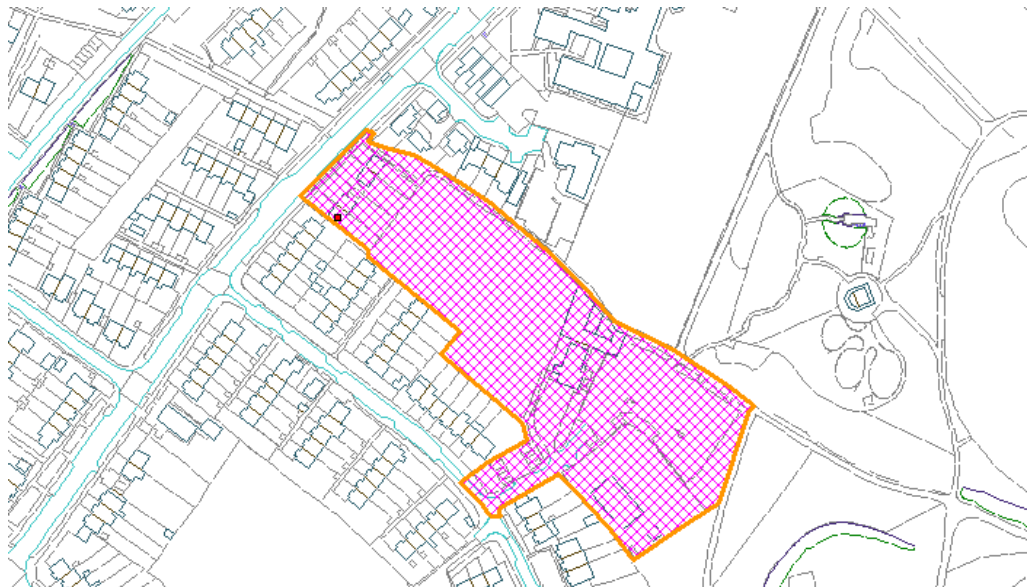


| | | |
|-------------------------|---|---------------------|
| Meeting: | Planning and Development Committee | Agenda Item: |
| Date: | 18 July 2023 | |
| Author: | Ailsa Davis | 07702 874529 |
| Lead Officer: | Zayd Al-Jawad | 01438 242257 |
| Contact Officer: | Ailsa Davis | 07702 874529 |

| | |
|-----------------|--|
| Application No: | 22/00965/FPM |
| Location: | 224-230 Bedwell Crescent, Stevenage |
| Proposal: | Demolition of existing semi-detached houses, sea cadets, nursery and scouts buildings and garages to provide 57no new dwellings with associated parking, facilities and landscape. Reconfiguration of existing public car park. |
| Drawing Nos.: | 18068SU1.01; 18068SU1.02; 18068SU1.03; 18068SU1.04; 18068SU1.05; 18068SU1.06; 18068SU1.101; 18068WD2.01; 18068WD2.02; 18068WD2.03; 18068WD2.04; 18068WD2.05; 18068WD2.102; 18068WD2.103; 18068WD2.104; 18068WD2.105; 18068WD2.106; 18068WD2.107; 18068WD2.108; 18068WD2.109; 18068WD2.110; 18068WD2.111; 18068WD2.112; 18068WD2.20; 18068WD2.201; 18068WD2.202; 18068WD2.203; 18068WD2.204; 18068WD2.205; 18068WD2.206; 18068WD2.207; 18068WD2.208; 18068WD2.209; 18068WD2.21; 18068WD2.210; 18068WD2.211; 18068WD2.22; 18068WD2.23; 18068WD2.24; 18068WD2.25; 18068WD2.30; 18068WD2.31; 18069WD2.120; 18069WD2.121; 18069WD2.130; SHF.1926.002.ENZ.XX.01.DR.L.45.101; SHF.1926.002.ENZ.XX.01.DR.L.45.102; SHF.1926.002.ENZ.XX.01.DR.L.45.103 |
| Applicant: | Stevenage Borough Council |
| Date Valid: | 2 November 2022 |
| Recommendation: | GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION |



Plan for information purposes only

1. SITE DESCRIPTION

- 1.1 The application site measures 1.5 hectares in area and is located on the western edge of Fairlands Valley Park, to the south of Bedwell Crescent and east of Shephall View. The site comprises a mixture of uses including residential, public grassed amenity space, garage block, public car park, children's day nursery and community buildings (Sea Cadets and 5th Stevenage Air Scouts Hut) clustered to the north west boundary of Bedwell Crescent and towards the southern boundary of the site which adjoins Fairlands Valley Park. The site currently only has one single lane vehicular access from Shephall View adjacent to the garage block between Nos. 37 and 39. Pedestrian access is available from both Shephall View and Bedwell Crescent, as well as Fairlands Valley Park.
- 1.2 The site sits within an established residential area comprising predominantly two-storey terraced dwellinghouses set within regimented building lines. These properties are constructed from stock red brick with their respective dual pitched roofs finished in bold roll concrete inter-locking tiles.

2. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

- 2.1 No relevant planning history, although the site has been subject to pre-application discussions since 2021.

3. THE APPLICATION

- 3.1 This application seeks planning permission for the demolition of a pair of semi-detached dwellings (Nos. 224 – 230 Bedwell Crescent) to create a new two-way vehicular access from Bedwell Crescent into the site. The sea cadets, day nursery, scouts building and garage block would also be demolished to provide 57no. new dwellings with associated parking, facilities and landscaping. The proposals would also include the reconfiguration and re-surfacing of the existing public car park to provide 53no. spaces.
- 3.2 The proposed dwelling mix would include 6no. 2-storey 2 bed terraced houses, 1no. 2-storey 4 bed detached house, 8no. 3-storey 4 bed semi-detached townhouses and 18no. 2-storey 4 bed semi-detached houses. Twenty four dwellings would also be provided in a 4-storey block of flats, comprising 5no. 1 bed flats, 13no. 2 bed flats and 6no. 3 bed flats. The proposed housing would be private open market.
- 3.4 The existing single lane access from Shephall View would be closed and converted to a private driveway access serving the proposed dwellings in plots 23 and 24. The Sea Cadets and the 5th Stevenage Scouts would be relocated as part of the proposals. More details are provided on the proposed arrangements in paragraphs 7.2.24 to 7.2.28 of the report.
- 3.5 The majority of the site, located on the north western side is allocated under Local Plan Policy HO1(15) for the provision of housing and with the requirement for a satisfactory vehicular access to be provided. The policy intimates the provision of 25 houses. The existing car park for Fairlands Valley Park which is located to the south east of the site is protected under the Principal Open Space (POS) policy NH1/1. The area of the site which currently accommodates the Scouts, Sea Cadets and Day Nursery buildings is not allocated within the Local Plan.
- 3.6 This planning application is to be considered alongside the application submitted for 10A and 10B Burwell Road (ref. 22/00437/FPM) for the demolition of existing 2no. semi-detached houses and erection of 20 no. flats comprising 12 no. 1 bed and 8 no. 2 bed, associated parking and ancillary works. The two schemes are linked as the Burwell Road application would provide the required affordable housing provision for the Shephall View/Bedwell Crescent application.

3.7 This application comes before the Council's Planning and Development Committee as the application is a Major residential development. In addition, the applicant is Stevenage Borough Council and there have been a significant number of representations received against the proposed development.

4. PUBLIC REPRESENTATIONS

4.1 Following notification of the application via letter, the erection of site notice and being publicised in the local press, 76 representations against the application have been received and one general comment relating to the provision of swift boxes. A summary of the objections received are as follows:

- Increased pressure on parking, traffic and pollution
- Loss of Sea Cadets and Scouts
- Sea Cadets and Scouts should be re-provided in shared facilities on site
- Loss of light
- Loss of Archery and Shooting Club who use Scout Hut
- Loss of green space
- Loss of trees, hedges and wildlife
- Views of Fairlands Valley Park from flats and safeguarding issues for children
- Increase in anti-social behaviour from the flats
- Not enough spaces in public car park
- Not enough car parking for each house
- Not enough infrastructure to support new housing – more pressure on schools/doctors
- Over development of the site
- Loss of garages
- Buildings should be two storeys only
- Plots 24 and 25 would be detrimental to amenity of No.37 Shephall View
- Substation should be located elsewhere away from No.37 Shephall View
- Proposed footpath adjacent to plot 25 inadequate
- Noise and disturbance from construction
- Existing parking used for school drop off and pick up
- Site has covenants on it which prevent development
- Greater commitment needed to building sustainable homes
- Proposed replacement community facilities in Pin Green too small

4.2 The aforementioned is not a verbatim of the objections which have been raised. Full copies of the representations received can be viewed on the Council's website.

5. CONSULTATIONS

5.1 Hertfordshire County Council as Highway Authority

5.1.1 Notice is given under article 22 of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 that Hertfordshire County Council as Highway Authority does not wish to restrict the grant of permission subject to conditions. Based on the submission, it is unlikely given the quantum of the development that the increase in the traffic associated with the development would lead to an adverse impact on highway safety.

5.2 Flood Risk and Drainage Consultant

5.2.1 Due to resourcing issues at Hertfordshire County Council as Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA), the LLFA has been unable to comment on this planning application. The Council has

appointed an independent drainage consultant to assess the Flood Risk Assessment and Surface Water Drainage Strategy in line with Guidance issued by the LLFA. At the time of writing this report no comments have been received. If comments are received prior to the meeting an update will be provided, otherwise it is anticipated Members will agree to delegated powers being granted to the Assistant Director of Planning and Regulation to impose any conditions advised on any response provided after the committee meeting.

- 5.2.2 A decision will not be issued until the S106 Legal Agreement associated with the development has been signed, which will allow time for comments to be received. Therefore, comments will be fully considered prior to a decision being issued. However, if the Council's Drainage Consultant raises an objection to this application and their concerns cannot be overcome, then this application will be referred back to the Planning and Development Committee for its decision.

5.3 Hertfordshire County Council Growth and Infrastructure Unit

- 5.3.1 Hertfordshire County Council's Growth and Infrastructure Unit do not have any comments to make in relation to financial contributions required by the Toolkit, as this development is situated within your CIL zone and does not fall within any of the CIL Reg123 exclusions. Notwithstanding this, we reserve the right to seek Community Infrastructure Levy contributions towards the provision of infrastructure as outlined in your R123 List through the appropriate channels.

5.4 Council's Environmental Health Section

- 5.4.1 If planning permission is to be granted, then it is recommended conditions are imposed covering the following:

- Contaminated Land
- Noise

5.5 Police Crime Prevention Design Advisor

- 5.5.1 Thank you for inviting me to comment on this proposal. I had previously commented on these plans when they were at the 'pre-app' stage. At that time, I did have several concerns, especially around the parking arrangements. I am pleased to say that these issues have been addressed in this application.

- 5.5.2 I have studied the crime figures on www.police.uk and for the period of May 2020 to April 2023 there were 57 crimes within 100m of the existing Fairlands Car Park. Of these crimes there were 37 assaults, 3 vehicle related crimes, 3 incidents of criminal damage/arson and 2 incidents of antisocial behaviour. As stated, my original letter, the Bedwell estate was the first housing estate that was built when Stevenage was made a 'New Town' in the late 1950's. It has also featured highly in the list of deprived estates within the country and county. Because of this I would strongly recommend that, should this project be granted planning permission it should seek to gain accreditation to the Police preferred minimum security standard that is Secured by Design.

5.6 Thames Water

- 5.6.1 No objection, subject to a condition relating to foul water drainage and informative relating to a groundwater risk management permit.

5.7 Affinity Water

- 5.7.1 No comments received.

5.8 Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust

- 5.8.1 No objection, subject to conditions requiring 15 integrated swift boxes and 4 integrated bat boxes, a bat license and a biodiversity net gain management plan.

5.9 Hertfordshire Fire and Rescue (Fire Hydrants)

- 5.9.1 This will require a condition for the provision and installation of hydrants, at no cost to the county council, or Fire and Rescue service. This is to ensure there are adequate water supplies available for use in the event of an emergency.

5.10 Sport England

- 5.10.1 The proposed development does not fall within either our statutory remit (Statutory Instrument 2015/595), or non-statutory remit (National Planning Policy Guidance (PPG) Par. 003 Ref. ID: 37-003-20140306), therefore Sport England has not provided a detailed response in this case but would wish to give the following advice to aid the assessment of this application.

- 5.10.2 General guidance and advice can however be found on our website: https://www.sportengland.org/how-we-can-help/facilities-and-planning/planning-forsport#planning_applications. If the proposal involves the loss of any sports facility then full consideration should be given to whether the proposal meets Par. 99 of National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), link below, is in accordance with local policies to protect social infrastructure and any approved Playing Pitch Strategy or Built Sports Facility Strategy that the local authority has in place.

- 5.10.3 If the proposal involves the provision of a new sports facility, then consideration should be given to the recommendations and priorities set out in any approved Playing Pitch Strategy or Built Sports Facility Strategy that the local authority may have in place. In addition, to ensure they are fit for purpose, such facilities should be designed in accordance with Sport England, or the relevant National Governing Body, design guidance notes: <http://sportengland.org/facilities-planning/tools-guidance/design-and-cost-guidance/>.

- 5.10.4 If the proposal involves the provision of additional housing (then it will generate additional demand for sport. If existing sports facilities do not have the capacity to absorb the additional demand, then new and/or improved sports facilities should be secured and delivered in accordance with any approved local policy for social infrastructure, and priorities set out in any Playing Pitch Strategy or Built Sports Facility Strategy that the local authority has in place.

- 5.10.5 In line with the Government's NPPF (including Section 8) and PPG (Health and wellbeing section), consideration should also be given to how any new development, especially for new housing, will provide opportunities for people to lead healthy lifestyles and create healthy communities. Sport England's Active Design guidance can be used to help with this when developing or assessing a proposal. Active Design provides ten principles to help ensure the design and layout of development encourages and promotes participation in sport and physical activity.

5.11 HCC Minerals and Waste Policy

- 5.11.1 No objection, subject to a condition securing a Site Waste Management Plan.

5.12 East of England Ambulance Service NHS Trust

- 5.12.1 The proposed development is likely to have an impact on Stevenage emergency ambulance stations within the vicinity of the application site. EEAST are in a unique position that intersects health, transport and community safety and does not have capacity to

accommodate the additional growth resulting from the proposed development to achieve nationally set blue light response times. EEAST would therefore expect these impacts to be fully assessed and mitigated.

5.12.2 The development and change of use from existing semi-detached houses, sea cadets, nursery and scouts buildings and garages to housing would give rise to a need for improvements to capacity, in line with emerging Integrated Care System estates strategy which can be met by:

- Provision of additional medical equipment to manage the increased number of incidents from the growing population in order to maintain mandated ambulance response times and treatment outcomes. The range of equipment includes stretchers, carry chair, tracks, power chair, scoop, spine board, power load, wheelchair, Corpuls (patient monitoring units with integrated defibrillator/pacemaker, ECG etc).
- Recruiting, training and providing new equipment for additional Community First Responders (CFRs) to support the proposed development and the community as a whole.

5.12.3 Table 1 shows the population likely to be generated from the proposed development. The capital required to create additional emergency ambulance services to support the population arising from the proposed development is calculated to be £16,313.

Table 1 Capital Cost calculation of additional health services arising from the development proposal

| Additional Population Growth (net gain) | ICS Activity Rate ² | Ambulance Cost ³ | Total |
|---|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|---------|
| 127 | 0.19 | £675 | £16,313 |

¹ Calculated assuming 2.4 persons for each dwelling average household for Stevenage Borough Council

² Calculated Hertfordshire and West Essex Census 2020 population (1.5m) and 2021-2 EEAST emergency activity volume (288,262)

³ EEAST ambulance infrastructure cost (2021)

5.12.4 It is unclear when the development may be delivered and if the site is listed in the Local plan and features on the housing trajectory for the local authority or indeed if permission will be granted. But should this development materialise, it will have an impact on emergency ambulance healthcare provision in the area and must be mitigated by legally securing developer's contributions and these are in addition to those submitted NHS Hertfordshire & West Essex ICB for GP, acute, community and mental health infrastructure.

5.12.5 Subject to certainty that healthcare will be the beneficiary of the aforementioned Section 106 contributions in relation to this development, EEAST does not raise an objection to the proposed development.

5.13 NHS England

5.13.1 No comments received.

5.14 SBC Green Spaces Development Officer

5.14.1 We note that the proposals include some narrow/small areas of grass, which will struggle to establish and may cause maintenance issues. These areas should be omitted and hard landscaped. The gradient(s) of the proposed banks that run alongside the main entrance road shall be established. Banks should ideally be no greater than 15 degrees, as this may limit the accessibility of some maintenance machinery.

5.14.2 All landscaped/planted areas must be designed to be easily accessible for maintenance. We require clarity on those areas of landscaping where the maintenance is to be adopted by SDS

and those which are private. Due to its proximity, it is expected that the facilities in Fairlands Valley Park will be readily utilised. The developer shall be required to provide a suitable financial contribution to be allocated towards delivering green space improvements in the park.

- 5.14.3 We note that a tracking simulation has been undertaken for refuse vehicle manoeuvrability. However, we are concerned that this may not have considered parked cars, particularly on the main access road. It is not clear what parking restrictions may be in place. Still, we need reassurance that the access will be able to provide suitable manoeuvring space for refuse collection vehicles in all possible scenarios.

Fairlands Valley Park - Car Parking Arrangements

- 5.14.4 Whilst no dwellings are proposed to be built within the principal park, there will be a slight reduction of spaces allocated for park visitors. This will be in favour of spaces designed to be assigned to the development. This car park can be bustling during periods of high demand as it provides the nearest access to the play area and aqua park. Furthermore, these proposals look to improve the accessibility of the site by car over existing arrangements via Shephall View. Therefore, parking overspill must be anticipated as this could impact the availability of other spaces or result in parking on the verges, pavements and residential streets. In turn, this could affect accessibility for fire trucks and refuse collection freighters. As far as we know, this has not been considered, and the developer must show how these potential concerns and issues are proposed to be addressed.
- 5.14.5 We welcome the addition of improving the car park, including the marking and layout. We require details on how the car park is proposed to be 'controlled'. Due to housing being closer to the car park, this should include details on the proposals for managing/controlling antisocial behaviour/activities. This could consist of speed restrictions, CCTV etc. Due to the change of entrance location, consideration must be given to protecting the car park from unauthorised encampments. The current entrance route to the car park from Shephall View already provides a level of protection due to the road's narrowness. Changing this may increase the opportunity for an encampment. As such, consideration must be given to providing necessary protection measures (such as a height restriction barrier).
- 5.14.6 Considering the point above, it is not appropriate for refuse freighters to back into the car park to turn around. We also have concerns for the safety of park visitors from turning/reversing refuse freighters. Furthermore, consideration should also be given to preventing vehicles from parking in such a manner that may obstruct access. We have concerns regarding the proposed groundcover planting strip in the centre of the car park. We anticipate that this will struggle to establish and may cause issues for future maintenance. Furthermore, it will also be likely exposed to damage from vehicle incursion and erosion from foot traffic. Except for the trees, this area should ideally be attractively hard landscaped. We also question the appropriateness of installing bird boxes in the middle of a car park.
- 5.14.7 The proposals include a significant amount of native hedge planting around the car park. From experience, planting around car parks can cause future maintenance challenges. As such, all planting around car parks must allow for door swings and vehicle overhangs. All planting must also be set back far enough not to cause future access and maintenance issues. The proposals shall also include improved boundary treatments to the car park to protect the park from unauthorised vehicle access at all times. In addition, the current tired wooden kneel rail shall be replaced with more robust galvanised metal hoops. Maintenance access via a removable bollard shall also be provided.
- 5.14.8 It is unclear how the park's parking and maintenance access arrangements will be managed during construction, and this must be clarified. In addition, we require details of how the developer proposes to maintain and minimise disruption to access for the park and car park

whilst the development is being delivered. We require a new highway directional sign for the park on Bedwell Crescent. The existing sign on Shephall View shall also be removed.

Drainage

- 5.14.9 We require clarification on where the drainage interception will occur and the responsibility. Furthermore, we also need details about the arrangements for undertaking the 6-monthly maintenance and checking of the drainage system. SDS will not adopt the maintenance of any physical drains, pipes, channels etc, as a result of this development, as we do not have the expertise to do so. Please refer to the Council's Engineering department for comment. Whilst beyond our scope of expertise, the developer, must ensure that there is no risk of pollutants entering the lakes that could impact the fish stock, wildlife and public health. Input/advice from the Environment Agency may be required. Equally, the increased input of water into the lakes (particularly during storms) should be checked with relevant reservoir experts to ensure that the reservoir can still operate effectively and safely.

Planting

- 5.14.10 *Sambucus nigra* is unsuitable for this scheme as it will cause maintenance issues and out-compete other species. Therefore, it must be suitably substituted with an alternative. *Rhus typhina* has an invasive growing habit; therefore, it must be suitably substituted for an alternative. *Symphoricarpos spp.* is unsuitable for this scheme as it will cause maintenance challenges and must be suitably substituted with an alternative. The ornamental planting mix contains a more significant proportion of herbaceous perennials. The amount of herbaceous should be reduced in favour of shrub planting as SDS has a limited capacity to maintain herbaceous planting at this location.
- 5.14.11 An establishment defect period of 12 months minimum is required for all planting. During this period, the developer will ensure that an appropriate maintenance regime is in place to ensure the optimal planting establishment and carryout and repairs, replacements etc. Any proposed planting and grassed landscaping must also consider the location in respect of glazed windows, doors, drainage, services etc. Areas of planting must not interfere or have the potential to block windows and doors. Grassed areas shall not be near low-level glazing (due to the risk of material being thrown from machinery) and shall not abut a property (to avoid damage to guttering, wires etc).

Trees

- 5.14.12 Please refer to the Council's Arboricultural Manager for further comments and advice regarding trees. Careful consideration must be given to the placement of any tree in respect of causing cleansing or maintenance issues. We have concerns that some of the proposed trees may not be suitable for the location and should be substituted. For example, some *Quercus spp.* and *Prunus spp.* are situated close to parking and residential areas, which will cause issues at maturity. *Koelreuteria paniculata* may not be appropriate for this location as it is shallow rooting and requires a large space. This should be substituted for a suitable alternative. Trees planted near parking spaces must be suitably guarded from vehicle strikes and be planted within a grille and ground anchored. As per above, careful consideration must be given to the species not to cause maintenance issues.

5.15 UK Power Networks

- 5.15.1 No comments received.

5.16 Council's Garages Section

- 5.16.1 As part of ongoing discussions with SBC Housing Development, the garages between Nos. 37 and 39 Shephall View can be made available should this element of the development

come forward and can be considered surplus to requirements. There are a number of suitable, alternative garages in the local area which will be offered to existing garage tenants should the scheme achieve Planning. There are also garages which are privately owned within this block, so any work to find alternate garages for SBC tenants will only be undertaken should SBC be able to secure legal interest in the garages which are currently privately owned.

5.17 SBC Arboricultural and Conservation Manager

5.17.1 No comments received.

5.18 Planning Policy

5.18.1 No comments received.

5.19 SBC Waste Storage

5.19.1 No comments received.

5.20 SBC Highways (Engineers)

5.20.1 No comments received.

5.21 Environment Agency

5.21.1 No objection.

5.22 Pre-application consultation by SBC Housing Development (the Applicant)

5.22.1 Prior to the submission of the planning application, the applicant carried out consultation with the local community via a series of both in-person and digital consultation events. Community feedback and idea generation was gathered through an online questionnaire which gathered a large amount of exposure in the local community, with over 8000 visits. As part of the public consultation response, and to address the comments and feedback received, a 'you said – we did' plan was prepared to demonstrate how the revised scheme had been developed following the first consultation. This, along with the revised layout, was then presented at a second round of Public Consultation events held in June 2022. The layout presented within this application is the result of the plans presented at the last consultation.

5.22.2 A summary of the public consultation process and feedback can be found in section 2.3 of the Design and Access Statement.

6. RELEVANT PLANNING POLICIES

6.1 Background to the Development Plan

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

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

6.2 Central Government Advice

- 6.2.1 A revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published in July 2021. This largely reordered the policy substance of the earlier 2012 version of the NPPF albeit with some revisions to policy. The Council are content that the policies in the Local Plan are in conformity with the revised NPPF and that the Local Plan should be considered up to date for the purpose of determining planning applications. The NPPF provides that proposals which accord with an up to date development plan should be approved without delay (para.11) and that where a planning application conflicts with an up to date development plan, permission should not usually be granted (para.12). This indicates the weight which should be given to an up to date development plan, reflecting the requirements of section 38(6) of the 2004 Act.

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 Adopted Local Plan (2019)

- 6.4.1 The policies set out below are relevant in the determination of this application:

Policy SP1: Presumption in favour of sustainable development
Policy SP2: Sustainable development in Stevenage
Policy SP5: Infrastructure
Policy SP6: Sustainable transport
Policy SP7: High quality homes
Policy SP8: Good design
Policy SP9: Healthy Communities
Policy SP11: Climate change, flooding and pollution
Policy SP12: Green infrastructure and the natural environment
Policy IT4: Transport assessments and travel plans
Policy IT5: Parking and access
Policy IT6: Sustainable transport
Policy IT7: New and improved links for pedestrians and cyclists
Policy HO1/15: Housing allocations – Shephall View
Policy HO5: Windfall sites
Policy HO7: Affordable housing targets
Policy HO8: Affordable housing tenure, mix and design
Policy HO9: House types and sizes
Policy HO11: Accessible and adaptable housing
Policy HC4: Existing Health, social and community facilities
Policy GD1: High quality design
Policy FP1: Climate change
Policy FP2: Flood risk in Flood Zone 1
Policy FP5: Contaminated land
Policy FP7: Pollution
Policy FP8: Pollution sensitive uses
Policy NH1: Principle Open Space
Policy NH5: Trees and woodland

6.5 Supplementary Planning Documents

Parking Provision SPD (2020)
Stevenage Design Guide SPD (2023)
The Impact on Biodiversity SPD (2021)

Developer Contributions SPD (2021)

6.6 Community Infrastructure Levy

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. This application proposal would be CIL liable.

7. APPRAISAL

7.1.1 The main issues for consideration in the determination of this application are its acceptability in land use policy terms, affordable housing and planning obligations, design and visual impact, impact upon neighbouring amenities, impact upon future amenities of residents, parking provision, highway implications, flood risk and drainage, impact on the environment, trees and landscaping, biodiversity and ecology.

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

Compliance with the Council's Housing Policies

7.2.1 The NPPF states at paragraph 7 that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. The NPPF also stipulates that decisions should play an active role in guiding development towards sustainable solutions, but in doing so should take local circumstances into account, to reflect the character, needs and opportunities of each area. In addition, the Framework also sets out that sustainable development needs to be pursued in a positive way and at the heart of the framework is a "presumption on favour of sustainable development". Paragraph 62 of the NPPF (2021) requires that the planning system should deliver, inter alia, a mix of housing particularly in terms of tenure and price to support a wide variety of households in all areas. Paragraph 69 of the Framework sets out that small and medium sites can make an important contribution to meeting housing requirements in an area, and this includes supporting the development of windfall sites.

7.2.2 Paragraph 119 of the NPPF stipulates that planning policies and decisions should promote the effective use of land in meeting the need for homes through the use of brownfield sites (previously developed land) and the development of underutilised land.

7.2.3 The northern half of the site is allocated in the Local Plan (2019) as a housing site under Policy HO1(15) with an indicative capacity for 25 dwellings. However, the remainder of the site falls outside of the allocation in the Local Plan and would therefore, be classed as windfall. Policy HO5 of the adopted Local Plan (2019) deals with windfall housing sites and states that permission will be granted where: the site is on previously developed land or is a small, underused urban site; there is good access to local facilities; there will be no detrimental impact on the environment and the surrounding properties; proposals will not prejudice the Council's ability to deliver residential development on allocated sites; and, the proposed development would not overburden existing infrastructure.

7.2.4 Taking the above issues in turn, the northern half of the development proposal which predominantly falls within the housing allocation would comprise 23 dwellings and 24 flats. Notwithstanding this is a higher density than that envisaged within the Local Plan, which has an indicative dwelling capacity of 25 dwellings, this would be in accordance with Policy HO1(15) in land use policy terms. Paragraph 9.5 of the Local Plan states the housing numbers

in Policy HO1 are indicative. Schemes on these sites should aim to achieve the highest possible net density appropriate to the character of the area, passenger transport accessibility and other relevant plan policies. The acceptability of the proposal in relation to character of the area, accessibility and highways in terms of the proposed density are examined below. Whilst part of the allocated housing site comprises open green space, an assessment for its loss is not required under Local Plan policy as it forms part of the Local Plan designation.

- 7.2.5 Turning next to the proposed development which falls on land outside of the allocated housing site, 10 dwellings are proposed. Given this part of the site contains the existing community buildings (scouts and sea cadets) (there are no specific planning policies which protect nurseries as they are not classed as either an existing health, social or community facility), Local Plan Policy HC4 'Existing health, social and community facilities' is also engaged in addition to Policy HO5 'Windfall Sites'. Dealing first with Policy HO5, the application site is identified as being predominantly previously developed land with existing buildings and area of hardstanding and thus accords with the definition of previously developed land set out in Annex 2 of the NPPF. The NPPF states that previously developed land is land which is or was occupied by a permanent structure, including the curtilage of the developed land and any associated fixed surface infrastructure. The NPPF also advises that a key objective is that local planning authorities should continue to make effective use of land by re-using land that has been previously developed. As such, the proposed development, is in accordance with adopted Local Plan (2019) Policy HO5 criterion (a).
- 7.2.6 Criterion (b) of Policy HO5 also requires that there is access to local facilities and that residential proposals include opportunities to access alternative forms of travel to private motorised transport. In terms of pedestrian access, the site would continue to be accessible from both Bedwell Crescent and Shephall View, as well as Fairlands Valley Park. The site is also well connected in terms of cycle infrastructure to local facilities and the wider network. A shared use route runs from Bedwell Crescent inside the northern boundary of the site into Fairlands Valley Park linking south to the east-west cycle way system on Six Hills Way. This route would be retained as part of the development proposal.
- 7.2.7 The closest bus stop to the site is Sinfield Close (170m), which gives access to service SB10 towards Stevenage Bus Station, via Pin Green. Colestrete bus stop, approximately 500m from the site, offers services towards Shephall, Bedwell and Stevenage town centre. The site is also 1700m from the Aldi supermarket and 1800m from Asda Superstore (approximately 20-minute walk). In addition, the site is also within 2.1km of the railway station. Consequently, the site is identified as being within a highly sustainable location.
- 7.2.8 Turning to the impact of the development on existing infrastructure, the proposal is CIL liable and therefore its impact on education and healthcare facilities would be mitigated through CIL funding. In addition to the CIL funding, a financial contribution is being sought by the East of England Ambulance Service. The proposed development is not therefore considered to overburden existing infrastructure in accordance with criterion (e) of Policy HO5.
- 7.2.9 In terms of criteria (c) and (d), the impact on the environment and surrounding properties will be considered later in the report. The additional 10 dwellings proposed on the unallocated part of the site would not prejudice the delivery of the 47 dwellings on the allocated part of the site for housing and therefore the proposal would comply with criterion (d). Consequently, it is considered the 10 dwellings which would form part of the windfall site would be in accordance with Policy HO5 of the Local Plan (2019).
- 7.2.10 Turning to 5-year land supply and housing delivery, Paragraph 68 of the NPPF (2021) states that planning policies should identify a supply of specific deliverable sites for years one to five of the plan period, and specific deliverable sites or broad locations for growth, for years 6 to 10 and where possible, for years 11 to 15.

- 7.2.11 Paragraph 74 of the NPPF (2021) stipulates policies should include a trajectory illustrating the expected rate of housing delivery over the plan period, and all plans should consider whether it is appropriate to set out the anticipated rate of development for specific sites. Local Planning Authorities should identify and update annually a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide a minimum of five years' worth of housing against their local housing need where the strategic policies are more than five years old. The supply of specific deliverable sites should, in addition, include a buffer (moved forward from later in the plan period) of:
- a) 5% to ensure choice and competition in the market for land; or
 - b) 10% where the Local Planning Authority wishes to demonstrate a five-year supply of deliverable sites through an annual position statement or recently adopted plan, to account for any fluctuations in the market during that year; or
 - c) 20% where there has been significant under delivery of housing over the previous three years, to improve the prospect of achieving the planned supply.
- 7.2.12 Since November 2018, housing delivery has been measured against the Housing Delivery Test (HDT) as set out by the Government planning policy and guidance. The results of the HDT dictate whether a local planning authority should be subject to consequences to help increase their housing delivery. Where an authority's HDT score is less than 85% of its housing requirement, the Council must incorporate a 20% buffer into its housing supply calculations in line with paragraph 73 of the NPPF. Where an authority's score is below 75%, the Council will be subject to the HDT's most severe penalty and must apply the presumption in favour of sustainable development.
- 7.2.13 The latest HDT results, published by the Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) (now the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC)) in January 2022 (DLUHC have not yet published the latest HDT results), identifies that Stevenage delivered 79% of its housing requirement. This exceeds the 75% target and renders the adopted Local Plan housing policies as being in-date. However, this is still well below the 95% target which is set out in the NPPF (2021). Consequently, the Council has to apply a 20% buffer in its 5-year housing supply calculations. In addition, the Council also has to produce an Action Plan in order to boost housing delivery.
- 7.2.14 The Council prepared an Action Plan in July 2022 to show how it is responding to the challenge of ensuring more homes are delivered in the Borough. This has been prepared in accordance with Planning Practice Guidance and analyses the reasons for under-delivery of new homes against the Government's requirements. It also sets out clear actions on how to improve housing delivery. A copy of the Stevenage Borough Council published Action Plan is set out in the following link: <https://www.stevenage.gov.uk/documents/planning-policy/monitoring/housing-delivery-test-action-plan-2022.pdf>
- 7.2.15 Turning to 5-year housing land supply, the Council recently published an Addendum Report in May 2022. The report set out that the Borough Council could demonstrate a housing supply of 5.91 years (including 20% buffer) for the period 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2027. However, since the Land West of Lytton Way appeal was allowed by the Planning Inspectorate for a development of 576 residential units (Appeal Reference: APP/K1935/W/20/3255692), the Council's Policy Department has confirmed the Council can currently demonstrate a housing supply of 6.68 years (including 20% buffer).
- 7.2.16 The Council, based on its HDT score and 5-year housing land supply calculations, is not currently subject to the most severe penalty under paragraph 11(d) of the NPPF (2021). For reference, if this policy was to be engaged, it would mean the Local Plan policies would be classed as out-of-date. The Council is now commencing preliminary work into a review of its Local Plan, last adopted in May 2019. This is to ensure the policies within the Local Plan are up to date in accordance with the NPPF as well as ensuring the Council is delivering a sufficient supply of housing and employment.

- 7.2.17 Given this position, this proposal i.e. the windfall part of the scheme, is not fundamental to the Council's ability to meet its 5 Year Land Supply as the tilted balance under para. 11d of the NPPF (2021) has not been engaged. Consequently, this is a key material consideration in the assessment of this application. However, Para. 60 of the NPPF (2021) states that to support the Government's objective of significantly boosting housing supply, it is important that a sufficient amount and variety, of land comes forward where it is needed, that the needs of groups with specific housing requirements are met, and that land with permission is developed without unnecessary delay.
- 7.2.18 In respect to Policy HO9 (House types and sizes) of the adopted Local Plan (2019), it identifies that there is a structural imbalance in the existing housing stock (albeit in a limited manner) whereby there is a lack of smaller properties and larger aspirational homes in the town. The Design Guide SPD (2023) outlines that housing is an area of weakness across the town. One of the main issues is the lack of an appropriate mix of housing sizes, types, and tenures with a high proportion of three-bedroom properties, and a lack of one and two bedroom properties. The lack of housing mix is exacerbated by changes in demographics leading to an increase in the number of single person households and couples needing homes. Due to growth requirements for the town, there is a need to provide a substantial number of additional homes in Stevenage. Higher density development is set out as a key requirement of National Guidance, and, where appropriate, densities will need to be raised to meet these targets for new homes.
- 7.2.19 The proposed development is seeking to deliver 6no. 2-storey 2 bed terraced houses, 1no. 2-storey 4 bed detached house, 8no. 3-storey 4 bed semi-detached townhouses and 18no. 2-storey 4 bed semi-detached houses. Twenty four dwellings would also be provided in a 4-storey block of flats, comprising 5no. 1 bed flats, 13no. 2 bed flats and 6no. 3 bed flats. As such, it would be in accordance with this policy because it would help to deliver a number of smaller one/two bed and larger four-bedroom dwellings and contribute to the delivery of a mix of housing types in the town. Furthermore, this proposal would help to support the Government's current adopted policy objective of delivering more housing in accordance with paragraph 60 of the NPPF.
- 7.2.20 In summary, the Council is currently able to demonstrate a five-year supply of deliverable housing sites, which is a key material consideration in the assessment of this application. Nonetheless, the proposed development would contribute to the aim of boosting housing supply as required under paragraph 60 of the NPPF without compromising the delivery of housing on allocated sites or placing an undue burden on local infrastructure. Further, the principle of development has been established in that the principle of residential development has been agreed for the northern half of the site through the Local Plan site allocation HO1(15).
- 7.2.21 There would be some economic benefit during the construction phase, and future occupiers would be likely to contribute to local services and facilities. Given the quantum of development, it is considered that these benefits would be substantial and therefore attracts significant weight in favour of the proposal.

Loss of Community Facilities

- 7.2.22 The application proposal involves the redevelopment of two community buildings for housing, namely the 5th Stevenage Scouts Group and Stevenage Sea Cadets Corps buildings. A third building used as a private Day Nursery would also be demolished, however, this use is not classed as a 'community use' and falls within Planning Use Class E relating to 'business, service and commercial' uses. The loss of the scouts and sea cadets buildings needs to be assessed under Local Plan policy HC4 'existing health, social and community uses'. Policy HC4 states planning permission that results in the loss or reduction of any existing health, social or community facility will be granted where:

- a) The existing facility can be satisfactorily relocated within the development proposal, or replaced in an appropriate alternative location;
- b) It can be demonstrated that there is no longer a need for the particular facility; or
- c) The facility, or any reasonable replacement, is not, and will not, be viable on that site.

7.2.23 Paragraph 11.24 of the Local Plan states the above policy refers to health, social and community facilities falling within Use Classes C2 'residential institutions', D1 'non-residential institutions' and D2 'Assembly and Leisure'. With respect to the question on the Use Class for the Scout and Sea Cadet buildings, these generally would have fallen under Use Class D2 'Assembly and Leisure' under the previous planning use class legislation. However, the Use Class Order was amended in 2020 (The Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2020). Consequently, under the amended use class order, the Scout and Sea Cadets buildings would now fall under Use Class F.2 'Local Community'.

7.2.24 The applicant has advised both the 5th Scout Group and the Stevenage Sea Cadets have been offered access to alternative premises. 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 venues enjoyed by the community groups 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 its core activities.

7.2.25 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 in this report 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 that are currently on offer.

7.2.26 The applicant has advised officers from the Council's Cooperative & Neighbourhood department will continue to liaise with the groups and are working actively to facilitate their relocation with both operational and financial assistance. It is also noted that a number of other uniform groups (Brownies & Guides) in Stevenage operate out of these premises that are available on a hire basis. On this basis, the relocation would satisfy criterion (a) of Local Plan policy HC4.

7.2.27 With regards to the use of the Scout Hut by an archery and shooting club, Sport England has been consulted and advised the proposed development does not fall within either their statutory remit (Statutory Instrument 2015/595), or non-statutory remit (National Planning Policy Guidance (PPG) Par. 003 Ref. ID: 37-003-20140306), therefore they did not wish to provide a detailed response. The Scout Hut itself which the clubs use is not a sports facility and therefore the requirements of paragraph 99 of the NPPF in terms of dealing with the loss of existing sports and recreational buildings is not engaged.

7.2.28 Notwithstanding this, it is understood the shooting and archery club activities are laid on by the scouts and are available to the wider scout network. The applicant has advised the scouts have already relocated these activities to alternative premises within the town. More detailed information on the relocation of the existing community groups can be found in a letter from the applicant dated 30 June 2023, together with appendices 1 – 4 at the end of the report.

Existing public car park and areas of open green space

- 7.2.29 The existing car park for Fairlands Valley Park which is located to the south east of the site is protected under the Principal Open Space (POS) policy NH1/1. This policy restricts any development that would see the loss of any part of the POS and proposals should not have an adverse impact upon any POS within, or adjacent to, the application site. The proposal to replace the existing car park with a new, improved car park in terms of layout and provision is acceptable and would accord with the provisions of the policy.
- 7.2.30 In assessing the loss of open green space which forms part of the application site around the buildings to be demolished, Policy NH6 stipulates that for development of any existing, unallocated open spaces, development would be permitted where:
- A) the loss of the open space is justified having regard to:
 - i) the quality and accessibility of the open space;
 - ii) the existence, or otherwise, or any interventions to improve the quality or access;
 - iii) whether the open space is serving its function and purpose; and
 - iv) whether alternative space(s) remain available for community use, and
 - B) Reasonable compensatory provision is made.
- 7.2.31 The areas covered by this policy are small in size and are all contained within the site and largely screened by existing buildings. The loss would not harm the character and appearance of the area, nor would it detrimentally affect useable open space given the proximity of Fairlands Valley Park. Furthermore, the provision of good quality housing on the site outweighs the loss of these small areas of non-allocated open space.
- 7.2.32 Consideration of the effects of the development on the character of the area and neighbouring amenities, and the ability of the site to provide good living conditions for future residents as well as impact on the environment, biodiversity and infrastructure will be considered in the following sections of this report.

7.3 Affordable housing and planning obligations

- 7.3.1 Policy HO7 of the adopted Local Plan (2019) stipulates that planning permission would be granted for residential development which would maximise affordable housing provision. Taking this into consideration, there is a requirement to provide 25% of new homes to be affordable on previously developed sites. In this regard, there would be a requirement to provide 14.25 (rounded down to 14) affordable units.
- 7.3.2 Turning to affordable housing tenure, mix and design, Policy HO7 states that planning permission will be granted where those dwellings:
- a. Are provided by the developer on site with at least 70% of the units being for rent and the remainder consisting of other tenures which is to be agreed with the Council's Housing team;
 - b. Meets the requirements of Policy HO9 (House types and sizes);
 - c. Are physically indistinguishable from other types of homes and are distributed across the site to avoid over-concentration in particular; and
 - d. Will remain at an affordable price for future eligible households.
- 7.3.3 In addition to the above, paragraph 65 of the NPPF (2021) stipulates that for major developments involving the provision for housing, planning decisions should expect at least 10% of the total number of homes to be made available for affordable home ownership (this

includes affordable housing for rent, starter homes, discounted market sales housing and other routes including shared ownership, equity loans and other low cost homes (at a cost to at least 20% below market value). However, the 10% requirement is part of the overall affordable housing contribution for the site.

- 7.3.4 On the 24 May 2021, the Government announced its First Home policy through a Written Ministerial Statement (WMS) and accompanying changes to the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG). As a result, these changes came into effect on the 28 June 2021. First Homes are designed to support local first-time buyers onto the property ladder, by offering homes at a discount to the market price. The discount will apply to the homes in perpetuity, meaning that generations of new buyers and the local community would continue to benefit every time the property is sold.
- 7.3.5 First Homes are a specific kind of discounted market sale units which:
- a) must be discounted by a minimum of 30% against the market value
 - b) are sold to a person or persons meeting the First Homes eligibility criteria (see below);
 - c) on their first sale, will have a restriction registered on the title at HM Land Registry to ensure this discount (as a percentage of current market value) and certain other restrictions are passed on at each subsequent title transfer; and,
 - d) after the discount has been applied, the first sale must be at a price no higher than £250,000.
- 7.3.6 First Homes are the government's preferred discounted market tenure and should account for at least 25% of all affordable housing units delivered by developers through planning obligations.
- 7.3.7 With regards to affordable housing delivery, the Council's evidence base has demonstrated that since the start of the Local Plan period, delivery of affordable housing has been limited to 295 units, an average of 31 units per annum. Consequently, this evidence demonstrates that there has been a significant under provision of affordable housing delivery within the Borough. This is also reflected in the appeal decision letter for Land West of Lytton Way appeal whereby the inspector states (para. 87) and quote:
- 7.3.8 *"I have been referred to other schemes which have been granted planning permission or it has been resolved that planning permission should be granted. In these schemes, for one reason or another, affordable housing provision has been lower than the expected policy figure of 20%. Indeed 52 homes would equate to over 17% of the affordable housing that has been delivered thus far in the Local Plan period. In these circumstances of poor delivery of affordable homes and with sizeable unmet need for such housing, I give the provision of affordable housing significant weight".*
- 7.3.9 Written notice has been received that the applicant is seeking to deliver its affordable housing contribution for the site through the delivery of the scheme at 10A and 10B Burwell Road, Stevenage (ref. 22/00437/FPM) as an entirely affordable scheme. This scheme was previously granted permission for 20 flats subject to a S106 agreement. The consented scheme was due to deliver five units of affordable housing. The applicant (SBC Housing Development) is now proposing to deliver all 20 units as affordable. This would therefore provide an additional unit of affordable housing as a result of the delivery offsite, which would be a significant planning benefit given this proposal is key in helping to fund the delivery of affordable housing within the town. The triggers for dealing with how the affordable housing would be delivered through the development of the Burwell Road site would be secured as part of a linked S106 legal agreement. Subject to this, it is considered offsetting the affordable housing requirement to the site at Burwell Road is acceptable.

- 7.3.10 Turning to the recently adopted Developer Contributions SPD (2021), this SPD introduces a new requirement that developers of major development when signing an agreement with the Council, will need to:
- Attempt to fill 5% to 10% of construction jobs on-site associated with the development with Stevenage Residents;
 - Attempt to fill 1 apprenticeship position per 10 construction jobs on-site with a Stevenage Resident or Student (cap requirement of 10 apprenticeships);
 - Report whether or not these requirements are met; and
 - Provide a financial contribution in lieu of not achieving either or both targets.
- 7.3.11 In terms of monitoring, the Council Developer Contributions SPD set out that the Council will seek a monitoring fee of 2.5% of the value of the contributions being monitored. The fee would be capped at £25,000.00. The monitoring fee itself would be secured as part of any S106 legal agreement.
- 7.3.12 Turning to the areas of open space on the site, including areas of highway which are not to be formally adopted by the Council or Hertfordshire County Council, it is recommended that the Legal Agreement secures the provision of a Management Company. This is to ensure that the areas of un-adopted open space and highways which form part of the development are properly managed and maintained during the lifetime of the development.
- 7.3.13 A separate s278 Agreement (covering the junction alterations and public realm works on highway verge land to be adopted by HCC Highway Authority) would also be required and would need to be referenced and secured within the S106 agreement.
- 7.3.14 The proposed development would also likely have an impact on Stevenage emergency ambulance stations within the vicinity of the application site. East of England Ambulance Service Trust (EEAST) are in a unique position that intersects health, transport and community safety and does not have capacity to accommodate the additional growth resulting from the proposed development to achieve nationally set blue light response times. EEAST would therefore expect these impacts to be fully assessed and mitigated via a financial contribution of £16,313.00 to be secured via the S106 agreement.
- 7.3.15 Finally, due to its proximity, it is expected that the facilities in Fairlands Valley Park would be readily utilised. It is recommended by the Council's Green Spaces Development officer that the Legal Agreement secures a financial contribution (amount to be agreed) to be allocated towards delivering green space improvements in the park.

7.4 Visual impact of the development

- 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. Policy HO5: windfall sites require residential development on unallocated sites to not have a detrimental impact on the environment and on surrounding properties.

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.

7.4.9 Paragraph 40 of the National Design Guide states that well-designed places are:

- Based on a sound understanding of the features of the site and the surrounding context, using baseline studies as a starting point for design;
- Integrated into their surroundings so they relate well to them;
- Influenced by and influence their context positively; and
- Responsive to local history, culture and heritage.

7.4.10 The Council recently adopted an updated Design Guide SPD (Jan 2023) and Sections B (Built Form) and H (Homes and Buildings) of this SPD are particularly pertinent to the design of new residential units. An understanding and analysis of the original New Town design concepts led to some key issues becoming apparent. These have been used as key themes, which run throughout the entirety of this guidance. Considering these concepts at all stages of the development process will provide a good basis for the creation of a successful place; based on the recognised principles of urban design, but also building on the existing fabric of the town without taking away from Stevenage's history as Britain's first Mark One New Town. The themes have been identified as follows:

- Sustainability – incorporate principles of sustainable development from a town-wide perspective to measures incorporated into an individual property;
- Increasing densities – encourage high densities in accessible locations;
- Respecting existing characteristics – respect local characteristics and preserve and enhance existing features, where appropriate;
- Legibility – provide landmark developments at nodal points;
- Design innovation – showcase Stevenage as an example of high-quality design, creating safer places through urban design techniques.

7.4.11 This part of the application has been assessed against the key policy criteria on good design, as well as how the scheme meets the four key objectives in the National Design Guide on what is considered as a well-designed place. The proposed development would comprise the construction of 57no. new dwellings with associated parking, facilities and landscape, together with the reconfiguration of the existing public car park.

Layout

7.4.12 The site would be developed in a north-south direction between an existing grid of 2-storey houses for the top and middle section and would then open up slightly towards Fairlands Valley Park to the south and adjoining car park. To improve access to the existing car park and provide a safe and suitable access to the new dwellings, a new vehicular access is proposed. The access to the site would be from Bedwell Crescent, through a 5.5m wide road that would provide access to both local roads and the existing car park at the end.

7.4.13 The new access road would also act as a buffer between the new development and the rear of the neighbouring properties on Sinfield Close to the north of the site. The Bedwell Crescent frontage would then be completed with the addition of 4 semi-detached 2-storey houses to continue the existing line of houses on this road. The proposed dwellings would be set back from the existing building line to reduce their impact on the neighbouring properties and to also respect the Adopted Highway Land to the front of the site (no parking or dwellings are proposed on this land).

7.4.14 The main access road would continue along the northern edge of the site, providing access to the first secondary road serving a group of semi-detached and detached houses. These

are positioned to continue the existing row of houses on the Shephall View terrace, allowing the new development to link with the existing and creating a visual and pedestrian connection. Further down, the site would continue with a series of 2-storey terraced and semi-detached dwellings which would face the access road, set back from the pavement with parking spaces at the front.

- 7.4.15 A second secondary road would serve 4no. semi-detached houses and the block of flats. The access road would curve at the end to serve the houses and maintain the existing access to the neighbouring houses existing rear garden gates. The 4no. semi-detached houses would also be provided with parking at the front. The proposed houses have all been designed to comply with the minimum overlooking distance for both relationships with new and existing dwellings. The rear gardens would also comply with the Design Guide (2023) in terms of minimum area and minimum length. The secondary access road would also serve the main entrance and front parking area of the flats.
- 7.4.16 The block of flats would sit in the middle of the site and would have a rectangular shape that would allow it to be oriented to predominantly face the park and northern area of the development. The flank elevations of the building would face the existing houses to the south (still maintaining the 25m minimum back to side distance) and the school playing fields to the north. The main access to the flats would be via the northern access road, which would also include parking spaces and disabled bays close to the entrance. Secondary access would also be provided to the flats from its rear (southern) elevation, where the main access road would split to connect to the existing car park and provide access to the rest of the development. This secondary access road would include most of the parking spaces for the flats along with access to the refuse store.
- 7.4.17 The existing vehicular access from Shephall View would not be retained as a link to the public car park, but converted to a private driveway serving the proposed semi-detached dwellings replacing the existing garage block. The road would still provide a 2m wide footpath that would maintain the pedestrian and visual link to the public car park through the development. A third party representation commented that this would be inadequate, however a 2m width would meet highway footpath requirements and is considered acceptable. HCC as Highway Authority have not raised any concerns regarding this footpath. The proposed 2no. two storey semi-detached houses along Shephall View would be set back from the neighbouring properties front building line. The existing trees in this area would be retained as they contribute positively to the street scene.
- 7.4.18 The southern area of the site, facing the park and between the existing terraces to the west and the car park to the east would accommodate a row of three storey semi-detached townhouses. These would be accessed by a dead-end secondary road and provided with an integral ground floor garage with additional parking space in front. The townhouses would be oriented to follow the same building line as the neighbouring properties, which would allow them to achieve the required 35m back-to-back minimum distance. They would also be staggered from each other, with vegetation to the front to create a more dynamic street scene.
- 7.4.19 The townhouses area would be separated from the public car park by dense new vegetation which would provide privacy and screening. The southern edge next to the park would retain part of the existing vegetation to act as boundary screening. The vegetation boundary would be interrupted by a proposed turning head overextending into the existing car park to allow larger vehicles to turn and leave in forward gear. The public car park would be retained and reconfigured, as it is currently in a poor state with no markings to define the number of bays. The car park would be resurfaced, and parking bays formally marked out to serve Fairlands Valley Park and nearby Aquapark. A total of 53 spaces are proposed.

Density

- 7.4.20 The northern half of the development proposal which falls within the housing allocation would comprise 23 dwellings and 24 flats. This is a higher density than that envisaged within the Local Plan, which has an indicative dwelling capacity of 25 dwellings for this allocated housing site. However, paragraph 9.5 of the Local Plan states the housing numbers in Policy HO1 are indicative. Taking into account the assessment of the proposed layout above, which has been well considered and provides satisfactory access and separation between new and existing dwellings, the conclusion in paragraphs 7.2.6 and 7.2.7 above identifying the site as being within a highly sustainable location and the assessment in section 7.8 below confirming the associated increase in the traffic would not lead to an adverse impact on highway safety, it is concluded the proposed density would not lead to material harm to the amenity of neighbouring dwellings, the highway network or the character and appearance of the wider area. As such, it is concluded the higher density as proposed is acceptable.

Scale and Massing

- 7.4.21 The overall scale and massing of the development has been designed to transition between the different areas of the site and respond to the surrounding existing properties. The majority of dwellings would be two storeys in height to match the surrounding residential area. This is especially important in the part of the site facing Bedwell Crescent and next to the existing terraces on Shephall View. Due to the low-pitched roof of the existing terraced and semi-detached houses and different ground levels, the proposed two storey dwellings would appear higher as they are designed with a 40° pitched roof to achieve better overall proportions in relation to their footprint.
- 7.4.22 Where possible, the proposed houses have been designed to create a smooth transition between the existing low-pitched roofs and the new dwellings. This would be achieved by having different planes and articulation within the houses. All proposed dwellings facing onto the existing roads (Shephall View and Bedwell Crescent) would be two storeys high and set back from the existing dwellings' front building line to minimise their impact on the street scene. As the development would continue south and away from the existing streetscape, the overall massing and height of the buildings would increase.
- 7.4.23 The block of flats would occupy the centre of the site and would be four storeys in height, as it would constitute the transition element between two different character areas of the development. The architect has designed it to mark the passage from a more intimate and enclosed area to an open and wider part of the site with a different relationship to its surroundings and the park. Despite its height, it is considered the building would not dominate the surrounding two and three storey dwellings as it would feature a recessed top floor and enclosed balcony, which would reduce the overall scale and mass of the building and allow it to sit comfortably within the site.
- 7.4.24 Finally, the site would be bookended by the three storey townhouses, which would help to create a more domestic scale towards the southern site boundary. These would be buffered from the car park and park by dense vegetation to minimise their impact on views from the park.

Design and Appearance

- 7.4.25 The design of the proposed dwellings would employ a variety of materials which both characterise each type and represent elements of the common palettes across the development. The brickwork to be used across the site would be a light buff brick, to maintain a link with most of the surrounding buildings. A second type of brickwork feature would also be included across the site. This would be made by an alternate coursing of the buff brick with a smooth white brick. Windows and canopies are proposed to be in a dark grey finish. All front doors and secondary doors would be solid timber with a dark grey finish. Interlocking

concrete roof tiles would be used in charcoal grey to compliment the material palette. Feature elements on the dwellings, such as dormer and bay windows would be used across the site to be finished with a grey-bronze colour. Grey zinc would also be used as a feature element across the scheme, with different uses and finishes.

7.4.26 With regards to the block of flats, every flat would have access to a balcony which would function as private amenity space. The top floor would be set back on three sides, to minimise its impact on the surrounding area and to provide articulation to the building. A third type of brickwork would be used (Weinerberger Brown Krypton) to differentiate the recessed top floor and the external wall. This would also reduce the overall scale of the building. Consequently, most top floor flats would have access to larger balconies extending around the perimeter. The block would have a flat roof which would provide space for plant and potentially solar panels. The roof would also be a green roof to enhance biodiversity and contribute to biodiversity net gain. Where the side of the building would face existing dwellings, additional screening would be provided to avoid overlooking. Feature elements like floral motif railings and brise soleil would also enrich the building facades.

7.4.27 Overall, it is considered the proposed development would have a high-quality finish and has been designed to assimilate itself with the wider area with the careful use of materials and finishes to give the buildings architectural interest. The use of the recessed top floor on the block of flats would help to break the overall mass and scale of this building. The scale of the remaining dwellings would appear in keeping with the surrounding established residential area. The layout of the proposed development has been well considered and takes into account the need for satisfactory access and separation with existing dwellings. The proposed development is therefore, considered acceptable in accordance with the policies on design in the adopted Local Plan (2019), the Design Guide SPD (2023), the NPPF (2021) and PPG.

7.5 Impact upon Neighbouring Amenity

7.5.1 In assessing the impact on neighbouring amenity, the Council's Design Guide (2023) sets out standards which should be met to safeguard the privacy and outlook of adjoining properties from new development. The recommended separation distances are as follows:

| No of Storeys | Type of Separation | Min. distance (metres) |
|---|------------------------------|------------------------|
| Between existing and new 2 storey or a mix of 1 and 2 storey dwellings. | Back to Back Back to Side | 25m 15m |
| Between new 2 storeys or a mix of 1 and 2 storey | Back to Back Back to side | 20m 12m |
| Over 2 storeys between existing and new dwellings | Back to Back Back to Side | 35m 25m |
| Between new dwellings over 2 storeys in height. | Back to Back Back to Side | 30m 20m |

7.5.2 Following an assessment of the proposed development, it would accord with the separation distance standards which are set out in the Council's Design Guide SPD. In terms of the side to back distance between plot 4 and Nos. 4 and 6 Sinfield Close, this meets the required 15m distance. The proposed access road and retained boundary vegetation would also act as a buffer between the rear of the dwellings on Sinfield Close and the proposed two storey houses running down the centre of the site. In terms of the relationship to the southern boundary terraces, namely Nos. 22, 11 and 13 Shephall View the proposed houses in plots 1, 8 and 9 would all have an acceptable side to side relationship raising no amenity issues for the occupiers.

- 7.5.3 Concerns have been raised by the owners of No.37 Shephall View regarding the proximity of the proposed dwelling in plot 24 to their property, along with the cycle store and bin store associated with the flats and substation. The owners are concerned about overshadowing and overlooking of their garden due to the height of the dwelling and side window, as well as blocking light to the side window of their property. In terms of overlooking, no side window is proposed in the flank elevation of plot 24 therefore there would be no loss of privacy. Due to the fact the dwelling would be set back from the front building line of No.37, to enable the trees to be retained, the proposed dwelling in plot 24 would not obstruct light from reaching the side window of No.37. Furthermore, a site visit confirmed this window is already covered by net curtains and most likely serves a staircase or landing area which is non-habitable space.
- 7.5.4 With regards to overshadowing of the rear garden of No.37, it is accepted that due to the higher pitched roof of the dwelling in plot 24, there would be some overshadowing of parts of the garden in the winter months. However, this would coincide with when the garden is less used for outdoor amenity. It is considered the level of overshadowing created by the dwelling in plot 24 would not be of a sufficient level to warrant refusal of the planning application. With regards to the proximity of the refuse and cycle store to this dwelling, the cycle store would be sited 19m away and the refuse store 24.5m and in addition, would be separated by the rear garden and boundary fence. It is considered this distance, combined with the infrequent use and low-level noise their use would generate would not be unneighbourly for the occupiers of No.37. The proposed substation location the other side of the rear boundary fence of No.37 is shown as indicative only if required. Should it be sited here, it is not considered this would be unneighbourly due to fact the building would be single storey and not emit any noise.
- 7.5.5 In terms of the relationship of the proposed three storey townhouses with Nos. 39 – 49 Shephall View in the southern part of the site, the required minimum 35m separation distance has been achieved. As such, there would be no loss of amenity to the occupiers of these dwellings.
- 7.5.6 Given the above assessment, it is considered the proposal would not have a detrimental impact on the amenities of neighbouring residential properties. As such, the proposal would accord with the policies in the adopted Local Plan (2019), the Council's Design Guide SPD (2023), the NPPF (2021) and PPG. With regards to the impact of noise and light pollution on the amenities of neighbouring residents, these aspects have been considered in detail in section 7.10 of this report.

7.6 Impact upon future amenities of residents

- 7.6.1 In considering a residential scheme of this nature it is also important to ensure that living conditions for any future occupiers are appropriate. With regards to private amenity space for the flats, there is a requirement to provide 50m² of amenity space for schemes of up to 5 units, plus an additional 10m² for every additional unit above 5. In new flatted developments where there is no communal space, the Design Guide SPD states balconies or roof gardens should be provided for the occupants of these units.
- 7.6.2 Based on the number of units proposed, there would be a requirement to provide 240m² of communal amenity space. The proposed development would seek to provide approximately 182m² of communal amenity space which falls below the Council's requirements. The communal garden would be enclosed with gated entrances, which could only be accessed by future residents of the development. Each flat would also have access to an enclosed balcony which would provide private amenity space. The flats on the top floor would have larger balconies due to the recessed upper floor. Given the occupiers of each flat would also have access to a private enclosed balcony, it is considered the provision of a smaller communal garden would be acceptable. The proximity of the flats to Fairlands Valley Park should also be taken into account.

- 7.6.3 With regards to private amenity space for the proposed dwellings, the Design Guide SPD (2023) states that for new houses the minimum standard garden space for terraced and semi-detached houses should normally be 50m². Each dwelling should normally have a minimum rear garden depth of 10m and the shape and slope of the garden should ensure that it is useable. The proposed dwellings meet the minimum requirement for garden size and all have usable private amenity space.
- 7.6.4 With regard to the requirements for new residential properties to meet Nationally Described Space Standards (NDSS) as defined by Policy GD1 of the Local Plan (2019), for 2 bed 4 person houses there is a requirement to provide 79m² of floorspace. For 4 bed 6 person houses there is a requirement to provide 106m² of floorspace. For 4 bed 6 person three storey townhouses there is a requirement to provide 112m² of floorspace. For 4 bed 7 person houses there is a requirement to provide 115m² of floorspace. In terms of flats, 1 bed 2 person flats would require 50m² of floorspace, 2 bed 3 person flats would require 70m², 2 bed 4 person flats would require 70m² and 3 bed 5 person flats would require 86m² of floorspace. Following a review of the plans, all the dwellings including the bedrooms would comply with the NDSS for their respective sizes.
- 7.6.5 Policy HO11 of the Local Plan (2019) requires at least 50% of all new dwellings to be Category 2: wheelchair accessible and adaptable. The supporting Design and Access Statement confirms all the proposed dwellings would be designed to M4(1) standard under Part M of the Building Regulations. This means all dwellings would make reasonable provision for most people, including wheelchair users who would be able to access and enter the dwellings and access habitable rooms and sanitary facilities on the ground floor. It is therefore considered the objectives of this policy have been met.

7.7 Parking Provision

- 7.7.1 Policy IT5 of the adopted Local Plan (2019) states that planning permission will be granted where proposals comply with the parking standards set out in the plan. The parking strategy has been designed to comply with the Parking Provision SPD (2020). The application site falls within residential accessibility zone 3, where the Council would seek between 75% to 100% of the maximum number of car parking spaces to serve the development. For the dwellings, the proposed parking arrangements have allowed for 1 space per 2 bed house and 2/3 spaces per 4 bed house and 0.19 space per dwelling for visitors, giving a total of 68 spaces including 7 allocated visitor spaces. Taking into account the accessibility zone, a 75% provision of the maximum number of spaces would be 57 spaces not including visitor bays. This means the proposed parking provision for the dwellings is in accordance with the suggested range.
- 7.7.2 With regards to the flats, the proposed parking arrangements have allowed for 1 space per 1 bed flat, 1.13 space per 2 bed flat, 2 spaces per 3 bed flat and 0.19 space per flat for visitors giving a total of 37 unallocated spaces. In terms of visitor parking, the applicant has confirmed that the parking for the flats would not be allocated and, as such, there would not be a requirement to provide visitor parking (however 6 visitor spaces are shown on the proposed site plan). Taking into account the accessibility zone, a 75% provision of the maximum number of spaces would be 25 spaces not including visitor bays. This means the proposed parking provision for the flats is in accordance with the suggested range.
- 7.7.3 Turning to disabled parking, in line with the Council's adopted Standards, 5% of the total number of spaces for the flats should be designated for disabled persons. In this regard, there would be a requirement to provide 2 disabled parking bays. The proposal would provide 2 disabled parking bays next to the entrance to the flats in line with the Council's standards.
- 7.7.4 With regards to cycle parking, long and short stay cycle parking is provided throughout the site in line with the Parking Provision SPD (2020) standards. The SPD requires:

- 1 long term space per 1 bed
- 2 long term spaces per 2 bed
- 3 long term spaces per 3 and 4 beds
- 1 short term space per 40 units

7.7.5 Every dwelling would be provided with a garden shed to act as secure cycle storage. The apartment block would be provided with an external cycle store containing 52 cycle spaces on a double tier rack system. The required number of long term spaces for the flats are:

- 5 spaces for the 1 beds
- 26 spaces for the 2 beds
- 18 spaces for the 3 beds

7.7.6 There would also be 2 short term cycle spaces (1 per 40 dwellings) located next to the front car park for the flats. This would ensure that there is more than sufficient cycle parking to serve the development.

7.7.7 Turning to electric vehicle parking, the Parking Provision SPD (2020) introduces a minimum requirement for electric vehicle parking. The requirements for new developments would need to abide by the following:-

- All new car parking should be designed to fulfil a Passive Electrical Vehicle Charging Point standard (providing the necessary underlying infrastructure);
- The blend of access to charging points provided within new developments;
- A minimum of 20% of new parking on a site to have access to an active EV charging point;
- A flexible approach to the requirement of charging facilities as technology changes.

7.7.8 At least one space per house (within garages where possible) and 7 of the flats parking spaces (including disabled spaces) would be provided with an active EV point. Of the visitor spaces, 4 bays would be provided with active EV points. Within the flats parking spaces, the EV points would be assigned to unallocated spaces and visitor spaces, as per guidance. All remaining spaces would be passive EV points ready for future installation. This provision fully complies with the Parking Provision SPD (2020) requirement of 20% of the spaces to be active EV points and 80% passive.

7.7.9 With regards to the loss of the existing garages, Local Plan Policy IT8 states that planning permission resulting in the loss of existing car or cycle parking provision will be granted where the existing spaces are replaced within or adjacent to the development. They must also be within 200 and 80 metres walk respectively of the key attractors, or it can be evidenced that the parking is no longer required.

7.7.10 The proposed development would result in the loss of 12 no. garages with no replacement parking being provided. The Council's Garage Services department have advised the garages can be made available should this element of the development come forwards and can be considered surplus to requirements. There are a number of suitable, alternative garages in the local area which would be offered to existing garage tenants should the scheme achieve planning permission. There are also garages which are privately owned within this block, so any work to find alternate garages for Council tenants would only be undertaken should the Council be able to secure legal interest in the garages which are currently privately owned.

7.7.11 Based on the above and in consultation with the Council's Garages Services department, it can be concluded that replacement garage provision can be provided elsewhere should planning permission be granted and therefore the requirements of Local Plan Policy IT8 in terms of loss of the existing garages have been satisfied.

- 7.7.12 The existing Fairlands Valley car park currently serves the park, the existing nursery, scout hut and sea cadets and adjacent Aquapark. No markings currently define the parking bays; therefore it is not known how many spaces the current car park can accommodate and users tend to park randomly. The proposal entails a reduction in the overall existing car park surface to provide the required parking for the apartment block. As the current number of car parking spaces is not known and the existing buildings (nursery, scouts, sea cadets) have or will be vacating the site, the proposed scheme proposes a smaller car park surface with marked parking bays to provide 53no. spaces. These would include disabled bays close to the park entrance and the infrastructure for EV charging points if required.
- 7.7.13 Whilst the proposal would involve a reduction in the overall car park area, the provision of marked bays including disabled bays would improve the car park's usability and the safety for members of the public. There are no minimum parking standards associated with the public car park and therefore the quantum of parking provided is restricted by area and layout of the marked bays only. Given the proposed improvements to the car park surface, the benefits of providing marked bays and the accessibility of the site by walking, cycling and bus it is considered 53no. spaces would be sufficient to serve Fairlands Valley Park particularly as users of the scouts, sea cadets and day nursery would no longer be parking on the site. A third-party representation mentioned that the car park is currently used for school pick up and drop off for Bedwell primary school and St Vincent De Paul Catholic primary school sited within walking distance to the north. There would be no restrictions on this informal use continuing in the future.
- 7.7.14 Given the above assessment, it is considered there would be sufficient parking (including cycle parking, disabled parking and EV parking) in accordance with the Council's adopted Parking Standards. In addition, there is sufficient evidence to demonstrate that the Council could identify replacement garages for existing tenants and owners should they wish following demolition of the garage block. Therefore, the proposal would be in accordance with policies set out in the adopted Local Plan (2019), the Council's Parking Standards SPD (2020), the NPPF (2021) and PPG.

7.8 Highway implications

- 7.8.1 The application is accompanied by a Transport Statement, a Construction Method Statement and a Travel Plan. The development is flanked by residential dwellings to the north, south and east, the Bedwell Primary School and Bedwell Medical Centre to the northeast and Fairlands Valley Park to the east and southeast. Bedwell Crescent joins the A1155 to the north and south, is subject to a 30mph speed limit and is served by 4 bus routes operated by Arriva Bus.
- 7.8.2 The existing 4 residential dwellings currently benefit from a dropped access off Bedwell Crescent whilst the 5th Stevenage Scout Group and Stevenage Sea Cadets buildings, Noah's Ark Nursery and Fairlands Valley Park and Car Park are served by a vehicular access off Shephall View. Shephall View operates as a one-way system between The Hawthorns in the south and Bedwell Crescent to the north. Section 3.0 of the Transport Statement reviews the accessibility of the development to several key local facilities, amenities, and public transport. Whilst the applicant acknowledges several facilities are beyond the preferred walking distances identified within Manual for Streets, the Highway Authority are satisfied that the development is reasonably accessible having regard to the general distance to retail, other commercial units and bus services.
- 7.8.3 Section 3.34 of the Transport Statement investigates the Personal Injury Accident Data between January 2016 and December 2020, supplied by Hertfordshire County Council. A further analysis was obtained from Crashmap.co.uk for 2021. The Transport Statement reports during the five-year period, there were no fatalities, 1 serious accident and 6 slight in severity. From the recorded data, it is noted that the accidents were attributed to a range of factors such as poor judgement and driver/rider errors. The Highway Authority is satisfied

there are no inherent highway defects on the network, which would be exacerbated if the local planning authority was minded to approve the application.

- 7.8.4 Apart from plots 1 to 3 and plots 24 and 25, the development would be served by a vehicular access that forms a bell mouth junction with Bedwell Crescent. The main access would be 5.5m wide and bounded on both sides by a 2m footway. There would be two minor accesses that would connect to the main access to form a raised junction. Plots 1, 2 and 3 would be provided with individual domestic dropped curbs off Bedwell Crescent, whilst Plots 24 and 25 would be served by the existing access off Shephall View, which would be modified and include a 1.5m footway. The vehicular access would become a driveway only and vehicular access to the site from Shephall View would be no longer available. All traffic would access the site, including the Fairlands Valley Park car park from Bedwell Crescent which would reduce the amount of traffic using Shephall View.
- 7.8.5 The position of the main access off Bedwell Crescent requires relocating an existing disabled parking space approximately 15m north. Drawing 6529.011D shows the access achieving visibility splays of 2.4 x 43m in both directions, commensurate with the speed limit on Bedwell Crescent. The submission is also accompanied by several drawings showing the swept path analysis of the Borough's standard refuse vehicle (Drawing 6529.013D), a typical family car and fire tender (Drawing 6529.14D) as well as a Tanker accessing the pump station (Drawing 6529.015B). Having examined the plans, the Highway Authority is satisfied the internal road network could accommodate the manoeuvres of a range of vehicles.
- 7.8.6 The introduction of the new access onto Bedwell Crescent plus the reconfiguration of the existing access off Shephall View would need to be secured by an appropriate highway licence. The pedestrian permeability across the site is considered acceptable by the Highway Authority and responds positively to Hertfordshire County Council's policy requirement as set out in LTP4 and paragraph 112 of the National Planning Policy Framework.
- 7.8.7 Section 5 of the Transport Assessment (Trip Generation, Distribution, Assignment and Assessment) predicts the trip rates associated with the development and this is informed by a review of the Trip Rate Information Computer System (TRICS) database. The Transport Assessment concludes that the proposal has the potential to generate 10 and 13 additional vehicle trips during the AM and PM peaks, respectively. Whilst it is agreed by the Highway Authority the quantum of development is unlikely to result in conditions prejudicial to highway safety, the predicted trip rates appear quite low.
- 7.8.8 It is understood that the scope of the Manual Classified Counts was agreed with Hertfordshire Highways Department. The 2021 traffic flows have been increased to a 2022 base year scenario using the Temprow growth rates which were then increased to the 2027 Future Year rates. The results conclude in percentage terms, the development would not cause an increase in traffic of more than 2% at the nearby junctions. Based on these results, the applicant has not undertaken further capacity assessments or proposed mitigation, which is considered acceptable.
- 7.8.9 The Construction Method Statement (CMS) identifies several key elements expected in the document. The accompanying drawing titled Construction Access Routes (6529.010) identifies the main transport routes construction vehicles would travel during various phases. The plan also includes the tracking of a 12.2m rigid truck. However, absent from the CMS is a prediction of the traffic volumes associated with the build. It is recommended this is provided in an updated CMS, which can be secured via planning condition.
- 7.8.10 Based on the submission, the Highway Authority has concluded it is unlikely given the quantum of the development that the associated increase in the traffic would lead to an adverse impact on highway safety. For this reason, the Highway Authority offers no objection subject to the inclusion of planning conditions set out in Section 9 below.

7.9 Development and Flood Risk

- 7.9.1 A Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy prepared by Marks Heeley Ltd dated September 2022 accompanies the application. The report reviews the drainage and flood risk issues associated with the proposed development and sets out how surface water run off would be accommodated. The report states that the application site is located within Flood Zone 1 and that flood risk from fluvial and groundwater flooding is low. The development of the site for housing is therefore appropriate as set out by the ‘flood risk vulnerability classification’ contained within the Planning Practice Guidance. The Drainage Strategy sets out details in respect of surface water and foul water drainage.
- 7.9.2 Drainage strategies should adhere to the Sustainable Drainage Strategy (SuDS) hierarchy provided in the Local Flood Risk Management Strategy 2 (2019). The hierarchy identifies that living roofs and walls are the most-sustainable SuDS features, followed by ponds and basins, infiltration devices and permeable surfaces. Tanked and piped systems are identified as the least sustainable, providing no pollution reduction nor biodiversity benefit.
- 7.9.3 Based upon mapping and on-site borehole testing, the site’s geology consists of gravely clay over chalk. This geology suggests that infiltration is appropriate for the site. However, due to a poor infiltration rate during testing and the 10m requirement for distance from dwellings, this was not considered possible. The surrounding area is currently served by several public surface water sewers. Following the SuDS hierarchy, the most suitable method of providing surface water drainage to the site has been determined:

| SUDS HIERACHY (ordered most preferable to least) | |
|--|--|
| METHOD | COMMENTS |
| Discharge into ground | Not Feasible in north of site. Not possible in almost all locations of site, due to requirement to located infiltration devices 10m from buildings. |
| Discharge into a surface water body | Proposed – Via existing connection to Millenium Lake |
| Discharge into a surface water sewer | Proposed |
| Discharge into a combined sewer | Not required. |

- 7.9.4 On-site surface water runoff would be discharged to a surface water body. In this instance, via the existing connection to the Millennium Lake and subsequent outfall from the lake to the Fairlands Valley Stream. The rate would be reduced as close as practical to the greenfield runoff rate (4.3 l/sec) whilst ensuring a half drain time of less than 24 hours. The site is not within an area identified as being located above an aquifer. This site is not located within an area designated by the Environment Agency as a Ground Water Source Protection Zone. The Environment Agency has been consulted and has raised no objections to the drainage strategy.
- 7.9.5 The proposed SuDS scheme should include appropriate SuDS components to effectively mitigate the pollution risks associated with the end user activity. Storm water from areas of hard standing to the shared access road would drain towards gullies, pass through a Naylor Smart Chamber and onto an appropriately sized attenuation tank before being discharged to the existing surface water sewer at a reduced rate. Storm water from parking bays would be allowed to percolate to ground via permeable paving and mimic natural ground infiltration, as if it were soft landscaped. Roofs (clean water) would discharge directly to attenuation. In accordance with CIRIA SuDS Manual C753, an appropriate level of treatment for the surface water runoff to the attenuation tanks from the proposed contributing areas has been achieved. The proposal would not increase the risk of flooding elsewhere.
- 7.9.6 Due to resourcing issues at Hertfordshire County Council as Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA), the LLFA has been unable to comment on this planning application. The Council has

appointed an independent drainage consultant to assess the Flood Risk Assessment and Surface Water Drainage Strategy in line with Guidance issued by the LLFA. At the time of writing this report no comments have been received. If comments are received prior to the meeting an update will be provided, otherwise it is anticipated Members will agree to delegated powers being granted to the Assistant Director of Planning and Regulation to impose any conditions advised on any response provided after the committee meeting.

- 7.9.7 A decision will not be issued until the S106 Legal Agreement associated with the development has been signed, which will allow time for comments to be received. Therefore, comments will be fully considered prior to a decision being issued. However, if the Council's Drainage Consultant raises an objection to this application and their concerns cannot be overcome, then this application will be referred back to the Planning and Development Committee for its decision.

7.10 Impact on the environment

- 7.10.1 Historic OS Maps indicate that prior to the site being developed out in the 1960s, the site was part of open fields. The site comprises housing, areas of hardstanding, garages and community buildings along with grassed amenity space and has not been used for any other purposes. A Phase 1 and Phase 2 geo-environmental assessment has been carried out covering the whole site. Extensive geo-environmental and geo-technical sampling and testing have been carried out to identify any potential risks related to pollution and the nature of the ground for future construction. Infiltration testing has also been carried out. A small pollution risk has been identified within an area behind the existing garage block. This area would require remedial works which could be identified with a Remedial Strategy.

- 7.10.2 Following consultation with the Council's Environmental Health department, they do not raise any concerns from a land contamination perspective subject to the imposition of conditions. The conditions imposed would require a remediation strategy is submitted for approval in the event contaminants are identified during the demolition and construction phase of development. In terms of the potential presence of asbestos, the applicant would require a licenced contractor to be appointed to carefully remove the asbestos and for it to be disposed of at a licenced site. The requirements for handling asbestos is controlled by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE).

Groundwater

- 7.10.3 The application site is not located within a Source Protection Zone for potable water. Therefore, no concerns have been raised from Affinity Water or Thames Water in this instance. In addition, the Environment Agency has raised no objections.

Air Quality

- 7.10.4 Policy FP7 of the adopted Local Plan (2019) states that all development proposals should minimise, and where possible, reduce air, water, light and noise pollution. Looking at air quality and air pollution specifically, the Air Quality Annual Status Report (ASR) 2019 by Stevenage Borough Council identifies that the development site is not located within or in close proximity to an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA). This generally indicates that the air quality in the area is within national guidelines.
- 7.10.5 In order to mitigate the impact of the construction phase on air quality, it is recommended a condition is imposed to any permission issued. This condition would require the applicant to submit a Construction Management Plan to detail measures on how to control levels of dust and air pollutions which are generated during the demolition and construction phases of development.

7.10.6 With regards to the operational aspect of the development, due to its limited scale, the proposed development would give rise to a very small rise in NO₂ emissions which in accordance with IAQM/EPUK guidance is identified as having a negligible impact at all receptors in the area. As such, the need for additional mitigation has not been identified as being required. As such, the Council's Environmental Health department has not raised any concerns with respect to the operational impact the development would have on air quality.

Noise Pollution

7.10.7 With respect to noise, Policy FP8: Pollution Sensitive Uses stipulates that planning permission for pollution sensitive uses will be granted where they will not be subjected to unacceptably high levels of pollution exposure from either existing, or proposed pollution generating uses.

7.10.8 Dealing firstly with the impact of noise from the construction phase of the development, it is recommended a condition is imposed on any permission issued requiring the submission of a Construction Management Plan (CMP). Through the CMP, the hours in which noisy activities can take place would be controlled and relevant mitigation measures put in place to minimise the impact of noise from construction activities. Moreover, once a CMP has been agreed by the Council, if a breach were to take place, the Planning Authority can enforce the condition accordingly.

7.10.9 With regards to noise which could arise during the operational phase of development, the houses would be in private ownership. As such, if any complaints arose regarding antisocial behaviour or noise, these could be dealt with by the Council's Environmental Health department or the Police.

Light Pollution

7.10.10 In terms of light pollution, Policy FP7: Pollution of the adopted Local Plan (2019) requires all development proposals should minimise, where possible, light pollution. Applications for development where pollution is suspected must contain sufficient information for the application to make a full assessment on impacts. Planning permission will be granted where it can be demonstrated that the development will not have unacceptable impacts on:

- a. the natural environment, general amenity and the tranquillity of the wider area which includes light pollution;
- b. health and safety of the public; and
- c. The compliance with statutory environmental quality standards.

7.10.11 Turning to the operational side of the development, the applicant has not submitted a detailed lighting strategy. However, to ensure that any external lighting does not prejudice highway safety or cause a substantive nuisance to neighbouring residential properties, a condition should be imposed to any permission issued. Details which would need to be provided as part of an overall lighting strategy should include:-

- Description of the proposed hours of operation, light spillage and column heights;
- A layout plan of the proposed site showing beam orientation;
- Details of the proposed equipment design;
- Details of the expected impact on neighbouring properties and roads;
- A statement of any proposed measures to mitigate for the possible impact of the development (i.e. planting of trees, hedges and shrubs).

7.10.12 In terms of lighting associated with the construction aspect of the proposed development, this can be dealt with as part of a Construction Management Plan. This can be secured by way of condition should planning permission be granted.

7.11 Trees and landscaping

- 7.11.1 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. All trees and hedges present on site have been surveyed and documented in a Tree Schedule (carried out in September 2019 and updated in September 2021). No trees on site have a TPO and the site is not within a Conservation Area. Most trees are Category C, with a few Category B trees. All information on the existing trees within and outside the application boundary are included in the Arboricultural Impact Assessment dated October 2022.
- 7.11.2 It is necessary for some trees and hedgerow to be removed for the development to take place. No veteran or high quality trees would be removed, with most trees identified for removal being Category C and 3no. Category B. Mitigation and replacement planting would be provided throughout the development.
- 7.11.3 A full landscape design, schedule and maintenance plan is provided within this planning application. The design includes for a structure of native species trees distributed throughout the development where space allows for their growth. Suitable locations may include in front gardens and along Bedwell Crescent. Trees would mainly be planted amongst wildflower or amenity lawns and alongside specimen shrubs to create attractive and colourful front gardens. This has been used to provide greenery in the street scene and privacy to the ground-floor level rooms. Hedgerows would also be planted to front gardens to delineate boundaries whilst providing greenery and habitats.
- 7.11.4 An area of ornamental mix would be planted to the front of the apartment block to provide a more formal and aesthetic enclosure to the area. A communal open space for the residents to break up the built environment would be provided to the rear of the apartment block. A hedgerow would be planted at the base of the fencing for general amenity and to soften the appearance of the boundaries. Trees would be planted in this space between the houses and the apartments which would provide a filtering effect in views to and from first and second floor windows.
- 7.11.5 Turf and long grass/ornamental planting would provide variety to the green spaces throughout the development. Trees and specimen shrubs would be planted amongst the long grass to give height and colour and seasonal interest. The use of ornamental species has been kept to a minimum and native species trees and shrubs would be a strong component of the proposed planting mixes. An overarching principle throughout has been to select species which deliver multiple benefits. This ranges from designing for year-round interest, through changes in foliage colours, flowers and fruits, as well as for the plant species' durability, hardiness and ease of maintenance.
- 7.11.6 Given the comments received from the Council's Green Spaces Development officer around the proposed planting schedule and landscaping strategy, it is recommended that a condition be imposed requiring final details of a hard and soft landscaping scheme be submitted. This is to ensure that suitable tree and shrub planting are provided to not only compensate for the trees removed, but to also enhance the site's overall biodiversity and the development's visual appearance in context with the street scene. It is also recommended a condition is imposed requiring details of a landscaping management plan be submitted. This would ensure that the landscaping strategy is maintained during the lifetime of development.

7.12 Biodiversity, Ecology and Protected species

- 7.12.1 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 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

7.12.2 The application site is identified as previously developed land and currently comprises amenity grassland, trees, areas of hardstanding and buildings. Notwithstanding Fairlands Valley Park, the wider environment is generally urban in nature. The application is accompanied by a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal, Biodiversity Impact Assessment, Biodiversity Net Gain Metric 3.1 and a Bat Survey to assess the potential for the site and adjoining habitats to have species that receive legal protection at either UK and/or European level. The survey comprised a desk top study from Hertfordshire Biological Records Centre and from the multi-agency Geographical Information for the Countryside (MAGIC). A field survey was also undertaken.

7.12.3 The Preliminary Ecological Appraisal identified that the development would have no adverse impact on habitats of principal importance, however, the report makes a series of recommendations as to how the impact on existing habitats and species should be mitigated. In terms of species, the surveys identified that protected and priority species present or potentially present include opportunities for foraging and commuting bats within the site. A bat roost was identified within the eaves of No.228-230 Bedwell Crescent, however all buildings were identified to have low or negligible potential to support roosting bats overall. A bat survey was recommended for the scout building and concrete shed. Opportunities were identified for nesting birds within the hedges and trees and suitable foraging and resting habitat for hedgehogs and common toad.

7.12.4 The bat survey of the scout building and concrete shed was undertaken on 5 June 2023, where no bat roosts were identified. Three common species of bat were recorded actively foraging and commuting in and around the site. The report recommends a sensitive lighting scheme should be implemented to avoid disturbance of foraging and commuting bats, together with the installation of two bat boxes within the site both of which would be secured by planning condition should planning permission be granted. A condition would also be imposed at the recommendation of Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust requiring a bat licence issued by Natural England pursuant to Regulation 53 of The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) be submitted to the Planning Authority prior to demolition of No.228-230 Bedwell Crescent authorising the specified activity/development.

7.12.5 With regards to biodiversity net gain, the proposal would result in the loss of habitats which are relatively common and widespread, but have an intrinsic value to wildlife and biodiversity along with the loss of priority habitat in the form of hedgerow. The landscaping for the site would include significant tree planting along with hedge planting, amenity grassland creation, bulb planting, wildflower grassland planting and ornamental planting which would result in a net gain of 29.21% habitat units. There would also be a minor gain of 3.63% hedgerow units. It is considered that the proposed landscaping in combination with proposed non-metric enhancements would result in an overall gain in biodiversity and mosaic of urban habitats of benefit to local wildlife.

7.12.6 Following consultation with Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust, they advise that the details and recommendations set out in the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal, Biodiversity Impact Assessment, Biodiversity Net Gain Metric 3.1 and Bat Survey are acceptable. Consequently, to ensure the biological enhancements are delivered as specified in the accompanying reports, it is recommended that appropriately worded conditions are imposed to any permission issued. This would ensure the development delivers the identified net gain in biodiversity.

7.13 Other Matters

Sustainable construction and climate change

7.13.1 Policy FP1 of the adopted Local Plan (2019) stipulates that planning permission will be granted for development that can incorporate measures to address adaptation to climate change. New developments will be encouraged to include measures such as:

- Ways to ensure development is resilient to likely variations in temperature
- Reducing water consumption to no more than 110 litres per person per day, including external water use
- Improving energy performance of buildings
- Reducing energy consumption through efficiency measures
- Using or producing renewable or low carbon energy from a local source; and
- Contributing towards reducing flood risk through the use of SuDS or other appropriate measures.

7.13.2 The Council's Design Guide SPD (2023) sets out additional requirements with respect to climate change. The guide states that all developments are required to make efforts to minimise energy usage and to incorporate methods of using renewable energy, including:-

- reducing energy demand;
- using passive environmental systems, e.g. natural ventilation;
- daylighting and passive solar gains;
- using high levels of insulation and air tightness in the fabric of the building;
- specifying energy efficient services, controls and appliances;
- implementing water recycling and the provision of water butts;
- using renewable energy;
- using low/zero carbon technologies to provide as much of the energy load as is technically and economically feasible, minimising use of fossil fuels; and
- using efficient fossil fuel technologies, such as Combined Heat and Power and condensing boilers.

7.13.3 The proposed development would utilise a fabric first approach with the provision of cavity wall insulation, roof insulation, party wall insulation as well as floor insulation. Water saving measures such as flow restrictors, aerated taps and dual flush toilets would be incorporated into the design. The dwellings would benefit from modern methods of construction. Where possible, materials would be sourced from environmentally sustainable sources. All materials would be reusable or recyclable where possible to address the whole life cycle of the building. The development would use high levels of thermal insulation to reduce energy requirements, and heating appliances would be selected to have low emission levels in accordance with the requirements of Part L of the Building Regulations. In response to the new part Approved Document O, the flats would also be provided with sun-shading features to minimise overheating.

7.13.4 Further sustainability measures would include:

- Identified location for the possible future installation of PV panels on both houses and the flat block

- Sedum and green roofs wherever a flat roof is provided
- 20% Active Electric charging points with the remaining spaces ready for future installation
- Houses and flats designed to be compatible with Air Source Heat Pumps in the future, should this be the preferred option for heating
- Encouragement of sustainable travel such as walking and cycling, using proposed pedestrian links across the site and convenient cycle storage

7.13.5 Turning to sustainable construction, Hertfordshire County Council as Minerals and Waste Authority recommended the applicant submit a SWMP (Site Waste Management Plan). This is to ensure that materials used in construction are properly recycled where possible. It is recommended that if planning permission were to be granted, a condition could be imposed requiring the applicant to submit a SWMP prior to the commencement of development.

7.13.6 Given the above, and subject to conditions securing the measures identified to address adaptation to climate change, the development would be in accordance with Local Plan Policy FP1 as well as ensuring a suitable site waste management plan would be provided.

Waste and Recycling

7.13.7 Refuse collection points would be allocated throughout the site providing central spaces for the waste collection. They have been placed to allow easy access for both the residents as well as refuse vehicles. The spaces have been designed following discussions with the Waste department at the Council, based on the requirements from the Design Guide SPD (2023). The following requirements were identified:

- 1no 180L bin + 1 space for recycling and glass for each house
- 3no 1100L bn for general waste for the flats
- 8no 360L bins for recycling for the flats

7.13.8 Refuse vehicle access would be via the proposed access from Bedwell Crescent. A swept path analysis for the refuse vehicles was carried out as part of the Transport Statement and confirmed as acceptable by the Highway Authority. The bins would be collected from the front of most dwellings. To ensure that the standard distances for residents and refuse collectors to walk are met, one bin collection point would be included for plots 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11 located as shown on the proposed site plan ref. 18068WD2.01. The refuse vehicle would reverse in so the operators could walk less than 10m to collect from the collection point.

7.13.9 The apartment block would also have a designated external bin store which would be accessed through the rear car park access road. The bins for the townhouses would be collected from the front of the properties by the refuse vehicle driving into the road and reversing in the proposed turning head. All travelling distances for both residents and operators are within the maximum allowed.

Crime Prevention/anti-social behaviour/security

7.13.10 With regards to crime prevention including the safeguarding of children, it is noted that despite the concerns raised by local residents, the Police Crime Prevention Design Advisor considers the development would be acceptable subject to the implementation of Secure by Design measures. The applicant has sought to engage with the Crime Prevention Design Advisor during the course of the application and improvements have been made to enable them to support the scheme. Such matters would also form part of any future Building Regulations approval under Part Q. Notwithstanding this, an informative can be imposed to any decision issued to require the applicant to continue to engage with the Police Crime Prevention Advisor in regard to Designing out Crime.

Community Infrastructure Levy

7.13.11 As indicated above, the Council adopted 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 meter) | |
|-----------------------|--|-------------------------|
| | 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 | |

7.13.12 CIL is a non-negotiable charge. The exact charge will be determined by the Council's CIL officer after an application has been granted in accordance with the CIL Charging Schedule and the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 (as amended). Opportunities for relief or exemption from the CIL charge exist and will be taken into account in the calculation of the final CIL charge.

7.13.13 CIL replaces the need for S106 agreements to specify financial and/or land contributions for non-site-specific infrastructure projects. This allows infrastructure to be planned on a borough-wide scale rather than on a site-by-site basis as mitigation against the impacts of individual proposals. A CIL Form 1: Additional Information has been submitted along with the application.

Covenants

7.13.14 A third party representation raised the issue about covenants preventing the development of the site. Restrictive covenants are not a material planning consideration and would not preclude planning permission from being granted. They would be a matter for the applicant to deal with outside of the planning application process.

Fire Safety

7.13.15 Hertfordshire Fire and Rescue have been consulted and are seeking the provision of fire hydrants to serve the development. The provision and installation of these will be secured via a planning condition should planning permission be granted.

Equality, Diversity and Human Rights

7.13.16 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.

7.13.17 When considering proposals placed before Members it is important that they are fully aware of and have themselves rigorously considered the equalities implications of the decision that they are taking.

- 7.13.18 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.
- 7.13.19 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.
- 7.13.20 In terms of inclusive access, the scheme has been designed to be DDA (Disability Discrimination Act) compliant. In addition, in accordance with Policy HO11: Accessible and Adaptable Housing of the adopted Local Plan (2019), as this is a major scheme at least 50% of all new dwellings will need to be category 2: accessible and adaptable dwellings. Whilst this would be secured via condition, the applicant has provided details to demonstrate that all the units would meet Accessible and Adaptable Housing Standards.
- 7.13.21 The scheme also seeks to deliver the necessary disabled parking provision in accordance with the Council's adopted Parking Standards SPD (2020). The bays would meet the relevant size standards and would be located in an appropriate location in close to the entrance of the apartment building.

8. CONCLUSIONS

- 8.1 Whilst the Council is currently able to demonstrate a five-year supply of deliverable housing sites, which is a key material consideration in the assessment of this application, the proposed development would contribute to the aim of boosting housing supply as required under Paragraph 60 of the NPPF without compromising the delivery of housing on allocated sites or placing an undue burden on local infrastructure. Further, the principle of residential development of the northern half of the site has been established through the Local Plan allocation HO1(15) and the development of the remainder of the site for windfall housing complies with the requirements of Local Plan policy HO5. The area of Principle Open Space comprising the public car park would remain undeveloped.
- 8.2 Ongoing discussions between relevant officers from the Council and representatives of the Scouts and Sea Cadets are seeking to ensure these community groups can be relocated, either utilising alternative buildings or in other scout groups in the town. The scouts and sea cadets would therefore be relocated to an appropriate alternative location as allowed under criterion (a) of Local Plan Policy HC4, which seeks to protect existing community uses. It is concluded the aims of this policy have been met to enable the site to be redeveloped as proposed.
- 8.3 The scheme would, subject to conditions, not have a detrimental impact on the character and appearance of the area and it would not harm the amenities of neighbouring residential properties. Furthermore, the scheme would have acceptable living standards, would have sufficient off-street parking and would not prejudice highway safety. In terms of drainage, it is considered that appropriately worded conditions can be imposed to ensure an acceptable drainage strategy can be delivered on-site once the drainage strategy has been agreed. The development would not have a detrimental impact on the environment and a suitable landscaping strategy can be delivered to compensate for the loss of the existing trees and

hedgerow. In addition, the scheme would deliver biodiversity net gain and would be adaptable to climate change. The scheme would also comprise sufficient general waste and recycle storage.

- 8.4 The development would accord with the relevant policies in the adopted Local Plan (2019) as well as the Council's adopted Supplementary Planning Documents. It would accord with the policies set out in the NPPF (2021) and PPG. Therefore, it is recommended that planning permission be granted.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

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

- S278 Agreement (covering the junction alterations and public realm works on highway verge land to be adopted by HCC Highway Authority)
- Affordable Housing linked to 10A and 10B Burwell Road
- Local apprenticeships and construction jobs
- Management Company to manage areas of unadopted open space, highways and SuDS.
- Financial contribution (amount to be agreed) towards delivering green space improvements in Fairlands Valley Park
- £16,313 East of England Ambulance Service NHS Trust
- S106 monitoring fee.

- 9.2 The detail of which would be delegated to the Assistant Director of Planning and Regulation in liaison with the Council's appointed solicitor, along with the recommendations of the Council's Drainage Consultant, as well as the imposition of suitable safeguarding conditions.

- 9.3 Authority would be given to the Assistant Director of Planning and Regulation in consultation with the Chair of Planning Committee, to amend or add to the suggested draft conditions set out in this report, prior to the decision notice being issued, where such amendments or additions would be legally sound and most effectively deliver the development that the Planning Committee has resolved to approve. These suggested conditions are as follows:

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

18068SU1.01; 18068SU1.02; 18068SU1.03; 18068SU1.04; 18068SU1.05; 18068SU1.06;
18068SU1.101; 18068WD2.01; 18068WD2.02; 18068WD2.03; 18068WD2.04;
18068WD2.05; 18068WD2.102; 18068WD2.103; 18068WD2.104; 18068WD2.105;
18068WD2.106; 18068WD2.107; 18068WD2.108; 18068WD2.109; 18068WD2.110;
18068WD2.111; 18068WD2.112; 18068WD2.20; 18068WD2.201; 18068WD2.202;
18068WD2.203; 18068WD2.204; 18068WD2.205; 18068WD2.206; 18068WD2.207;
18068WD2.208; 18068WD2.209; 18068WD2.21; 18068WD2.210; 18068WD2.211;
18068WD2.22; 18068WD2.23; 18068WD2.24; 18068WD2.25; 18068WD2.30;
18068WD2.31; 18069WD2.120; 18069WD2.121; 18069WD2.130;
SHF.1926.002.ENZ.XX.01.DR.L.45.101; SHF.1926.002.ENZ.XX.01.DR.L.45.102;
SHF.1926.002.ENZ.XX.01.DR.L.45.103

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 site clearance or construction work relating to this permission shall be carried out 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.

- 4 The development to which this permission relates shall be carried out in accordance with the external materials specified within drawing numbers 18068WD2.201, 18068WD2.203, 18068WD2.206, 18068WD2.207, 18068WD2.208, 18068WD2.209 and 18068WD2.210 submitted as approved or any alternatives to be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority.

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

- 5 Notwithstanding the details set out in the application submission, no development shall take place above slab level until details of a hard and soft landscaping strategy and boundary treatment shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall include details of the following:

1. Details of all new planting to take place including species, size, quantity, location and method of planting;
2. Details of all boundary treatments including type, size, positions, heights and materials;
3. Details of any street furniture;
4. Details of tree pit designs and root protection measures (if required);
5. Details of all hardsurfacing areas to include type, size and materials.

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

- 6 All hard surfacing comprised in the approved landscaping details as specified in condition 5 of this approval shall be carried out prior to the first use of the site or the completion of the development, whichever is the sooner.

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

- 7 All planting, seeding and turfing comprised in the approved landscaping details as specified in condition 5 of this approval shall be carried out in the first planting and seeding seasons following the first use of the site or the completion of the development whichever is the sooner. In addition, the boundary treatment as approved shall also be installed prior to first occupation of the development hereby permitted.

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

- 8 Any trees or plants comprised within the approved plans or subsequently approved landscaping scheme, which within a period of five years from the completion of the development die, are removed or become seriously damaged or diseased shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of similar size and species, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

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

- 9 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.

- 10 Development shall not commence until a biodiversity net gain management plan (BNGMP) has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the local planning authority. The content

of the BNGMP shall ensure the delivery of the agreed number of habitat units as a minimum (6.29 habitat units, 2.77 hedgerow units) to achieve a net gain in biodiversity and include the following.

- a) Description and evaluation of habitat parcels to be managed, cross referenced to individual lines in the metric.
- b) Maps of all habitat parcels, cross referenced to corresponding lines in the metric.
- c) Appropriate management options for achieving target condition for habitats as described in the approved metric.
- d) Preparation of an annual work schedule for each habitat parcel (to be applied as a 30-year work plan capable of being rolled forward in perpetuity).
- e) Details of the body or organisation responsible for implementation of the plan.
- f) Details of species selected to achieve target habitat conditions as identified in approved metric, definitively stated and marked on plans.
- g) Ongoing monitoring plan and remedial measures to ensure habitat condition targets are met.
- h) Reporting plan and schedule for informing LPA of condition of habitat parcels for 30 years.

The BNGMP shall also include details of the legal and funding mechanism(s) by which the long-term implementation of the plan will be secured by the developer with the management body(ies) responsible for its delivery.

The plan shall also set out (where the results from monitoring show that conservation aims and objectives of the BNGMP are not being met) how contingencies and/or remedial action will be identified, agreed and implemented so that the development still delivers the fully functioning biodiversity objectives of the originally approved scheme.

The approved plan will be implemented in accordance with the approved details.

REASON:- To ensure measurable biodiversity net gain in accordance with Stevenage Biodiversity and Planning SPD and NPPF.

- 11 No development shall commence until details of 15 integrated swift boxes and 4 integrated bat boxes have been submitted and approved by the LPA. These devices shall be fully installed prior to occupation and retained as such thereafter.

REASON:- To conserve and enhance biodiversity.

- 12 No demolition of the site of the bat roost identified in the approved survey shall commence unless the local planning authority has been provided with a copy of the licence issued by Natural England pursuant to Regulation 53 of The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) authorising the specified activity/development to go ahead. Development shall then proceed in accordance with that licence and in accordance with the approved ecological report. All mitigation and compensation measures shall be fully installed before occupation and retained as such thereafter.

REASON:- To ensure compliance with the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) and to ensure biodiversity is conserved and enhanced in accordance with NPPF.

- 13 The recommended ecological and nature conservation enhancements set out within the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal by Ecology By Design dated November 2022 shall be implemented and permanently maintained in accordance with the approved details.

REASON:- To conserve and enhance biodiversity.

- 14 Prior to the first occupation of the development hereby permitted the vehicular access shall be completed and thereafter retained as shown on drawing number (Proposed Site Plan-18068wd2.01) in accordance with details/specifications to be submitted to and approved in

writing by the Local Planning Authority in consultation with the highway authority. Prior to use appropriate arrangements shall be made for surface water 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 in accordance with Policy 5 of Hertfordshire's Local Transport Plan (adopted 2018).

- 15 Prior to the first occupation of the development hereby permitted the vehicular access improvements, as indicated on drawing number (Proposed Site Plan-18068wd2.01), shall be completed and thereafter retained.

REASON:- To ensure construction of a satisfactory access and in the interests of highway safety, traffic movement and amenity in accordance with Policy 5 of Hertfordshire's Local Transport Plan (adopted 2018).

- 16 Prior to the first occupation of the development hereby permitted a visibility splay measuring 2.4 x 43m metres shall be provided to each side of the access where it meets the highway and such splays shall thereafter be retained at all times free from any obstruction between 600mm and 2m above the level of the adjacent highway carriageway.

REASON:- To ensure that the level of visibility for pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles is satisfactory in the interests of highway safety in accordance with Policy 5 of Hertfordshire's Local Transport Plan (adopted 2018).

- 17 Prior to the first occupation of the development hereby permitted the proposed access arrangements/on-site car turning area shall be implemented in accordance with the approved drawing number (Proposed Site Plan-18068wd2.01) and retained thereafter available for that specific use.

REASON:- To ensure construction of a satisfactory development and in the interests of highway safety in accordance with Policy 5 of Hertfordshire's Local Transport Plan (adopted 2018).

- 18 Prior to the first occupation of the development hereby permitted, each dwelling shall be provided with an active (ready to use) EV charging point which shall thereafter be permanently retained.

REASON:- To ensure construction of a satisfactory development and to promote sustainable development in accordance with Policies 5, 19 and 20 of Hertfordshire's Local Transport Plan (adopted 2018).

- 19 Prior to the commencement of the development hereby permitted, a scheme for (short and long stay) the parking of cycles including details of the design, level and siting shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved scheme shall be fully implemented before the development is first occupied and thereafter retained for this purpose.

REASON:- To ensure the provision of cycle parking that meets the needs of occupiers of the proposed development and in the interests of encouraging the use of sustainable modes of transport in accordance with Policies 1, 5 and 8 of Hertfordshire's Local Transport Plan (adopted 2018).

- 20 No development shall commence until a Revised Construction Method Statement 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 / Statement shall include details of:

- a. Construction vehicle numbers, type, routing
- b. Access arrangements to the site;
- c. Traffic management requirements
- d. Construction and storage compounds (including areas designated for car parking, loading /unloading and turning areas);
- 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 (including delivery times and removal of waste) and to avoid school pick up/drop off times;
- h. Provision of sufficient on-site parking prior to commencement of construction activities;
- i. Post construction restoration/reinstatement of the working areas and temporary access to the public highway;
- j. where works cannot be contained wholly within the site a plan should be submitted showing the site layout on the highway including extent of hoarding, pedestrian routes and remaining road width for vehicle movements
- k. Phasing Plan.

REASON:- In order to protect highway safety and the amenity of other users of the public highway and rights of way in accordance with Policies 5, 12, 17 and 22 of Hertfordshire's Local Transport Plan (adopted 2018).

- 21 Following the removal of all subbase from the existing pavement construction and completion of site preparation works and prior to the commencement of construction works testing of Boreholes WS101 and WS105, referenced in the Geo-Environmental Report ref. CRM.757.001.GE.R.001.A, shall be carried out to confirm that soil concentrations of lead and Polycyclic Aromatic Hydrocarbons at these locations do not exceed the General Acceptance Criteria values referenced in the said report, and the results from the analysis of the soil samples shall be provided to the local planning authority.

If, following the further testing of boreholes or during the course of development any unforeseen contamination is found or suspected, works shall cease and the local planning authority shall be informed immediately. The local planning authority may request the nature and extent of any contamination to be investigated in order that a suitable remediation strategy can be proposed. The development shall not continue until any required remediation as agreed in writing by the local planning authority has been undertaken, and the local planning authority has confirmed it has been undertaken to its satisfaction.

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.

- 22 Prior to first occupation of the development hereby permitted details of external lighting to the site shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority and approved in writing. There shall be no other sources of external illumination.

REASON:- To minimise pollution of the environment and to protect foraging and commuting bats.

- 23 The measures to address adaptation to climate change as set out within the Design and Access Statement by Kyle Smart Associates dated October 2022 shall be implemented and permanently maintained in accordance with the approved details.

REASON:- To ensure the development is adaptable to climate change through provision of energy and water efficiency measures.

- 24 Prior to the commencement of the development hereby permitted, a detailed Site Waste Management Plan (SWMP) shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The SWMP shall detail how waste materials generated as a result of the proposed demolition and/or construction works will be disposed of, and the level and type of soil to be imported to the site as part of the development.

REASON:- In order to reduce the level of waste generated during the demolition and construction phases of development and to recycle all waste materials where possible.

- 25 No development shall take place (including site clearance) until a final detailed design for the drainage scheme for the site has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved drainage scheme shall be implemented in full prior to the beneficial occupation of the development to which this permission relates and shall be

permanently retained as such thereafter unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

REASON:- To adhere to the hierarchy of drainage options, as set out in paragraph 080 (Reference ID: 7-080-20150323) of the Planning Practice Guidance; to maximise the use of SuDS in the interests of mitigating the risk of flooding to the site itself and downstream; and to maximise the sustainability of the development.

26 Infiltration testing should be in accordance with BRE Digest 365 which should be carried out at the location of any infiltration measure(s). Where infiltration is not possible, evidence that approval has been sought from the relevant water authority should be provided for any connection into a public surface water sewer.

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

27 Upon completion of the drainage works for the site and in accordance with the timing/phasing arrangement, a management and maintenance plan for the SuDS features and drainage network must be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall include:

1. Provision of a complete set of as built drawings for site drainage.
2. Maintenance and operational activities.
3. Arrangements for adoption and any other measures to secure the operation of the scheme throughout its lifetime.

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

28 At least 50% of the residential units shall be Category 2: Accessible and Adaptable dwellings.

REASON:- To ensure the development will meet the increase in demand for accessible and adaptable units for elderly and disabled residents in accordance with Policy HO11 of the Stevenage Borough Local Plan 2011 – 2031 (adopted 2019).

29 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 & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).

30 A new highway directional sign for Fairlands Valley Park shall be erected adjacent to the approved vehicular access on Bedwell Crescent and the existing sign on Shephall View removed.

REASON:- To ensure all vehicular traffic is directed to the correct access.

31 No above ground works shall take place until a scheme for the provision of adequate water supplies and fire hydrants, necessary for firefighting purposes at the site has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall not be occupied until the scheme has been implemented in accordance with the approved details.

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

32 No dwelling shall be occupied until confirmation has been provided that either: 1. Foul water Capacity exists off site to serve the development, or 2. A development and infrastructure phasing plan has been agreed with the Local Authority in consultation with Thames Water. Where a development and infrastructure phasing plan is agreed, no

occupation shall take place other than in accordance with the agreed development and infrastructure phasing plan, or 3. All Foul water network upgrades required to accommodate the additional flows from the development have been completed.

REASON:- Network reinforcement works may be required to accommodate the proposed development. Any reinforcement works identified will be necessary in order to avoid sewage flooding and/or potential pollution incidents.

- 33 All car parking spaces shown on drawing number 18068wd2.01 shall be provided, marked out and hard surfaced ready for use prior to first occupation of the dwellings hereby permitted and shall be retained in that form and kept available for those purposes thereafter.

REASON:- To ensure that adequate parking is available within the site and that there is no detriment to the safety of adjoining highways.

- 34 The refuse and recycling store for the apartment building as shown on drawing number 18068WD2.30 shall be provided and made ready for use prior to first occupation of the flats hereby permitted and shall be retained in that form and kept available for those purposes thereafter.

REASON:- To ensure that adequate refuse and recycling facilities are available to serve the apartment building.

- 35 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.

- 36 Notwithstanding the provisions of Classes A, B and C of Part 1, Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (or any Order revising, revoking or re-enactive that Order with or without modification) no internal or external alterations shall take place to any garage, which would preclude its use for housing motor vehicles and/or bicycles, no loft conversions including dormer windows / roof extensions, or roof lights and openings shall be constructed on the dwellinghouse(s) hereby permitted unless permission is granted on an application made to the Local Planning Authority.

REASON:- To enable the Local Planning Authority to fully consider the effects of development normally permitted by that Order to safeguard the amenities of the neighbouring properties from overlooking / loss of privacy and to ensure sufficient parking is available.

Pro-active Statement

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.

INFORMATIVES

1 Thames Water

A Groundwater Risk Management Permit from Thames Water will be required for discharging groundwater into a public sewer. Any discharge made without a permit is deemed illegal and may result in prosecution under the provisions of the Water Industry Act 1991. We would expect the developer to demonstrate what measures he will undertake to minimise

groundwater discharges into the public sewer. Permit enquiries should be directed to Thames Water's Risk Management Team by telephoning 020 3577 9483 or by emailing trade.effluent@thameswater.co.uk. Application forms should be completed online via www.thameswater.co.uk. Please refer to the Wholesale; Business customers; Groundwater discharges section.

2 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.

3 Building Regulations

To obtain advice regarding current Building Regulations please contact Hertfordshire Building Control Ltd. by emailing us at building.control@hertfordshirebc.co.uk or phoning us on 01438 879990.

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

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

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

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

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

4 Police Crime Prevention Design Service

Prior to construction the applicant will contact the Hertfordshire Constabulary CPDS with a view to seeking to achieve accreditation to the Police preferred minimum security standard that is Secured by Design. The reason for this is to ensure that the development is compliant with both National and Local Planning Policies, in addition, this will also demonstrate the discharge of obligations under Approved Document 'Q' – Security of Building Regulations".

5 HCC Highway Works s.278

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.

6 Storage of Construction Materials

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-developmentmanagement.aspx> or by telephoning 0300 1234047.

7 HCC Construction Management Plan

Construction Management Plan (CMP): The purpose of the CMP is to help developers minimise construction impacts and relates to all construction activity both on and off site that impacts on the wider environment. It is intended to be a live document whereby different stages will be completed and submitted for application as the development progresses. A completed and signed CMP must address the way in which any impacts associated with the proposed works, and any cumulative impacts of other nearby construction sites will be mitigated and managed. The level of detail required in a CMP will depend on the scale and nature of development. The CMP would need to include elements of the Construction Logistics and Community Safety (CLOCS) standards as set out in our Construction Management template, a copy of which is available on the County Council's website at: <https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/highways-roads-and-pavements/business-and-developer-information/development-management/highways-developmentmanagement.aspx>

10. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

1. The application file, forms, plans and supporting documents having the reference number relating to this item.

2. Stevenage Borough Council Supplementary Planning Documents – Parking Provision adopted October 2020, Stevenage Design Guide adopted January 2023, The Impact of Development on Biodiversity adopted March 2021, Stevenage Borough Council Developer Contributions adopted March 2021.
3. Stevenage Borough Local Plan 2011-2031 adopted 2019.
4. Hertfordshire County Council’s Local Transport Plan 4 adopted May 2018.
5. Responses to consultations with statutory undertakers and other interested parties referred to in this report.
6. Central Government advice contained in the National Planning Policy Framework July 2021 and Planning Policy Guidance March.