo 44 – Storage room door removed and floor uneven with paint worn



Photo 45 – Door damaged



Photo 46 – Section of door liner missing



Photo 47 – Rainwater pipe diverted across access route



Photo 48 – Damage to skirting board

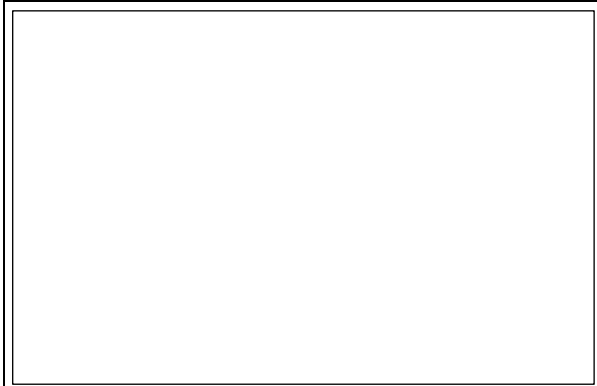


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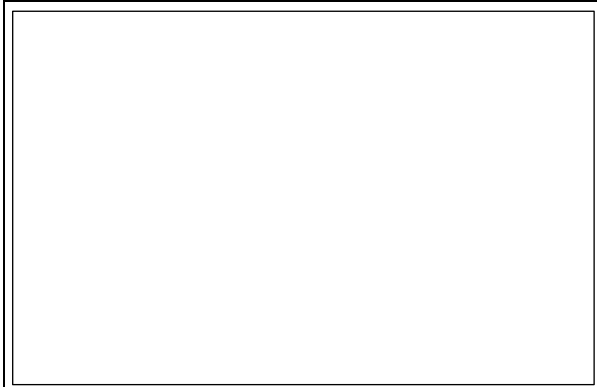


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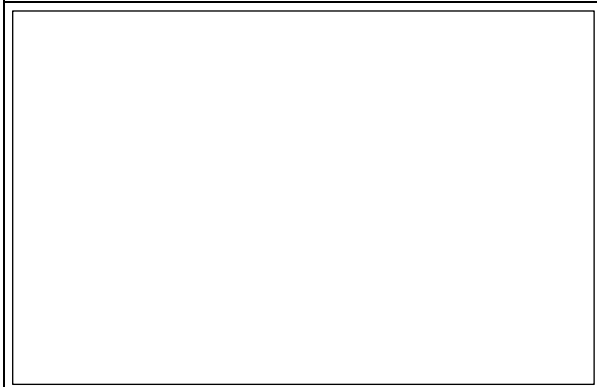


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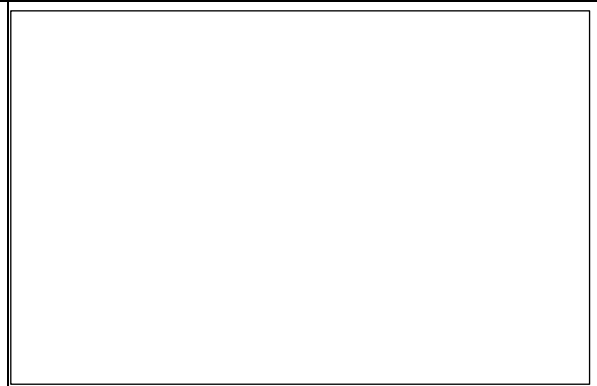


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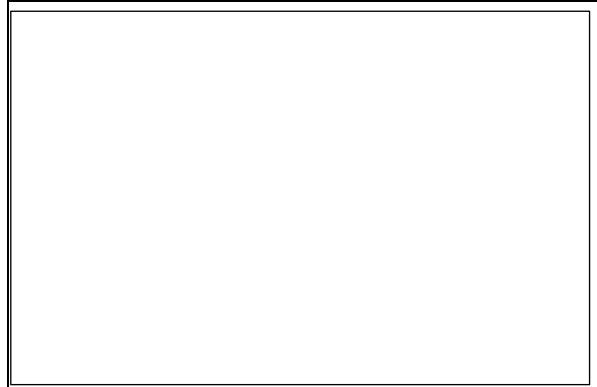


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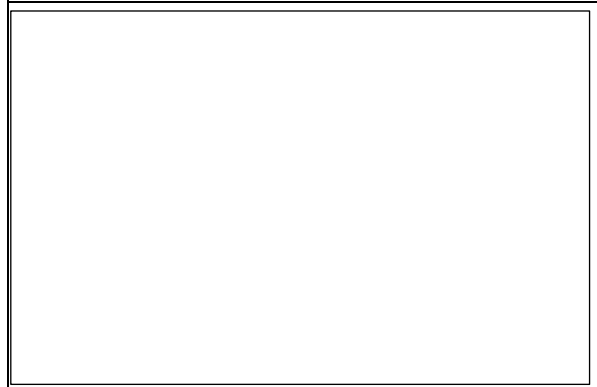


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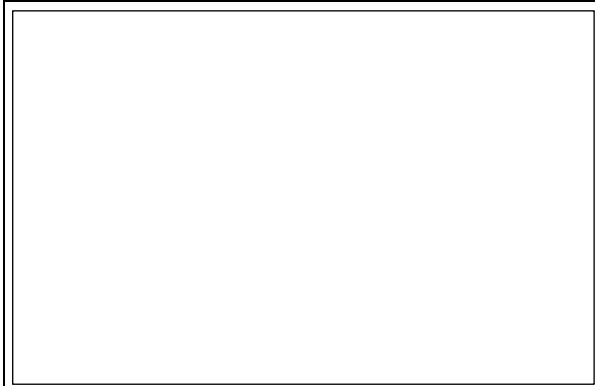


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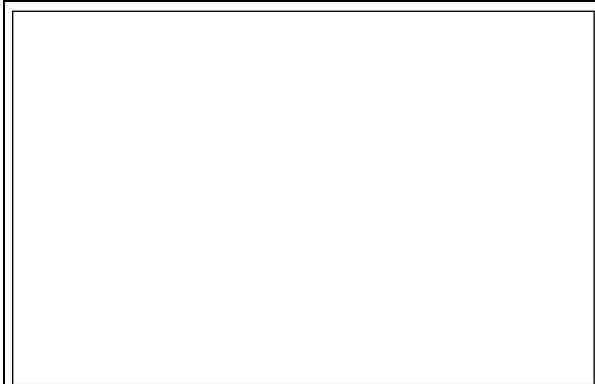


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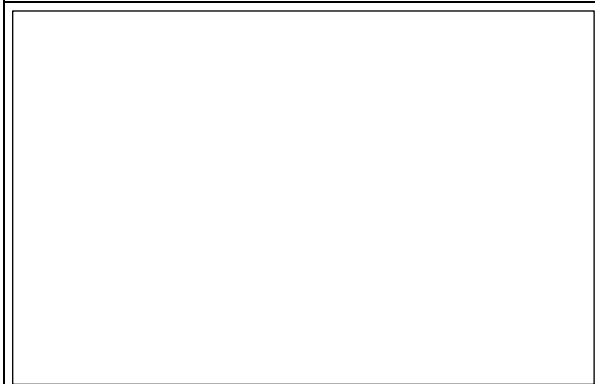


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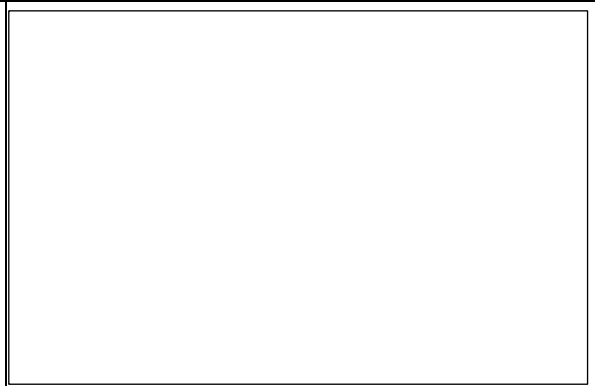


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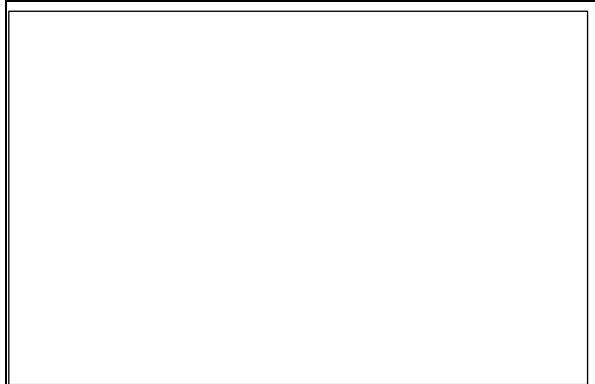


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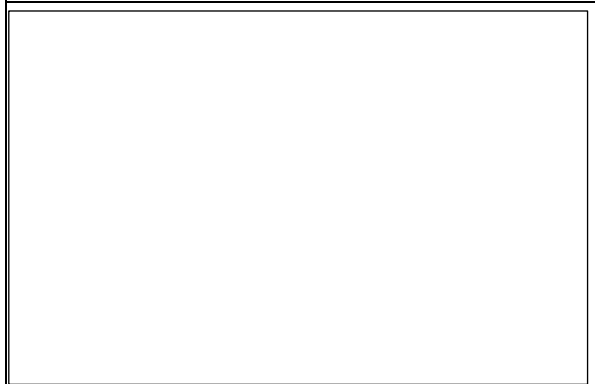


Photo 60 -

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| Photo 1 - | Photo 2 - |
|           |           |
| Photo 3 - | Photo 4 - |
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| Photo 5 - | Photo 6 - |

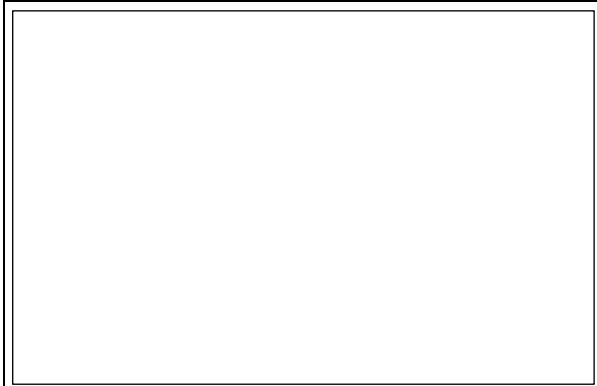


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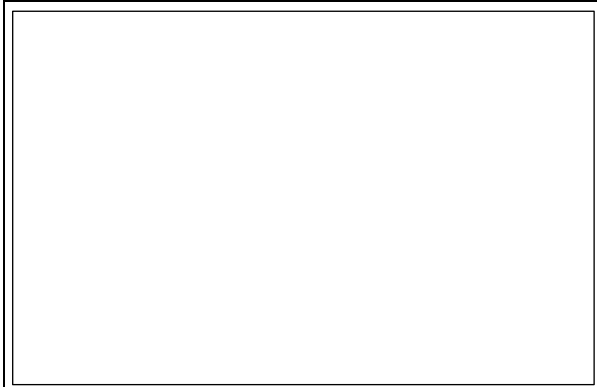


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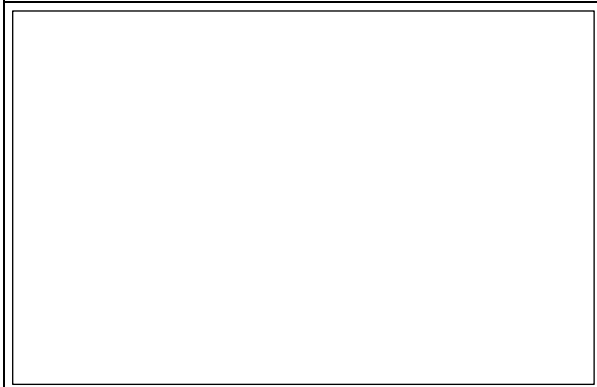


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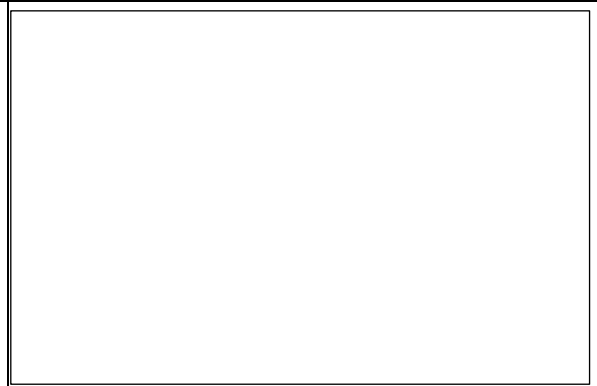


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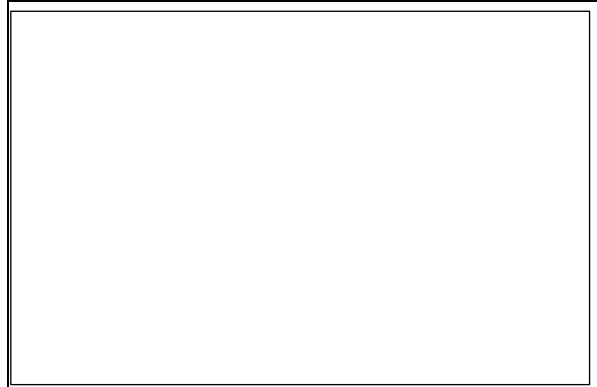


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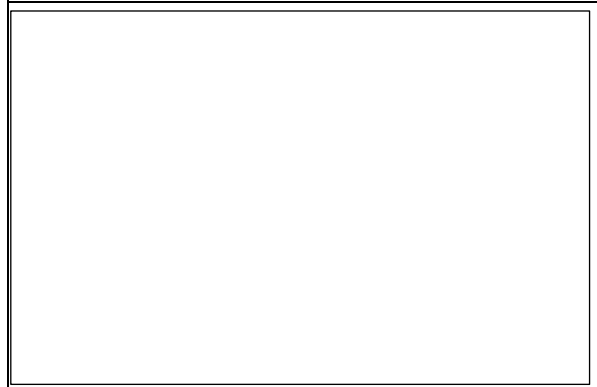


Photo 6 -

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| Photo 1 - | Photo 2 - |
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| Photo 3 - | Photo 4 - |
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| Photo 5 - | Photo 6 - |



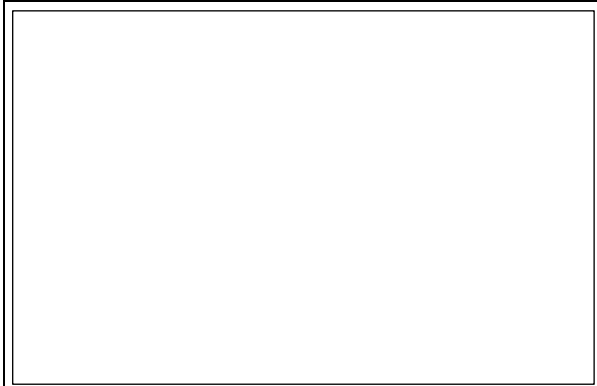


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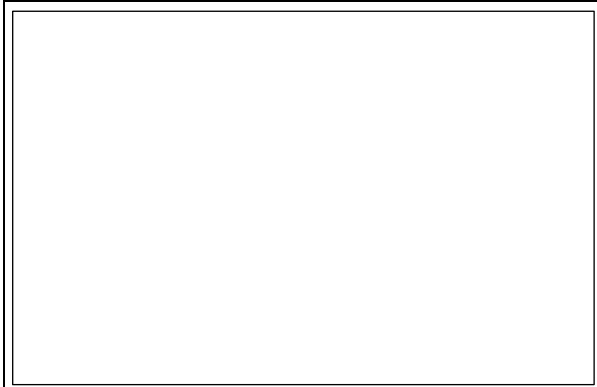


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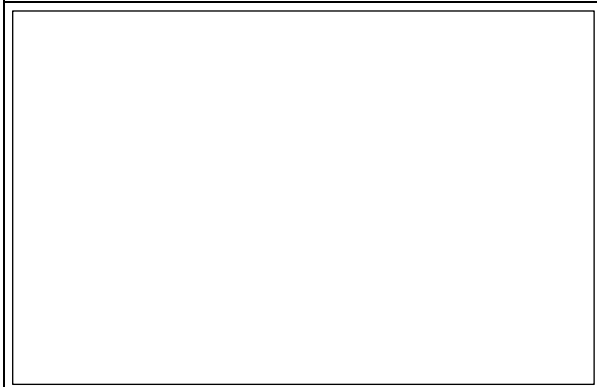


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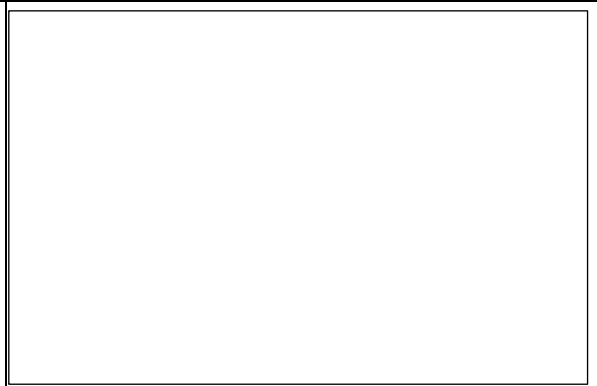


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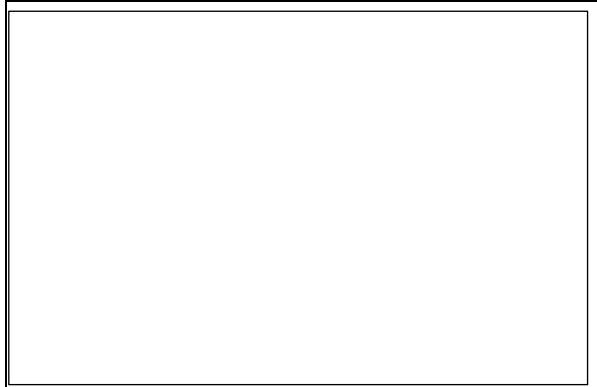


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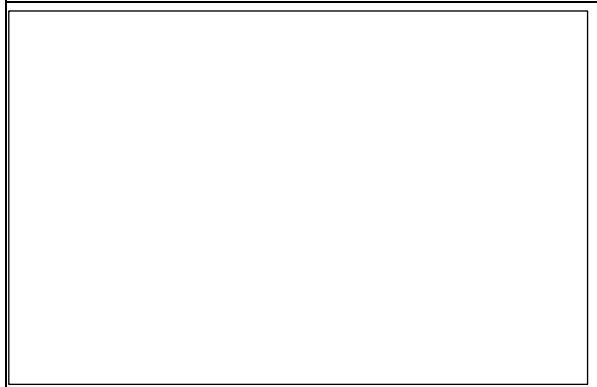


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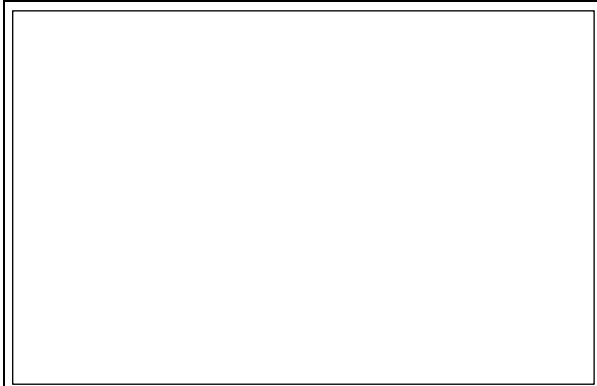


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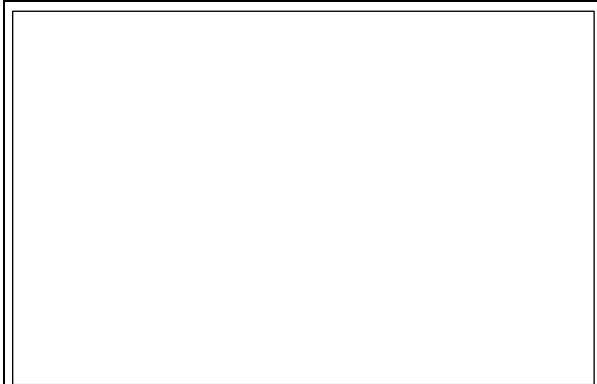


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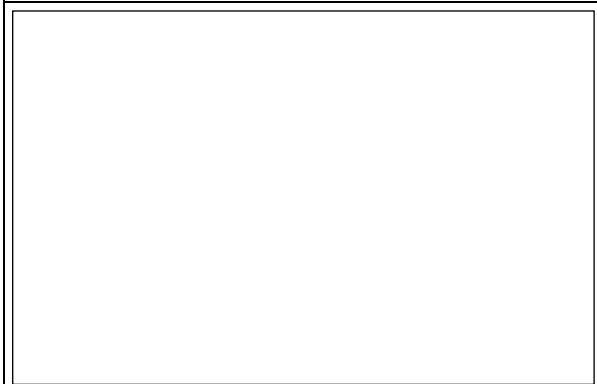


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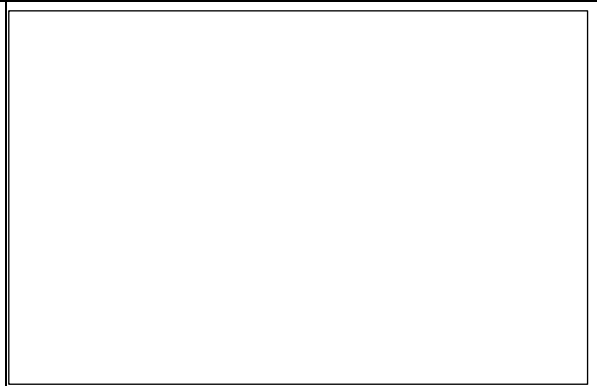


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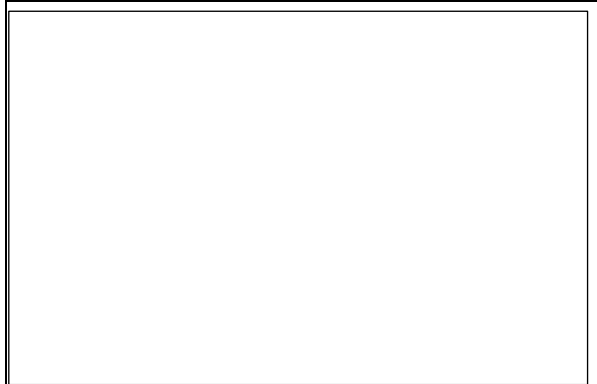


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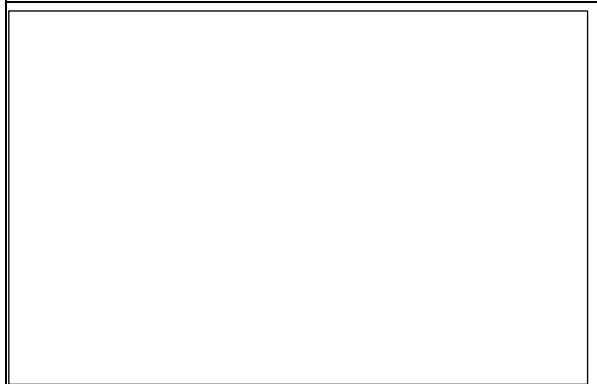


Photo 6 -

Condition Schedule

Property and Investment



Condition Schedule

Property and Investment

Condition Schedule

Property and Investment



The End

Condition Schedule  
Photographic Condition Schedule

Property and Investment

Property – 37 Shephall View, 5<sup>th</sup> Scout Hut Building, Stevenage SG1 1RL

Date – 07/09/2022      Weather – Sunny with showers

Surveyor – Neil Philips MRIC



Photo 1 – Front elevation



Photo 2 – Storage Sheds



Photo 3 – Profile metal roof with cut edge corrosion



Photo 4 – Pointing to brickwork weathered with mortar joints falling out



Photo 5 – Impact damage to pre-cast concrete panel



Photo 6 – High level brickwork pointing weathered.



Photo 7 – Staining to wall and brickwork damage at low level



Photo 8 – Flat roof in reasonable condition .  
Cut edge corrosion to metal profile roof

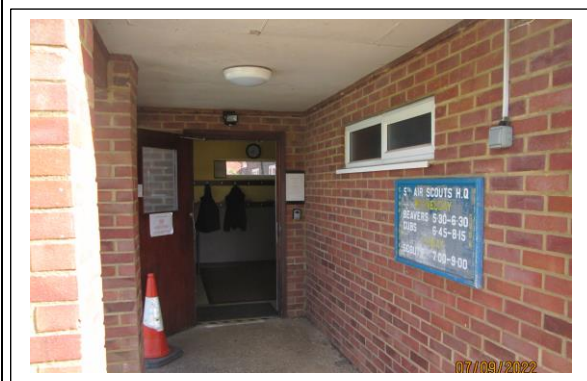


Photo 9 – Main entrance



Photo 10 – Damage to ceiling in main entrance



Photo 11 - Left side elevation



Photo 12 - Right side elevation

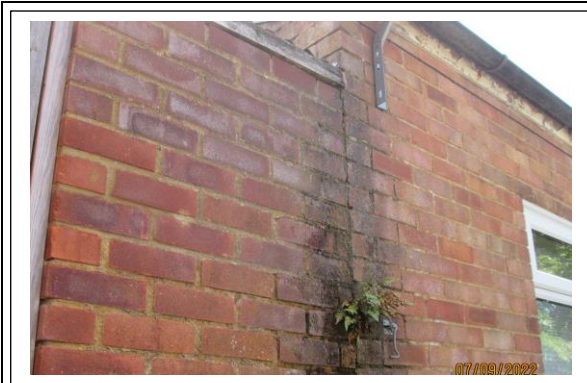


Photo 13 – Damp ingress at building junction



Photo 14 – Fascia in poor condition and rotting to wall plate



Photo 15 – Side door damaged and in poor decorative order



Photo 16 – Lean-to roof panels lifting and with cut edge corrosion.



Photo 17 - Right side elevation with blocked down pipe gully



Photo 18 – Cracked and uneven paving slabs





Photo 19 - Damp ingress to wall with deposition of salts over brickwork



Photo 20 – Fire exit doors damaged and in poor decorative condition.



Photo 21 – Blocked don pipe gully

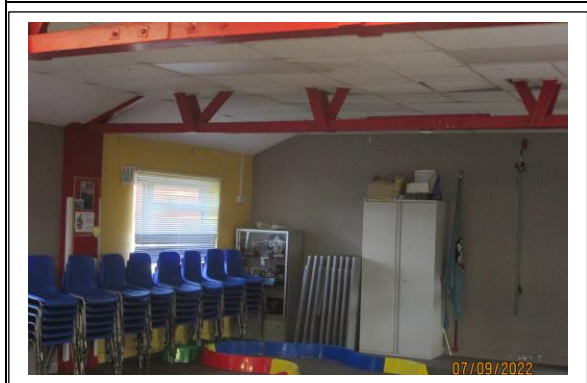


Photo 22 – Main hall

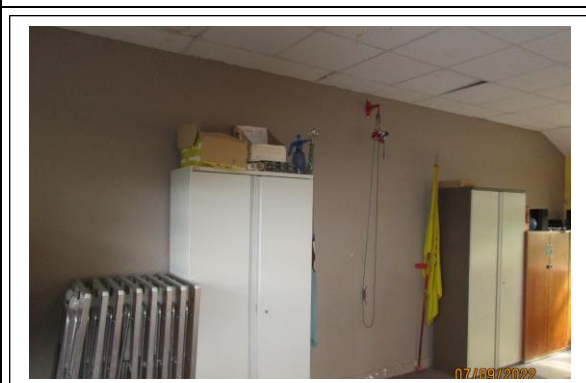


Photo 23 - Rear wall with plaster damage and indents.



Photo 24 – Suspended ceiling in poor condition



Photo 25 – View of main hall with exposed timber trusses



Photo 26 – Carpet tile floor covering marked and dirty with inconsistent tile colour.



Photo 27 – Disabled toilet with non-contrasting grab rails



Photo 28 – Suspended ceiling with tiles bowed



Photo 29 – Store room



Photo 30 – Suspended ceiling tiles missing or water stained

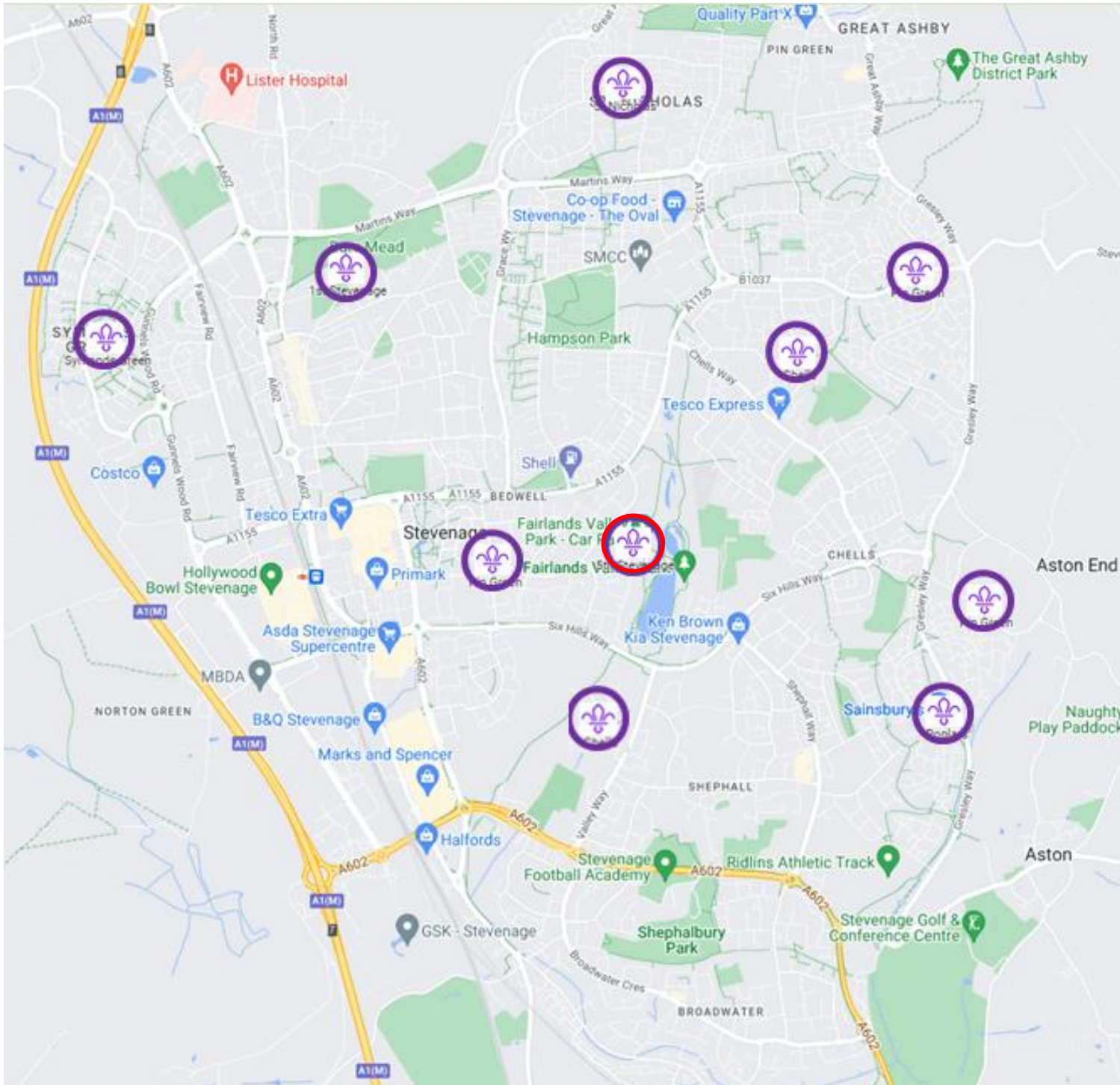
Condition Schedule

Property and Investment



End of Survey

### Appendix 3 – Location of Existing Scout Venues



#### Key



= Existing Scout Group Location



= 5<sup>th</sup> Scout Group Location

