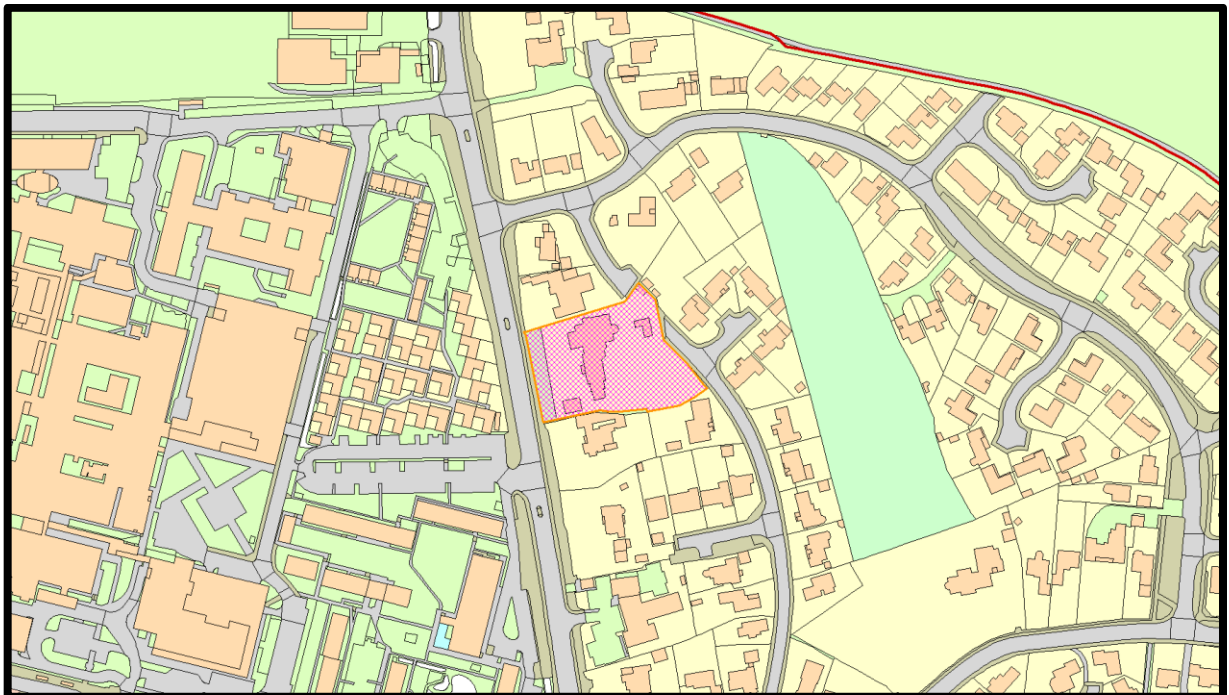


Meeting: Planning and Development Agenda Item:
Committee
Date: 7 December 2023
Author: Thomas Frankland-Wells
Lead Officer: Zayd Al-Jawad
Contact Officer: Thomas Frankland-Wells

Application No:	23/00107/OPM
Location:	18 North Road, Stevenage, Herts, SG1 4AL
Proposal:	Outline planning permission for the demolition of existing dwellinghouse and erection of an up to 76 bedroom care home (Use Class C2). Detailed design of access with appearance, landscaping, layout and scale as reserved matters.
Drawing Nos.:	(21) 01; (00) 2; (00) 3; (00) 4; (00) 5; (9-) 1; (9-) 3 Rev E; (9-) 4 Rev D;
Applicant:	Muller Property Group
Date Valid:	31 January 2023
Recommendation:	REFUSE PLANNING PERMISSION



The above plan is for illustrative purposes only.

1 SITE DESCRIPTION

- 1.1 The site is an irregularly-shaped plot of land extending to approximately 3,700m² and located to the east of North Road, near the northern boundary of the Borough. It is developed with a detached, two storey dwellinghouse and incidental outbuildings, with a large garden to the rear and a private driveway to the front. The principal access to the site is via said driveway, which leads off North Road, whilst a secondary access is located to the rear off Daltry Road. The land on the site is largely flat.
- 1.2 The site contains several protected trees but is otherwise not subject to any local plan designations or notable environmental constraints. It is located wholly within Flood Zone 1.
- 1.3 The surrounding area has a mixed character. Lister Hospital is the dominant feature to the west and further to the north on that side of North Road are a mix of commercial and leisure uses, including Stevenage Rugby Club and the recently constructed G-Park. The land to the east of the road is characterised by suburban housing, including the strategic housing site at Land to the North of Stevenage.

2 RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

- 2.1 There is no relevant planning history recorded at the application site.

3 THE CURRENT APPLICATION

- 3.1 The application seeks outline planning permission for the erection of a care home with 76 bedrooms. Access is the only matter put forward for approval, whilst appearance, landscaping, layout and scale are reserved for approval at a later date.
- 3.2 The application comes before the Planning and Development Committee because it is for major development.

4 PUBLIC REPRESENTATIONS

- 4.1 The application was publicised by neighbour letters, a site notice, and a press advert.
- 4.2 32 letters of objection were received. The material issues raised are summarised as follows:
- Loss of an aspirational home
 - Overdevelopment / inadequate soft landscaping
 - Loss of period property / diminished historic character
 - Excessive width, height and overall scale
 - Inappropriate massing
 - Loss of light
 - Light pollution
 - Noise pollution, including traffic noise
 - Vermin and odour resulting from bin stores
 - Demolition and construction impacts
 - Inadequate off-street parking / inconsiderate overspill parking
 - Traffic generation
 - Impact on ecology, biodiversity and trees
- 4.3 2 letters of support were received. The material issues raised are summarised as follows:
- Provision of supported housing

- Provision of employment
- Adequate public transport

4.4 Full copies of all representations are available on the Council's website.

5 CONSULTATIONS

5.1 The following section contains summaries of consultation responses. Full copies of the responses are available on the Council's website.

HCC Highways (Local Highway Authority)

5.2.1 No objection.

HCC SuDS (Lead Local Flood Authority)

5.3.1 Awaiting updated comments.

HCC Growth and Infrastructure

5.4.1 No objection.

HCC Waste and Minerals

5.5.1 No objection, subject to a condition to secure a site waste management plan.

Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust

5.6.1 Awaiting updated comments.

Hertfordshire Fire and Rescue Service

5.7.1 No objection, subject to a condition to secure the provision of a fire hydrant.

SBC Environmental Health

5.8.1 No objection, subject to conditions to control working hours, secure a construction environmental management plan, and secure further ground investigations.

SBC Arboriculture and Conservation Manager

5.9.1 No objection, subject to further consideration at the reserved matters stage.

6 RELEVANT PLANNING POLICIES

Background to the Development Plan

6.1.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that planning applications be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. For Stevenage, the statutory development plan comprises the following documents:

- The Stevenage Borough Council Local Plan 2011-2031 (adopted 2019)
- The Hertfordshire Waste Core Strategy & Development Management Policies Development Plan Document 2011-2026 (adopted 2012)

- The Hertfordshire Waste Site Allocations Development Plan Document 2011-2026 (adopted 2014)
- The Hertfordshire Minerals Local Plan Review 2002-2016 (adopted 2007)

6.2 National Planning Policy Framework

- 6.2.1 A revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published in September 2023. This largely made minor corrections to the earlier July 2021 version and revised policy with respect to onshore windfarms. 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.
- 6.2.2 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. 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.
- 6.2.3 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 link below:
- <https://www.stevenage.gov.uk/documents/planning-policy/monitoring/housing-delivery-test-action-plan-2022.pdf>
- 6.2.4 Turning to 5-year housing land supply, the Council 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).
- 6.2.5 The Council, based on its HDT score and 5-year housing land supply calculations, the Council is not currently subject to the most severe penalty under paragraph 11(d) of the NPPF (2023). For reference, if this policy was to be engaged, it would mean the Local Plan policies would be classed as out-of-date.
- 6.2.6 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.

6.3 Planning Practice Guidance

6.3.1 The Planning Practice Guidance (“PPG”), with which Members are fully familiar, is an online resource containing guidance supplementing the NPPF. The PPG is a material consideration which should be taken into account in determining planning applications.

6.4 National Design Guide

6.4.1 The National Design Guide 2021 is Government guidance on the characteristics of well-designed places and demonstrates what good design means in practice. It has the same status as the PPG and should similarly be taken into account when determining planning applications.

6.5 Stevenage Borough Local Plan

6.5.1 The Local Plan policies most relevant to determining the application are as follows:

- SP1 Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
- SP2 Sustainable Development in Stevenage
- SP5 Infrastructure
- SP6 Sustainable Transport
- SP7 High Quality Homes
- SP8 Good Design
- SP11 Climate Change, Flooding and Pollution
- SP12 Green Infrastructure and the Natural Environment
- IT4 Transport Assessments and Travel Plans
- IT5 Parking and Access
- IT6 Sustainable Transport
- HO5 Windfall Sites
- HO10 Sheltered and Supported Housing
- GD1 High Quality Design
- FP1 Climate Change
- FP2 Flood Risk in Flood Zone 1
- FP7 Pollution
- FP8 Pollution Sensitive Uses
- NH5 Trees and Woodland

6.6 Supplementary Planning Documents

6.6.1 The following supplementary planning documents are relevant to determining the application:

- Parking Provision and Sustainable Transport SPD 2020
- The impact of Development on Biodiversity SPD 2020
- Developer Contributions SPD 2021
- Design Guide SPD 2023

6.7 Community Infrastructure Levy

6.7.1 Stevenage Borough Council adopted a Community Infrastructure Levy (“CIL”) Charging Schedule in 2020. This allows the Council to collect a levy to fund infrastructure projects based on the type, location, and floor space of a development. The proposal would be liable for CIL but would be zero rated.

7 APPRAISAL

7.1 The main issues in the assessment of the application are as follows:

- The principle of the development
- Standard of accommodation
- Character and appearance
- Impact on neighbouring amenities
- Parking
- Highway safety
- Ecology, arboriculture and biodiversity
- Flood risk and drainage
- Climate change and sustainability
- Land contamination
- Developer obligations and CIL
- Other material considerations

7.2 Principle of Development

- 7.2.1 The application proposes the erection of a care home, which is a form of supported housing. The application site is currently in use as a (vacant) single family dwelling and is not allocated for any specific purpose in the Local Plan.
- 7.2.2 Policy SP7 of the Local Plan sets out the strategic objective of providing at least 7,600 new homes within the Borough between 2011 and 2031, supplemented by the provision of 200 bed spaces in supported accommodation. The majority of these bed spaces are planned to be provided as part of strategic housing developments but the Local Plan does not preclude them from being provided on other appropriate sites.
- 7.2.3 The only significant supported housing proposal that has come forward in the Borough since 2011 is the provision of up to 72 beds within the strategic Land to the West of Stevenage development. This application was made in outline and has a resolution to grant permission but is currently pending determination whilst the associated section 106 agreement is negotiated. It is technically possible that the final number of beds provided could reduce slightly as part of the reserved matters process but at this stage, there is nothing to suggest that this would happen.
- 7.2.4 A care home located a short distance from the site at 12 North Road was demolished in 2018 and redeveloped for flats. This had once provided 18 beds but was in very poor condition and had lain vacant prior to being demolished.
- 7.2.5 It was envisioned that the strategic Land to the North of Stevenage development would provide additional supported bed spaces but ultimately these were not included within the scheme. This development is now at the reserved matters stage.
- 7.2.6 The only remaining opportunity to provide supported accommodation on a strategic site allocated in the current Local Plan would therefore be at the Land to the South-East of Stevenage site. This is the smallest of the three strategic site and proposals for its development have yet to come forward.
- 7.2.7 The current application, which comes forward on an unallocated site would, if approved, provide 76 supported bed spaces. This in itself is a significant level of provision and carries commensurate weight in favour of the proposal. However, it is also important to highlight that together with the proposals for Land to the West of Stevenage, the total number of supported bed spaces coming forward within the Local Plan period would be up to 148 or roughly 75% of

a planned total of 200 if the current proposal is approved. With the only strategic site yet to come forward for development also being the smallest, this application represents perhaps the best opportunity to ensure that the overall target for supported housing is met within the plan period.

- 7.2.8 The target set by Policy SP7 was based on the Strategic Housing Market Assessment that was prepared in support of the Local Plan. The applicant has however also submitted a more up-to-date assessment of care needs within the Borough and this shows that there are currently 40 more registered beds in total than are required. However, a distinction is made between older institutions and those which meet modern standards (in particular providing ensuite facilities) and when this is taken into account, there is currently a shortfall of 80 beds. This figure is expected to increase to a shortfall of 99 beds by 2025.
- 7.2.9 Again, the proposed development would make a significant contribution towards meeting this need, providing 76 beds which meet modern standards, including being provided with ensuite facilities. This would make up the majority of the projected 2025 shortfall of this type of accommodation and in doing so, would be of considerable public benefit.
- 7.2.10 The loss of the existing single family dwelling must be recognised, as this would have a negative impact on general housing supply. It is also important to note that the existing dwelling qualifies as an “aspirational” home, for which there is an identified shortage within the Borough. However, it is considered that the adverse impacts of this loss would be considerably outweighed by the provision of 76 modern care home beds and as such, the proposal is compliant with Policy SP7 overall. The associated detailed policy relating to loss of housing, Policy HO6, is not engaged because this only applies where redevelopment is for non-residential uses.
- 7.2.11 Policy HO10 of the Local Plan sets out additional criteria for the development of supported housing. It states that planning permission will be granted where:
- a) the site is well served by passenger transport;
 - b) there is good access to local services and facilities such as neighbourhood centres;
 - c) appropriate levels of amenity space and car parking for residents, visitors and staff are provided; and,
 - d) the proposal is appropriate to its locality.
- 7.2.12 The site is not located within a residential parking accessibility zone but is nonetheless reasonably well served by passenger transport, with bus stops almost immediately in front of the site boundary. These are served by the number 55 bus, which is a regular half-hourly service between Letchworth and Stevenage via the Old Town. Connections to other bus and train services are then possible from the town centre.
- 7.2.13 The site is not ideally located for local services because it lacks a neighbourhood centre within close proximity, meaning the closest location for day-to-day shopping and other amenities is the Old Town, which is approximately 1km or a 15 minute walk to the south. However, it is expected that the care home would provide support to residents who wish to make use of these amenities and the aforementioned 55 bus service also stops on the Old Town High Street.
- 7.2.14 It is also important to note that in terms of access to medical facilities, the site is very well located due to its proximity to Lister Hospital. This would not only be of benefit to residents as and when the need arises for hospital treatment but would also aid the transfer process when new patients are discharged from the hospital, whether that be for long-term care or reablement.
- 7.2.15 Amenity space and car parking are matters of detail and will be considered later on in this report.

- 7.2.16 The question of whether the proposal is appropriate to its locality is a broad one and also covers matters of detail (e.g. appearance) as well as matters of principle (i.e. land use). Strictly from a land use perspective, the proposal is considered to be appropriate for its locality because it is, fundamentally, a proposal for a residential use within an established residential area which is not significantly constrained by Local Plan designations or environmental factors. Of course, the proposal would amount to a more intensive residential use of the site than the existing use as a single family dwelling but not to the extent that it would be inherently incompatible with its location.
- 7.2.17 Having regard to all of the above, the proposal is considered to be consistent with Policies SP7 and HO10 in land use terms. Accordingly, the development is considered to be acceptable in principle.
- 7.3 Standard of Accommodation
- 7.3.1 There are no adopted planning standards relating to the quality of care home beds. The scheme is nonetheless for residential development and Policy GD1 of the Local Plan therefore requires the scheme to provide for the amenities of future occupants. Policy FP8 states that planning permission for pollution sensitive uses, such as residential 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.
- 7.3.2 Layout, appearance and scale are reserved matters but the applicant has submitted floor plans and elevations which are not marked as illustrative. Therefore, they must be treated as forming part of the application and put forward for approval.
- 7.3.3 These plans shows that the proposed bedrooms would measure between 18m² and 20m², which is generous considering that a typical double bedroom would be expected to be a minimum of 11.5m². In addition, each bedroom would benefit from an ensuite bathroom, measuring approximately 4m² and providing a toilet, washbasin and shower. Overall, the rooms would therefore be approximately halfway between the size of a typical bedroom and a typical one person flat. Given the specialist nature of the accommodation, this is considered to be appropriate.
- 7.3.4 Each of the proposed rooms would be served by a large window and those to the rear of the building at ground floor level would also have an external door. As such, the rooms would all benefit from a good outlook and while those facing directly north would not receive direct sunlight, they would still benefit from an acceptable amount of daylight.
- 7.3.5 Landscaping is a reserved matter but the submitted site plan suggests that approximately 1400m² of garden space would be retained. This is considered to be ample outdoor space for the proposed 76 residents.
- 7.3.6 In addition to the garden space, future residents would benefit from a number of other amenities, including lounges, dining facilities, a cinema, a café, and a hair and nail salon. These would all make a positive contribution to residents' quality of life.
- 7.3.7 The only significant nearby source of pollution, excluding ground contamination, is road traffic noise. It is considered that this would not result in any material harm, given the volume of traffic on nearby roads and the extent to which the proposed building would be set back from the busiest of these roads, North Road. The Council's Environmental Health team was consulted on the application and raised no concerns in respect of noise or any other sources of pollution which might have an immediate impact on residents living conditions.
- 7.3.8 Having regard to the above, it is considered that the proposed development would provide a good standard of accommodation for future residents. In this respect, the proposal accords

with Policies GD1 and FP8 of the Local Plan. The provision of adequate amenity space would also be consistent with Policy HO10.

7.4 Character and Appearance

7.4.1 Policy SP8 of the Local Plan requires new development to achieve the highest standards of design and sustainability. Policy GD1 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 surrounding urban fabric, its relationship between buildings, landscape design and relevant aspects of sustainable design.

7.4.2 The National Design Guide 2019, which was published by the Government, is a material consideration in the determination of planning applications. It states 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.

7.4.3 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.

7.4.4 The Guide goes on to state 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.

7.4.5 The Council's Design Guide SPD (2023) sets out that a high-quality environment is essential for providing a good quality of life. A well-designed and managed space not only provides a visually attractive environment but can also help to ensure that a place is easy to move around and within, is safe and secure, and is useful for all members of the community.

7.4.6 The proposed care home would be laid out in a T-shape with its forward building line approximately in line with its neighbours, set back by about 20m from the carriageway on North

Road. It would measure 43m wide and 50m deep, utilising almost the full width and depth of the plot, with an overall footprint of 1,230m² or roughly 1/3 of the plot. This layout and proportion of developed area would be appropriate, and the 2m gap remaining to either side of the building would prevent it appearing cramped.

- 7.4.7 The frontage would be mostly given over to hardstanding for the main car park, which is less than ideal but ultimately similar to the existing layout. A sufficient strip of land would remain to provide some soft landscaping to provide a degree of screening from North Road and prevent the hardstanding from dominating the frontage. Such planting is currently shown on the plans for illustrative purposes, with the final landscaping proposals being a reserved matter.
- 7.4.8 The front façade of the building would feature three gable ends, one slightly taller in the centre and two either side. The form to the rear would be similar, although the central gable would be smaller and slightly off-centre. Despite this, the design would afford the building a pleasing degree of symmetry and visual interest when viewed from either the front or rear.
- 7.4.9 The main roof of the building would be hipped and this mixture of hips and gables is consistent with surrounding properties, which feature a variety of both of these roof forms. At 14m in height, with the accommodation laid out across three principal storeys and the roof space, it would be considerably taller than nearby single family dwellings but roughly consistent with the flats which have been constructed at 12 North Road, which measure 13.5m in height.
- 7.4.10 External finishes are a reserved matter but for the purposes of illustration, the building is shown as finished with a mixture of red brick, buff brick and grey timber cladding to the walls, and plain grey tiles to the roof. These or similar materials, would give the building a high-quality appearance which would be suitably sympathetic to its surroundings.
- 7.4.11 Having regard to the above, it is considered that the proposed development, subject to final details being provided at the reserved matters stage, would have an acceptable impact on the character and appearance of the area. In this respect, the proposal accords with Policies SP8 and GD1 of the Local Plan.

7.5 Impact on Neighbouring Occupiers

- 7.5.1 Policy FP7 requires all development proposals to minimise, and where possible, reduce air, water, light, and noise pollution. Planning permission will be granted when it can be demonstrated that the development will not have unacceptable impacts on general amenity and the tranquillity of the wider area.
- 7.5.2 Policy GD1 also requires that developments do not have an adverse impact on neighbouring uses or the surrounding area.
- 7.5.3 The principal properties to be considered in this assessment are those directly adjoining the site, namely: 3, 4 and 20 Daltry Road; 4 Granby Road; and 16 North Road.
- 7.5.4 *4 Granby Road*
 - 7.5.4.1 4 Granby Road is located directly north of the application site, on the corner of Granby Road and Daltry Road. Its rear garden extends towards the far northern tip of the site where it crosses Daltry Road, which is proposed as the location for the smaller staff-only car park.
 - 7.5.4.2 It is possible that the occupants of this property would notice some traffic noise associated with the development, particularly at the changeover of shifts, which would happen three times per day. However, the number of vehicle movements would be relatively low, such that the level of noise would be within the confines of what might ordinarily be expected from a residential access road. As such, it would not be materially detrimental to the living conditions of the occupiers.

- 7.5.4.3 It is also possible that some overshadowing of the rear garden of this property would occur but this would generally be limited to the winter months when the sun is lower in the sky. In any event, the area that would be overshadowed is already shaded to a significant extent by trees and other vegetation.
- 7.5.4.4 With the proposed care home being located approximately 25m from the shared boundary at the closest point, the views afforded from the windows serving the north-facing rooms would be at a distance so as not to result in material loss of privacy. For the same reason, any loss of outlook would be well within acceptable limits.
- 7.5.5 *3 Daltry Road*
- 7.5.5.1 3 Daltry Road is located to the east of the site, sharing a short common boundary again adjacent to the proposed staff car parking area. This property has a much closer relationship to the site than 4 Granby Road, including the dwelling itself which is in much closer proximity. However, it is considered that the impacts from traffic noise would be similarly acceptable, for the same reasons as given above.
- 7.5.5.2 Overshadowing would again be limited, in this case generally to afternoons, and again much of the area that would be overshadowed is already shaded by vegetation. The north-facing windows of the care home would this time be in closer proximity but any views over the property would be limited to the end of the rear garden or at an oblique angle, which is considered to be acceptable. Any loss of outlook would be negligible.
- 7.5.6 *20 Daltry Road*
- 7.5.6.1 20 Daltry Road is located to the south-east of the application site, sharing a long common boundary adjacent to the larger of the proposed two garden spaces for the new home. Given this location, it would not be subject to any noticeable traffic noise associated with the development and would not be overshadowed by it either.
- 7.5.6.2 The south and east facing windows in the proposed home and the proposed first floor balcony would afford views over the rear garden of this property and in contrast with 4 Granby Road and 3 Daltry Road, these views would not be obscured to a significant degree by vegetation. However, at a minimum distance of approximately 17m from the shared boundary and 25m from the dwelling itself, it is considered that the views afforded would not result in unacceptable loss of privacy. This degree of separation would also mean any loss of outlook would be limited to an acceptable degree.
- 7.5.7 *16 North Road*
- 7.5.7.1 16 North Road is located directly to the south of the site, such that the dwelling would be roughly in line with the main part of the proposed care home. This relationship means that no overshadowing would occur and any loss of outlook would be extremely limited. Overlooking would result from the south-facing windows in the rear wing of the home and the first-floor balcony. As with 20 Daltry Road, at a distance of at least 20m away, these views would not result in material loss of privacy.
- 7.5.7.2 Some traffic noise would be experienced by occupants due to the proximity to the main shared car park. Whilst this would be noticeable to a greater extent than would be the case with 4 Granby Road or 3 Daltry Road, it is still considered that it would fall short of material harm.
- 7.5.8 *4 Daltry Road*

- 7.5.8.1 4 Daltry Road is located directly to the north of the site and again would also fall roughly in line with the proposed care home. However, since it fronts Daltry Road rather than North Road, it is orientated the opposite way to 16 North Road.
- 7.5.8.2 Being located directly to the north of the site means that this property would experience the most significant impacts by way of loss of natural light. The applicant has submitted a daylight and sunlight assessment which considers these impacts.
- 7.5.8.3 This shows that across almost all relevant measurements, including overshadowing of the rear garden, the impact of the proposed development would be acceptable. However, there are two areas where the development would fail the standard tests, which indicates a potentially significant adverse impact.
- 7.5.8.4 The first of these is a bedroom located towards the front of the property, adjacent to the driveway, which fails both the vertical sky component (“VSC”) and daylight distribution tests. In terms of VSC, the failure is predominantly the result of an existing canopy which extends over the sole window serving the room and without this canopy in place, the development would pass the test by a significant margin. As for daylight distribution, it is noted that much of the room is already obscured and the additional area that would be obscured by the development is circulation space. Consequently, the impact to this room is considered to be acceptable, despite failing the standard tests.
- 7.5.8.5 The other area of concern is the room which abuts the shared boundary. The main part of this room is served by two south-facing windows which would look directly out onto the flank wall of the main wing of the proposed care home. It is also joined, in an open plan layout, to a secondary space which is served by a further window, facing south-west, and a glazed door, facing north-west.
- 7.5.8.6 The south-west facing window and north-west facing door both pass all relevant tests. The room as a whole also passes the daylight distribution test. However, the two south-facing windows fail the VSC tests.
- 7.5.8.7 The applicant’s report argues that this failure is acceptable because the windows are secondary to the main south-west facing window and north-west facing door, which both pass the test with no measurable impact. It is also argued that the room is a bedroom and therefore daylighting is of less importance than it would be for a main living room.
- 7.5.8.8 Officers disagree with this assessment because the room is not merely a bedroom but is instead a multi-functional bed, living and treatment room which has been adapted to meet the care needs of a young adult with severe and complex disabilities. As such, the use of the room is more akin to a room within a care facility, insofar as it is effectively the sole living space for the occupant and it is accordingly where they spend the vast majority of their time.
- 7.5.8.9 It follows that the room is particularly more sensitive to any impacts than would be the case for an ordinary bedroom. Whilst it is acknowledged that the other window and the glazed door would be largely unaffected by the development, the VSC for the two south-facing windows would be less than half of their current value, resulting in a significant reduction in daylight to the main part of the room. In view of the way in which the room is used, these dark conditions would result in intolerable living conditions for the occupant, contrary to Policy GD1 of the Local Plan.
- 7.5.8.10 In terms outlook, it is recognised that the same windows would look directly out onto the flank wall of the proposal but the views from these windows are already limited to a significant degree and on this basis, the impact is considered to be acceptable. From other areas of the property, views would either be entirely unobscured or at a sufficient distance so as not to be materially harmful.

7.5.8.11 Turning to privacy, the north-facing windows in the rear wing of the development would afford views over the frontage of the property. As this area is used primarily for car parking, it is considered that any loss of privacy would not be materially harmful. The same conclusion is reached in respect of the views towards the windows serving the front bedrooms at the property since these would be at a distance of over 25m.

7.5.8.12 There is a discrepancy on the submitted drawings such that north-facing windows at ground, first, and second floor level within the main wing of the building are shown on the plans but not on the elevations. Setting this discrepancy aside, if the windows were to be inserted, they would serve hallways, meaning they could be fitted with obscure glazing to ensure that no material loss of privacy would result. This obscure glazing should be secured by condition in the event that planning permission is granted.

7.5.9 *Demolition and Construction Impacts*

7.5.9.1 The impacts of demolition and construction would be felt by all adjoining neighbours and this is a material consideration in the assessment of the application. Whilst the proposed building would be larger than its neighbours, the scale of the project is still within the bounds of what could ordinarily be expected from a residential area and it would not involve any especially disruptive work such as significant excavations.

7.5.9.2 Some disruption is inevitable, insofar as vehicle movements and noisy work will be necessary to complete the development. However, the impacts can be mitigated, for example by employing dust suppression techniques, limiting the hours when deliveries can be made, and limiting the hours when work can be carried out.

7.5.9.3 To this end, it is recommended that a construction management plan be secured by condition in the event that planning permission is granted. It is also recommended that hours of work be limited by condition to the standard times. Subject to these conditions, it is considered that the impacts of demolition and construction would be mitigated to an acceptable degree.

7.6 Parking

7.6.1 Policy IT5 of the Local Plan requires development proposals to comply with the parking standards set out in the Stevenage Borough Council Parking Provision and Sustainable Transport SPD 2020. According to the standard, one car parking space should be provided for every four resident beds and with 76 beds, the proposed development should provide 19 spaces. No standard is given for non-resident staff and this must therefore be assessed on a case-by-case basis. Census data shows that approximately 60% of work journeys in the area are made, which suggests that the 25 staff who would be on-site at any one time would require 15 spaces. This is broadly consistent with the published standard for other types of residential institutions, whereby one space is required for every two non-resident staff. Overall, the total requirement is therefore considered to be provision of 34 car parking spaces.

7.6.2 However, a reduction can then be applied due to the site's level of accessibility. It should be noted that although the proposal is for a residential use, it is treated as a non-residential use for the purposes of parking standards. Consequently, the site falls within the "all other areas" zone, whereby a reduction of up to 25% may be considered appropriate. Therefore, the final requirement is for between 26 and 34 spaces.

7.6.3 The proposed development would provide a total of 30 car parking spaces, which falls precisely in the middle of the recommended range. These would be split between seven dedicated spaces for staff located off Daltry Road and 23 spaces for both staff and visitors located off North Road. This overall level of provision and distribution is considered to be appropriate but a parking management plan should also be secured by way of condition if permission is granted to ensure that sufficient provision is made for busy periods when shifts are changing over.

- 7.6.4 Parking for disabled motorists should be provided at a rate of 5% of the total number of car parking spaces. With a total of 30 spaces, the requirement in this case is for two disabled spaces. Two such spaces are shown on the submitted site plan, in accordance with this standard.
- 7.6.5 Electric vehicle charging should also be provided, with 20% of spaces having active charging points and the remainder being provided with the underlying infrastructure to be provided with an active charger at a later date. The application proposes seven active charging points, which is slightly above the required number of six. These chargers, along with the infrastructure required for the remaining spaces, should be secured by condition.
- 7.6.6 The standard for cycle parking spaces is for one long-term space for every five staff and one short-term space for every 20 bedrooms. The proposed development should therefore provide five long-term spaces and four short-term spaces. Accessibility reductions are not applied to cycle parking.
- 7.6.7 A cycle store of a sufficient size to accommodate the number of spaces required is shown to the rear of the building adjacent to the Daltry Road parking spaces. Subject to full details of the design of the store being provided either as part of a reserved matters submission or pursuant to another condition, the proposed provision is considered to be acceptable.
- 7.6.8 Having regard to the above, the proposed parking arrangements are considered to be acceptable. In this respect, the proposal accords with Policies IT5 and HO10 of the Local Plan.
- 7.7 Highway Safety
- 7.7.1 Policy IT4 of the Local Plan 2019 states that planning permission will be granted where development will not have an adverse impact on highway safety.
- 7.7.2 The proposal would involve the retention of the existing accesses to the front and rear of the site. The principal front access, which leads off North Road, would lead to the 23 mixed car parking spaces and would also be used for services such as refuse collection. The rear access would be utilised solely by staff cars.
- 7.7.3 HCC Highways, as local highway authority, have confirmed that they have no in principle objections to the proposal, noting that the proposed level of parking and the presence of parking restrictions on surrounding roads is such that overspill parking would be unlikely. In addition, the overall impact on the highway network as a result of traffic generation is considered to be very low.
- 7.7.4 A draft travel plan has been provided, which would require finalising before the development is occupied. This should be secured by condition.
- 7.7.5 Having regard to the above, it is considered that the proposed development would have an acceptable impact on highway safety. In this respect, the proposal accords with Policy IT4 of the local plan.
- 7.8 Ecology, Arboriculture and Biodiversity
- 7.8.1 Policy SP12 of the Local Plan requires the protection of assets of ecological and biodiversity value. Policy NH5 states that development proposals will be expected to protect and retain individual trees within development sites and should include new planting where appropriate.
- 7.8.2 The NPPF and accompanying PPG require the Council to achieve measurable net gains in biodiversity at development sites 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 adopted Biodiversity SPD (2021) requires all major and minor applications other than the exemptions currently suggested by the Government to demonstrate a net gain in biodiversity. For reference, these exemptions are as follows:

- Permitted development;
- Householder development, including extensions;
- Nationally significant infrastructure, which falls within scope of the Planning Act 2008;
- 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
- Developments that would not result in measurable loss or degradation of habitat, for instance change of use of or alterations to building

- 7.8.3 The application is accompanied by a preliminary ecological appraisal ("PEA"), which acts as an initial assessment of whether the site may host protected species. This shows that the site has suitable habitat for bats, nesting birds, polecats, hedgehogs, and common amphibians. Badgers are also suspected to be present within the surrounding area.
- 7.8.4 Consequently, the PEA recommends a typical array of precautionary working methods, along with a sensitive lighting strategy for bats and ecologist oversight of the demolition and construction process. A series of nocturnal bat surveys are also recommended.
- 7.8.5 Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust ("HMWT"), as the Council's ecological consultant, objected to the application on the basis that the required bat surveys had not been carried out when the application was originally submitted. These surveys have now been carried out and at the time of writing, officers are awaiting updated advice from HMWT as to whether the conclusions are sound and the recommendations appropriate. Should a consultation response be received after the date of the committee, it is recommended that delegated authority be given to the Assistant Director to amend the conditions or reasons for refusal in light of the advice, as appropriate depending on the resolution of the Committee. In the event that the advice is at odds with the resolution, the application will be referred back to the Committee for further consideration.
- 7.8.6 The application is also accompanied by a DEFRA biodiversity metric, which shows that the scheme could deliver an on-site biodiversity net gain of 12.51%, achieved principally through the planting of trees. Landscaping is a reserved matter, so the final net gain figure may be subject to change but it is sufficient for the purposes of this outline application to demonstrate that a 10% net gain is achievable without the need for off-site contributions. The final biodiversity net gain proposals should be secured as part of a future reserved matters submission.
- 7.8.7 The wider impact on arboriculture is set out in the arboricultural impact assessment and technical note submitted in support of the application. This shows that one category B tree, five category C trees, and seven category C groups of trees would be felled to facilitate the development. Six category U trees would also be felled on arboricultural grounds regardless of whether necessary to facilitate the development. These removals include four trees which are subject to a TPO.
- 7.8.8 All other trees would be retained, including the six category A trees and four category B trees. Compensatory planting on a three-for-one basis would also be provided, which would be confirmed at the reserved matters stage. For the purposes of this outline application, it is sufficient that the submitted illustrative plan shows sufficient space to accommodate this compensatory planting.

7.8.9 Having regard to the above, it is considered that the proposed development would have an acceptable impact on ecology, biodiversity, and trees. In this respect, the proposal accords with Policies SP12 and NH5 of the Local Plan.

7.9 Flood Risk and Drainage

7.9.1 The application site is located wholly within Flood Zone 1 outside of any critical drainage area and the proposal would not involve the introduction of a use which is more vulnerable to flooding than the existing. As such, there is no policy requirement for a site-specific flood risk assessment to be carried out. Nevertheless, one has been provided.

7.9.2 The application is also for major development involving the provision of SuDS. As such, the lead local flood authority was consulted as a statutory consultee. They initially objected to the application on the basis of various deficiencies within the submitted drainage strategy. A revised strategy has now been submitted and at the time of writing, officers are awaiting updated advice from the LLFA. Should a consultation response be received after the date of the committee, it is recommended that delegated authority be given to the Assistant Director to amend the conditions or reasons for refusal in light of the advice, as appropriate depending on the resolution of the Committee. In the event that the advice is at odds with the resolution, the application will be referred back to the Committee for further consideration.

7.10 Climate Change and Sustainability

7.10.1 Policy FP1 of the Local Plan states that planning permission will be granted for developments that can incorporate measures to address adaptation to climate change. New development, including building extensions, refurbishments and conversions will be encouraged to include measures such as:

- Ways to ensure development is resilient to likely future 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; and
- Using or producing renewable or low carbon energy from a local source.

7.10.2 Section R (Resources) of the Design Guide SPD (2023) requires new developments to mitigate against and adapt to climate change. New developments will be encouraged to include measures such as:

- Ways to ensure development is resilient to likely future 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.

7.10.2 The application is not supported by an energy strategy and no detailed measures have been put forward in terms of adaptation to climate change. It is therefore recommended that a condition be imposed on any grant of permission to secure details of sustainability measures for the scheme. This would ensure that the development achieves a reduction in CO2 emissions vs the requirements of the Building Regulations (through a fabric-first approach which prioritises an efficient building envelope), as well as water consumption of no more than 110L per person per day.

7.10.3 Subject to the above condition, the proposal would accord with Policy FP1 of the Local Plan 2019 & DG SPD 23.

7.11 Land Contamination

7.11.1 Policy FP5 of the Local Plan requires development proposals to consider contamination and be supported by an appropriate preliminary risk assessment (PRA), demonstrating that any necessary remediation and subsequent development poses no risk to the population, environment or groundwater bodies. Accordingly, the application is accompanied a PRA, which recommends that further intrusive investigations be carried out.

7.11.2 The Council’s Environmental Health Team have reviewed the PRA and raise no objections, subject to the required investigations being carried out, along with any necessary remediation, prior to the commencement of the development. It is also recommended that details of measures to deal with any asbestos on the site are secured by condition.

7.11.3 Subject to the above conditions, the proposed development would not pose any unacceptable risks to human health as a result of land contamination.

7.12 Developer Obligations and CIL

7.12.1 *CIL*

7.12.1.1 Stevenage Borough Council adopted a Community Infrastructure Levy Charging Schedule on 1 April 2020. This allows the Council to collect a levy to fund infrastructure projects based on the type, location and floor space of a development, in line with the rates shown in the table below.

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

7.12.1.2 The proposed development would be liable for CIL but would be zero-rated because care homes are defined as falling within the “all other development” category by the charging schedule.

7.12.2 *Transport Obligations*

7.12.2.1 The final travel plan for the scheme, once agreed, would require monitoring for a minimum period of five years. Accordingly, a monitoring fee of £1,200 per annum should be paid to HCC and it is recommended that this be secured by s106 agreement.

7.12.2.2 HCC Highways have also requested that the applicant provide shelters for the nearby bus stops on North Road. However, no substantial justification has been provided for this, nor has a sum been suggested for the works. It is considered that the application adequately provides for the promotion of sustainable transport through the provision of policy-compliant cycle parking facilities and a travel plan. Therefore, a planning obligation is not necessary in

accordance with CIL Reg 122 to make the development acceptable in planning terms and a contribution should not be sought.

8 CONCLUSIONS

- 8.1 The policies considered to be most relevant for determining this application are listed above in Section 6.5.1 and mentioned throughout this report. These are all considered to be consistent with the most recent revision of the NPPF and are therefore considered to be up-to-date. The Council is not required to apply the tilted balance by reason of its housing land supply or housing delivery positions. Accordingly, Paragraph 11(d) of the NPPF is not engaged and the application falls to be determined against a straightforward planning balance.
- 8.2 The proposed development would result in the delivery of a 76 bed care home with high-quality, modern facilities. This would make a significant contribution towards meeting the Local Plan objective of providing 200 additional bed spaces in supported accommodation by 2031 and, with the only strategic housing site yet to come forward also being the smallest, is perhaps the best opportunity to ensure that this target is met.
- 8.3 In addition to the overall target set by the Local Plan, there is also evidence of an upcoming shortfall in the number of care beds with ensuite facilities, which is considered to be an essential part of meeting modern standards of care, that would be almost entirely remedied by the proposal. Together, these benefits carry great weight in favour of the proposal.
- 8.4 Balanced against this is the loss of the single family dwelling which is currently on the site. Although this loss does not conflict with any particular policy, boosting the supply of market dwellings is nonetheless a clear objective of the development plan. This carries weight against the proposal, although given that only one dwelling would be lost and in view of the Council's housing land supply and housing delivery positions, that weight is limited.
- 8.5 Much more significant is the harm to the occupants of 4 Daltry Road, particularly the disabled resident who occupies the room closest to the proposed care home. This room has been specially adapted to meet the needs of the resident, such that it is itself much more akin to a room within a care facility than a typical bedroom. The evidence available to officers shows that the main part of this room, which is served by two south-facing windows, would suffer a considerable loss of daylight as a result of the proposal, causing it to appear dark and gloomy. Irrespective of the fact that the secondary part of the room, which is adjoined in an open-plan layout, would be largely unaffected, it is considered that these conditions would make living conditions intolerable and this carries great weight against the proposal.
- 8.6 Aside from the above and also setting aside the outstanding issues relating to drainage and biodiversity, the proposal is considered to be compliant with development plan policies. This is subject to a number of conditions and future approval of the reserved matters. These matters do not carry weight either for or against the proposal.
- 8.7 On balance, it is considered that the harm to the amenities of 4 Daltry Road, by reason of loss of daylight, would outweigh the potential benefits of providing 76 high-quality care home beds in this location. Accordingly, the proposal is considered to be contrary to the development plan when read as a whole. In the absence of any other material considerations which indicate that permission should be granted, it is recommended that planning permission be refused.

9 HUMAN RIGHTS AND EQUALITIES

- 9.1.1 Consideration has been given to Articles 1 and 8 of the First Protocol of the European Convention on Human Rights. It is not considered that the decision would result in a violation of any person's rights under the Convention.

- 9.1.2 When considering proposals placed before Members it is important that they are fully aware of and have themselves rigorously considered the equalities implications of the decision that they are taking (this has been established as a key requirement in planning decision making by case law through the relevant courts). 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 ("PSED"). As a minimum this requires decision makers to read and carefully consider the content of any Equalities Impact Assessment ("EqIA") produced by officers.
- 9.1.3 The Equalities Act 2010 requires the Council when exercising its functions to have due regard to the need to (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other conduct prohibited under the Act; (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it and (c) foster good relations between persons who share protected characteristics under the Equality Act and persons who do not share it. The protected characteristics under the Equality Act are: age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion and belief; sex and sexual orientation.
- 9.1.4 In this case, the application gives rise to a number of equalities considerations. It has already been mentioned that a resident at 4 Daltry Road, indeed the resident who would be most significantly impacted by the proposal, is disabled, which is a protected characteristic. In addition, any future residents of the proposed care home would be elderly and therefore age is a relevant protected characteristic. It is also likely that a significant number of these residents would be disabled, although this is not a given.
- 9.1.5 The Council is under a duty not to discriminate, whether directly or indirectly, in the determination of this application. Direct discrimination will occur if the application is determined in a way such that the people affected by the proposal are treated unfavourably because of something arising directly from their age or disability. Indirect discrimination will occur if an otherwise non-discriminatory decision puts any of the same people at a particular disadvantage compared to those who do not share the same protected characteristic.
- 9.1.6 Officers are satisfied that the decision to refuse planning permission would not amount to direct discrimination. The disability of the resident at 4 Daltry Road is held to be material but only insofar as it relates to the character of the use of this neighbouring land and, far from being held against the resident, this use has been treated as justification for protection against the potentially adverse impacts of the proposal. Likewise, the age and potential disabilities of residents of the care home has been treated positively, carrying great weight in favour of approving the application, in recognition of the need to provide supported housing for the Borough's population.
- 9.1.7 In contrast, it is considered that the decision to refuse the application would result in indirect discrimination. The need for supported housing has already been outlined in this report and it has been emphasised that the proposal is likely to be the best opportunity to meet that need within the Local Plan period, in particular for accommodation which meets modern standards by virtue of the provision of ensuite facilities. It follows that in refusing the application, those of advanced age and/or those whose disabilities necessitate supported accommodation will find it more challenging to find appropriate accommodation than would otherwise be the case, and this difficulty would not be experienced by others who do not share the same protected characteristics (noting that the general supply of housing within the Borough is good).
- 9.1.8 However, indirect discrimination may be justified where it is a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim. In this case, that aim is the protection of the residents at 4 Daltry Road from intolerable living conditions, in particular the occupant of the room closest to the proposed development, who also happens to be disabled. It is self-evident that this aim is a legitimate one but whether refusal of the application is a proportionate means of achieving it is less readily apparent. In this regard, officers would point out that amendments to the scheme were sought

in the interests of resolving the adverse impacts on 4 Daltry Road but the applicant turned down this approach. In the absence of any such amendments, refusal of the application is proportionate because it is the *only* means of achieving the aim.

- 9.1.9 The second PSED duty of the Council is to advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not. This means: removing or minimising the disadvantages suffered by people due to their characteristics; taking steps to meet the needs of people from protected groups where these are different from the needs of other people; and encouraging people from protected groups to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is disproportionately low. Here there is a degree of overlap with the issues already discussed, since the key way in which the Council, through the exercise of its planning functions, can minimise the disadvantages faced by the Borough's elderly and/or disabled residents and meet their specific needs, is by determining applications in a way that ensures a sufficient supply of supported accommodation.
- 9.1.10 As already stated, the positive contribution that granting permission would make in meeting this objective has been afforded great weight in favour of the application, it is just that these benefits would be outweighed by other adverse impacts. Accordingly, it is considered that advancing equality of opportunity has been given the "due regard" that is required by the legislation.
- 9.1.11 The final PSED duty of the Council is to foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not, which means tackling prejudice and promoting understanding between people of different groups. Officers do not consider that the application would have any particular impacts in this regard.
- 9.1.12 Having regard to the above, officers conclude that the decision to refuse the application would not be in breach of any equalities legislation. Furthermore, in reaching that decision, the requirements of the PSED would have been satisfied.
- 9.1.13 It is then necessary to consider any potential implications should officers' recommendation be overturned and planning permission be granted for the proposal. In this event, the conclusions reached in respect of direct discrimination and fostering good relations would remain unaltered, whilst the indirect discrimination would fall away. In terms of advancing equality of opportunity, it is noted that the development is designed to cater to the needs of those with disabilities by providing disabled parking, level access and internal lifts, thereby satisfying the need to take reasonable steps to minimise the disadvantages faced by people with this protected characteristic. Accordingly, it is considered that a decision to grant planning permission would also be consistent with equalities legislation.

10 RECOMMENDATION

- 10.1 That planning permission be REFUSED for the reason below, with delegated powers given to the Assistant Director of Planning and Regulation, in consultation with the Chair of Planning Committee, to add to the reasons for refusal prior to the decision notice being issued, where such additions would be legally sound and reflect advice received by statutory consultees and/or the Council's appointed consultants.

Reason

1. The proposed development, by reason of its scale and siting, would unduly deprive the occupants of 4 Daltry Road of natural light, resulting in dark, gloomy, and ultimately intolerable living conditions. The proposal is therefore contrary to Policy GD1 of the Stevenage Borough Local Plan 2019, the Council's Design Guide SPD (2023) and the aims and objectives of chapter 12 of the NPPF 2023.

Pro-active Statement

Planning permission has been refused 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 led 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.

10. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

1. The application file, forms, plans and supporting documents having the reference number relating to this item.
2. The Stevenage Local Plan 2011-2031.
4. Stevenage Borough Council Supplementary Planning Documents – Parking Provision and Sustainable Transport SPD (2020); Developer Contributions SPD (2021); The impact of Development on Biodiversity SPD (2020); Design Guide SPD (2023).
5. Hertfordshire County Council Local Transport Plan LTP4 2018-2031
6. Central Government advice contained in the National Planning Policy Framework 2023 and the National Planning Practice Guidance.
7. Responses to consultations with statutory undertakers and other interested parties referred to in this report.