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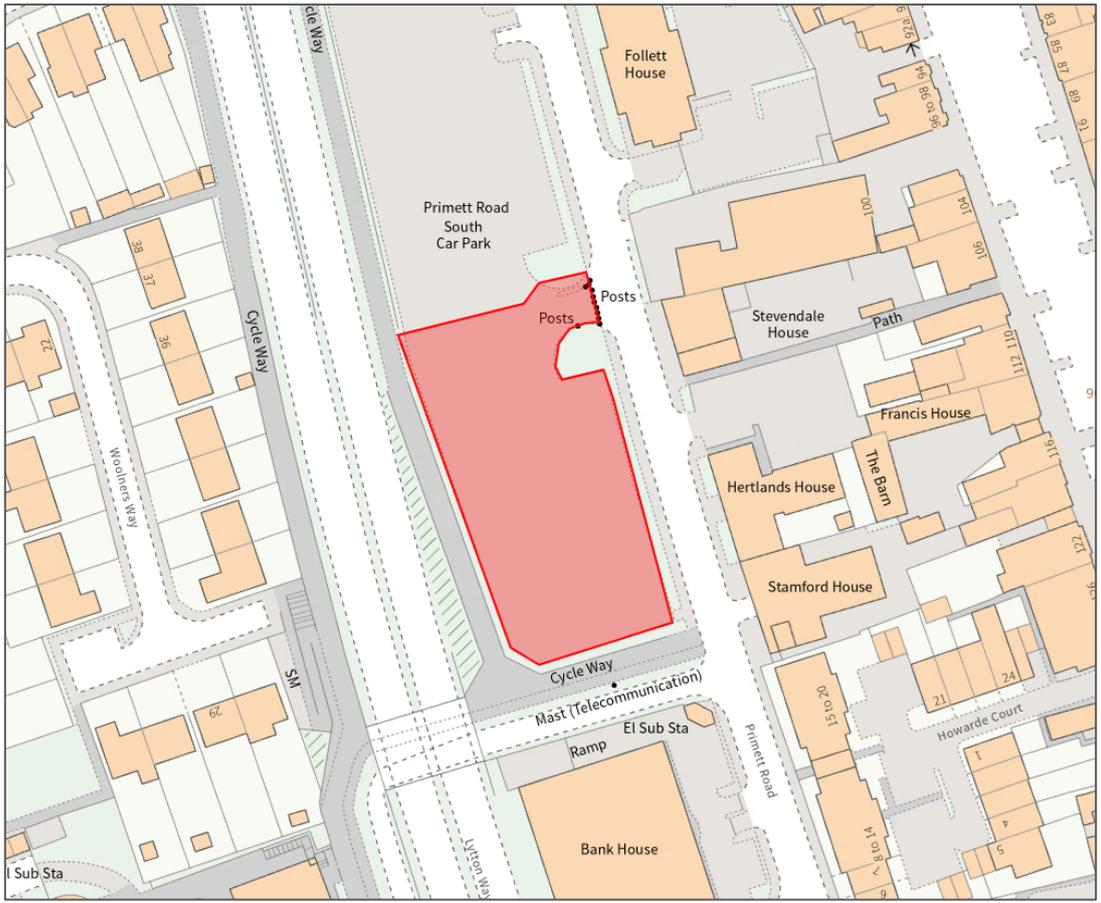
**Meeting:** Planning and Development Committee      **Agenda Item:**

**Date:** 12 March 2026

**Lead Officer:** Alex Robinson

**Author:** Thomas Frankland

<b>Application:</b>	25/00908/FP
<b>Location:</b>	South Car Park, Primett Road, Stevenage, Herts
<b>Proposal:</b>	Change of use of public car park to a rental vehicle premises (Sui Generis), the erection of modular rental vehicle office and rental vehicle wash bay and associated works (including lighting and resurfacing).
<b>Drawings:</b>	PP-ERAC-STE-001; ERAC-STE-002; 0002 Rev P02; 00010; 251217.UK99.CSB.T22; ST-01; ST-02; ST-03;
<b>Applicant:</b>	Enterprise Rent-A-Car UK LTD
<b>Agent:</b>	Planning Prospects Ltd
<b>Date Valid:</b>	29 January 2026
<b>Recommendation:</b>	Grant Planning Permission



## **1. SITE DESCRIPTION**

- 1.1. The site comprises the southern portion of the Primett Road South Car Park, which is located between Primett Road and Lytton Way on the western edge of Stevenage Old Town. It extends to roughly one quarter of a hectare, is largely flat, and is enclosed on three sides by a mixture of shrubs, semi-mature trees, metal railings and timber knee rail fencing.
- 1.2. The sole vehicular access to the site as existing is via the barrier-controlled entrance on Primett Road. To the south of this is a secondary access currently closed to vehicular traffic by the presence of bollards. There are also a number of pedestrian accesses, both formal and informal, dotted along Primett Road and the cycleway which runs between the western flank of the site and Lytton Way.
- 1.3. The surrounding area has a mixed character typical of town centre locations. Primett Road is predominantly commercial but gives way to a greater concentration of residential uses at its southern end on the approach to Games Yard. Primett Road also marks the boundary of the Old Town High Street Conservation Area, which covers the historic core of Stevenage centred around the High Street. To the west of the site, on the opposite side of Lytton Way, is more modern residential development.

## **2. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY**

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

## **3. PROPOSAL**

- 3.1. The application seeks full planning permission for the change of use of the site to a vehicle rental facility, together with the erection of an associated office and vehicle wash bay. Vehicular access would be provided by bringing the existing redundant access back into use, with new static hoops and removable bollards installed to control access both to the site and to the remainder of the South Car Park.
- 3.2. This application is being referred to the planning committee for its decision in accordance with the constitution as the Council is the landowner and over 5 objections have been raised.

## **4. REPRESENTATIONS**

- 4.1. The application was publicised by site notice and press advert. Notification letters were also sent to surrounding properties.
- 4.2. The council received 72 letters of objection. The material issues raised in the representations are summarised as follows:
  - Loss of public car parking, in particular affordable and convenient long-stay parking
  - Impact on businesses in the Old Town
  - Impact on driving test centre
  - Loss of facility for alternative public uses (e.g. Charter Fair and COVID-19 testing)
  - Impact on local parking pressure, in particular cumulative impact having regard to new development in the area
  - Impact on highway safety
  - Impact on air quality
  - Failure to consider alternative sites in more suitable locations

- Failure to prioritise sustainable transport
- Harm to the character and appearance of the area

4.3. The council also received one letter which supported the application on the grounds that it would provide a valuable facility for local residents who do not own a car.

4.4. Full copies of all representations are available to view on the council's website.

## **5. CONSULTATIONS**

5.1. A summary of consultation responses is set out below. Full copies of all representations are available on the council's website.

### **5.2. Affinity Water**

5.2.1. Objection on the grounds of insufficient information relating to groundwater pollution and surface water drainage.

### **5.3. Thames Water**

5.3.1. No objection, subject to the developer following the sequential approach to the disposal of surface water.

### **5.4. UK Power Networks**

5.4.1. No objection.

### **5.5. HCC Highways (Local Highway Authority)**

5.5.1. No objection. Informatives are recommended relating to storage of construction materials, obstruction of the highway, and highway debris/deposits.

### **5.6. BEAMS (SBC Heritage Consultant)**

5.6.1. Neither the office nor the wash bay would adversely impact the setting of the conservation area. However, it is recommended that further information be submitted regarding materials and colour finishes, boundary treatment and lighting.

### **5.7. SBC Engineers**

5.7.1. Support the application on the basis that the proposed loss of capacity would not have an adverse impact on parking provision for local people or businesses.

## **6. PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT**

### **6.1. The National Planning Policy Framework**

6.1.1. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied. It provides a framework within which locally-prepared plans can provide for housing and other development in a sustainable manner. The latest version of the NPPF was published in December 2024 (with further minor amendments in February 2025).

6.1.2. 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. The NPPF must be taken into account in preparing the development plan and is a material consideration in planning decisions.

6.1.3. The NPPF should be read as a whole (including its footnotes and annexes).

## 6.2. **The Development Plan**

6.2.1. For Stevenage, the development plan comprises the following documents:

- Stevenage Borough Local Plan 2011-2031
- Waste Core Strategy & Development Management Policies DPD 2011-2026
- Waste Site Allocations DPD 2011-2026
- Minerals Local Plan Review 2002-2016

## 6.3. **Stevenage Borough Local Plan 2011-2031**

6.3.1. The Stevenage Borough Local Plan 2011-2031 was adopted in 2019. Weight must be given to the policies it contains according to their degree of consistency with the NPPF (the closer the policies in the plan to the policies in the NPPF, the greater the weight that may be given).

## 6.4. **Local Plan Review and Update**

6.4.1. The council concluded a full review of the plan in 2024, as required by regulation 10A of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended).

6.4.2. In response to the review, the council has proposed a partial update of the local plan. Weight must be given to the emerging policies in the partial update according to:

- a) the stage of preparation of the emerging plan;
- b) the extent to which there are unresolved objections to the policies; and
- c) the degree of consistency between the policies and the most recent revision of the NPPF.

6.4.3. At the time of writing, the partial update is undergoing examination by the Secretary of State. Given that the examination has yet to conclude, there remain unresolved objections to a number of emerging policies. The partial update is nonetheless at an advanced stage of preparation and the council considers the emerging policies within it to have a high degree of consistency with the NPPF. Where relevant, the weight to be given to emerging policies will be set out in the assessment section of this report.

## 6.5. **Other Material Considerations**

6.5.1. In determining planning applications, regard must also be had to other material considerations. This may include (but is not limited to):

- The Planning Practice Guidance
- The National Design Guide
- Written ministerial statements and directions
- Guidance published by Hertfordshire County Council
- The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)
- Stevenage Borough Council supplementary planning documents

6.5.2. Planning decisions must also reflect relevant international obligations and statutory requirements.

## 7. **MAIN ISSUES**

7.1. The main issues in the assessment of the application are:

- The principle of the development

- Loss of public car parking
- Character, appearance and heritage impacts
- Neighbouring amenities
- Highway impacts
- Flood risk and drainage
- Biodiversity net gain
- CIL and planning obligations
- Equality and human rights

7.2. 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.

### 7.3. **Principle of Development**

7.3.1. The application proposes the redevelopment of an existing public car park, located on the edge of the Old Town, to provide a vehicle rental facility. The proposal does not fall within a defined use class and is therefore treated as sui generis. The adopted local plan does not contain specific policy criteria governing the location of vehicle rental operations. Accordingly, the acceptability of the proposal in principle falls to be assessed against the plan's broader strategic objectives.

7.3.2. Policy SP2 of the plan summarises those objectives. It says that the council will support applications which, among other things: deliver jobs; reduce the need to travel; respect their surroundings; and support facilities and services that encourage people to live, work and spend leisure time in Stevenage.

7.3.3. The site is previously developed land within the urban area and lies in an accessible location, adjacent to the Old Town and within a 15-minute walk of the town centre along with the railway and bus interchange. It is also well connected to the road network. The redevelopment of such land for a commercial use aligns with the local plan's overarching objective of supporting job creation, as the proposal would intensify the economic function of the site relative to its current use as a public car park and would generate 12 full-time employment opportunities.

7.3.4. It is noted that objections have been raised against the application on the grounds that it would be better suited to a designated employment area, and officers recognise that the operational characteristics of the proposed use go some way in supporting this view. However, the proposal would also provide a useful service to visiting members of the public and it would do so without inherently involving any especially significant impacts in terms of pollution. As such, the proposed use is not considered to be inherently incompatible with a location on the edge of the Old Town and indeed the proximity to other local amenities, residences and transport infrastructure would be likely to improve the accessibility of the proposed facility compared to a more peripheral industrial location.

7.3.5. It is also highly material that there is an absence in the local plan of a policy which would specifically direct the proposed use to an employment area. While these areas may also be capable of accommodating vehicle rental operations, the absence of a firm policy requirement means that the proposal does not give rise to any direct policy conflict.

7.3.6. Having regard to the above, the development is considered acceptable in principle. The proposal's compliance with other relevant policies is considered elsewhere in this report.

#### 7.4. **Loss of Public Car Parking**

- 7.4.1. The proposal would result in the loss of 90 public car parking spaces from the Primett Road South Car Park. Policy IT8 of the local plan says that planning permission will be granted for the loss of existing public car parking where:
- i) Existing spaces are replaced within or adjacent to the new development;
  - ii) Replacement car parking provision is made within 200m of the key attractors currently served; or
  - iii) It can be robustly evidenced that the parking is no longer required.
- 7.4.2. The proposal would not involve the provision of any replacement car parking. The degree of consistency between the proposal and Policy IT8 therefore depends on whether there is robust evidence that the 90 spaces proposed to be lost are no longer required.
- 7.4.3. To inform this assessment, the council's engineers have undertaken an analysis of occupancy data for the surrounding car park network for the month of January 2026. The assessed data is a record of barrier entry and exit information from 7am to 7pm each day. It will include some limited instances of vehicles entering and exiting without stopping to park but otherwise provides an accurate picture of demand for public car parks across the Old Town. The data is for the Primett Road South, Primett Road North and Church Lane North car parks, with Church Lane South excluded on the basis that it is only available for season ticket holders.
- 7.4.4. The analysis shows that if the observed occupancy levels for January were to continue, the remaining capacity within the car parks following the development would be sufficient 98.4% of the time. During the limited periods when theoretical capacity would be exceeded, the average level of displacement would be 11 vehicles, with a maximum recorded exceedance of 37 vehicles.
- 7.4.5. In assessing this evidence, it is important to recognise that parking demand is inherently variable and that a modest degree of peak overspill does not, in itself, indicate a structural shortfall in provision. The identified exceedances are limited in both scale and duration, and the dataset is likely to marginally overstate actual parking demand because it would include any vehicles which enter and exit without parking.
- 7.4.6. Furthermore, in June of this year, an existing season ticket arrangement with the NHS will come to an end, which will release up to 100 spaces back into general availability. This would more than offset the 90 spaces which would be lost as a result of the proposal and would increase overall parking availability across the Old Town beyond the levels seen in the January assessment.
- 7.4.7. Objectors to the application have pointed out that there are a number of other developments in the area which may affect long-term demand for public car parking. In particular, reference has been made to improving office occupancy rates on Primett Road, the construction of new residential developments with limited on-site parking provision (e.g. the Icon development), and the implementation of active travel improvements along the High Street which will result in the removal of some on-street parking spaces.
- 7.4.8. These are material considerations. However, while future growth in demand cannot be discounted, it is inherently uncertain and the little evidence which could be used to

quantify a likely increase in demand does not suggest an increase of a scale that would undermine the conclusions of the engineers' analysis.

7.4.9. Taking all of the above into account, it is concluded that the proposal would result in some displacement of vehicles attempting to park in public car parks in the Old Town. However, these instances of displacement would be limited in scale and duration and should cease when the season ticket arrangement with the NHS comes to an end in June of this year. From that date, assuming that the January occupancy levels are representative, there should be a surplus capacity of at least 63 spaces, which would be sufficient to accommodate any additional demand from new office leases and the removal of spaces from the High Street as part of the Active Travel Fund (ATF) works which are being delivered by Hertfordshire County Council.

7.4.10. Accordingly, it is considered that it has been robustly evidenced that the 90 spaces subject to the application are no longer required. It follows that the proposal accords with Policy IT8 of the local plan.

## 7.5. **Character, Appearance and Heritage**

7.5.1. Policy GD1 of the local plan requires development to be respectful of and make a positive contribution to its surroundings. It also requires compliance with the conservation area guidance in Policy NH10. In this instance, the guidance to be utilised for the purposes of this application with respect to its assessment is the Old Town High Street Conservation Area Management Plan SPD (2012).

7.5.2. Policy NH10 itself requires development proposals affecting a conservation area to have regard to the relevant conservation area management plan. Proposals affecting heritage assets should otherwise be assessed in accordance with national policy, as set out under Policy SP13 of the local plan.

7.5.3. The application site is located adjacent to the western boundary of the Old Town High Street Conservation Area, which is a designated heritage asset. The proposal would involve the construction of two new buildings; a single storey office, measuring approximately 10m x 7m x 3.5m; and a vehicle wash bay, measuring approximately 7.5m x 10m x 4.9m. The proposals would otherwise involve less visually prominent works such as the installation of bollards and other access works.

7.5.4. Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 places a general duty on local planning authorities to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of conservation areas when exercising functions with respect to land or other buildings in those areas.

7.5.5. National planning policy for proposals affecting heritage assets is contained in chapter 16 of the NPPF. This requires local planning authorities, in determining applications, to take account of:

- a) the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;
- b) the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and
- c) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

- 7.5.6. Great weight must be given to the conservation of heritage assets and the more important the asset, the greater the weight that must be given. This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to the asset's significance.
- 7.5.7. Any harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset (including from development within its setting) should require clear and convincing justification. Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, the harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal.
- 7.5.8. The significance of the Old Town High Street Conservation Area is as the economic centre of a settlement that grew around the Great North Road from the medieval period onwards. The presence of a significant number of listed buildings ensures that the zone around the application site maintains its historic character.
- 7.5.9. Although the buildings on the eastern side of Primett Road fall within the conservation area, they generally have a much more modern appearance than the buildings on the High Street itself and as such, make a limited, if any, positive contribution towards the character of the conservation area. In addition, the buildings towards the southern end of Primett Road are more tightly spaced, which affords limited views from the west towards the historic High Street beyond.
- 7.5.10. Given this, although the proposed development would form part of the setting of the conservation area, the council's heritage consultant has advised that it would not have any adverse impact. Accordingly, the development would not result in any harm to the significance of the conservation area and there is no harm to be weighed against the public benefits of the scheme. It follows that the proposal accords with Policies SP13 and NH10 of the local plan.
- 7.5.11. Notwithstanding the absence of any identifiable harm to the conservation area, the council's heritage consultant has requested further details of materials, boundary treatments and lighting for the scheme. Details of the materials for the proposed office building were provided on the drawings as originally submitted and further details have since been provided for the wash bay, boundary treatments and lighting.
- 7.5.12. These details generally conform to what one would ordinarily expect of a development of this nature and are considered acceptable. However, some details do still remain absent (e.g. the materials, as opposed to just the colours, of the office building) and so it is recommended that these be secured by condition.
- 7.5.13. Subject to the necessary condition, it is considered that although the proposed development would appear somewhat at odds with surrounding development, which generally comprises offices and a mix of residential development, it would not appear so out of place as to result in material harm to the character or appearance of the area. In this respect, the proposal accords with Policy GD1 of the local plan.

## 7.6. **Neighbouring Amenities**

- 7.6.1. Policy GD1 of the local plan requires that developments do not lead to an adverse impact on the amenity of neighbouring uses or the surrounding area. In the partial update of the local plan, this wording has been amended slightly to refer to "unacceptable" adverse impacts.

- 7.6.2. Policy FP7 says that development proposals should minimise and where possible, reduce air, water, light and noise pollution. Planning permission will be granted where it is demonstrated that the development will not have unacceptable impacts on:
- a) the natural environment, general amenity and the tranquillity of the wider area, including noise and light pollution;
  - b) the health and safety of the public; and
  - c) compliance with statutory environmental quality standards.
- 7.6.3. Given the scale of the proposed development, it is considered likely that construction would be completed relatively quickly and with minimal disruption to nearby residential properties and business. As such, a construction management plan is not necessary in this instance but it is considered appropriate to control the hours of permitted construction work by condition.
- 7.6.4. Likewise, the scale of the development means that it would not appear overbearing or result in any undue loss of natural light or loss of privacy for neighbouring properties. In addition, the submitted lighting details show that there would be limited light spillage beyond the site's boundaries, including upward glare.
- 7.6.5. The main impact on neighbouring amenities is likely to be from noise but the submitted noise impact assessment confirms that the noise generated by the development, once operational, would be well below the existing background noise level throughout the proposed opening hours (07:00 to 22:00, seven days per week) and just after closing.
- 7.6.6. Having regard to the above and subject to the recommended condition regarding hours of construction, it is considered that the proposed development would have no material adverse impact on the amenities of neighbouring occupiers. In this respect, the proposal accords with Policies GD1 and FP7 of the local plan.
- 7.7. **Highway Impacts**
- 7.7.1. Policy IT4 of the local plan requires that development proposals have no adverse impact on highway safety or severe residual cumulative impact on the highway network. Policy IT5 requires parking to be provided in accordance with the Parking Provision SPD.
- 7.7.2. The proposed development would make use of the existing southern access to the car park, which is currently sitting redundant and blocked to vehicular traffic by bollards. HCC Highways, as the local highway authority, has reviewed the proposal and has raised no objections to this proposed arrangement.
- 7.7.3. HCC Highways have also reviewed the submitted transport statement, which includes a trip generation assessment showing that the number of trips generated by the development would be substantially less than the existing use as a car park. Again, the highway authority have raised no objections to this whether in terms of highway safety or impact on the road network.
- 7.7.4. The council's baseline car parking standard for car hire facilities is that three car parking spaces should be provided for every four employees, as well as one additional space for every two hire cars. The proposed development would have 12 full-time staff and would accommodate 34 rental vehicles (21 cars and 13 vans, excludes two additional car club vehicles). On this basis, the baseline car parking requirement is 26 spaces.

- 7.7.5. However, the site is located within Non-Residential Parking Accessibility Zone 2, which means that car parking should be reduced to 25% to 50% of the baseline level. This provides a final range of between 7 and 13 spaces, once rounded up.
- 7.7.6. The proposal is for 7 spaces, which exactly meets the lower extent of the recommended range. All of these spaces would be reserved for staff.
- 7.7.7. There is no corresponding standard for disabled persons' car parking at car hire facilities. However, the best fit is likely to be workspaces, which would require 1 space plus 5% of the baseline requirement. This would mean 2.3 spaces, which would be rounded up to 3 spaces. The proposal is actually for two disabled persons' spaces, which is slightly below the standard but given the extent of the shortfall, is considered to be acceptable.
- 7.7.8. Likewise there is no standard for cycle parking at car hire facilities but again applying a best fit approach, the development would require one or two cycle parking spaces. The proposal is that cycle parking would be provided for staff within the proposed office. This is not considered to be acceptable on its own, as it fails to take account of any potential need for cycle parking from visiting members of the public, including riders of adapted cycles. However, there is clearly sufficient space within the site to accommodate a single adapted cycle parking space and it is recommended that this be secured by condition in addition to the facility provided within the office for staff members.
- 7.7.9. Having regard to the above and subject to the recommended condition to secure cycle parking, it is considered that the proposed development would provide adequate parking and would have an acceptable impact on highway safety and on the road network more widely. In these respects, the proposal accords with Policies IT4 and IT5 of the local plan.

## 7.8. **Flood Risk and Drainage**

- 7.8.1. Policy FP2 of the local plan requires development proposals to be accompanied by an appropriate flood risk assessment. The use of SuDS should also be maximised so as not to increase flood risk and wherever possible, reduce flood risk. Suitable flood resilience measures must also be incorporated into schemes.
- 7.8.2. In the emerging partial update of the local plan, Policy FP1 deals with sustainable drainage and Policy FP2 deals solely with flood risk. Emerging Policy FP1 places much greater emphasis on the use of green, surface SuDS features and adherence to the surface water discharge hierarchy than the policies in the adopted local plan. Emerging Policy FP2 largely replicates national policies for flood risk and in that sense is similar to the adopted version of the policy. It is considered that both of the emerging policies should be afforded moderate weight in assessing the current application.
- 7.8.3. The site is located wholly within Flood Zone 1, which means it is at a low risk of fluvial flooding. The risk of surface water flooding varies from very low to high across the site according to its topography and existing drainage features.
- 7.8.4. Affinity Water have objected to the application on the basis that it is not accompanied by a surface water drainage strategy and contamination risk assessment. Ordinarily, a scheme of the nature proposed would not require a drainage strategy but because the site falls within a source protection zone for the public water supply, the details are necessary in this instance.
- 7.8.5. The applicant has now submitted the requested information and Affinity Water has been consulted on it. At the time of writing, officers are awaiting their response.

7.8.6. In the event that a response is not received before the date of the committee, it is recommended that delegated authority be given to the Director for Planning and Regulation, in consultation with the Chair of the Planning and Development Committee, to finalise the wording of any relevant conditions recommended by Affinity Water. Subject to those conditions, officers are satisfied that the proposal would accord with Policies FP1 and FP2 of the adopted local plan and the emerging versions of those same policies in the partial update of the local plan.

## 7.9. **Biodiversity Net Gain**

7.9.1. Paragraph 13 of Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 sets out that every planning permission granted for the development of land in England shall be deemed to have been granted subject to the 'biodiversity gain condition' requiring development to achieve a net gain of 10% of biodiversity value. There are statutory exemptions and transitional arrangements which mean that the biodiversity gain condition does not apply in some circumstances.

7.9.2. In this instance, the proposed development would not affect more than 25m<sup>2</sup> of habitat. As such, it falls under the de minimis exemption and would not be subject to the statutory biodiversity gain condition in the event that planning permission is granted.

## 7.10. **CIL and Planning Obligations**

7.10.1. In this instance, the development would be liable for CIL but would fall under the "all other development" category and would therefore be zero-rated. As the proposal is not for major development and there are no identified harms which require mitigation through planning obligations, there would be no need for any permission to be subject to a s106 agreement.

## 7.11. **Equality and Human Rights**

7.12. Consideration has been given to articles 1 and 8 of the first protocol of the European Convention on Human Rights. In this case, it is considered that a decision to grant permission would not violate any person's rights under the Convention.

7.13. When determining planning applications, it is also important to rigorously consider any equalities implications of the decisions that may be taken. This requires proper appreciation of any potential impact of the proposed development on the council's obligations under the Public Sector Equality Duty.

7.14. 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 protected characteristics and persons who do not; and (c) foster good relations between persons who share protected characteristics and persons who do not. 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.

7.15. In this instance, the proposed development would provide an appropriate level of disabled persons' car parking and subject to the recommended condition, would also provide an adapted cycle parking space. In addition, the development would be entirely at ground floor level and would provide level access for disabled staff and customers, including persons who use buggies.

7.16. Having regard to the above, it is considered that a decision to grant permission would not conflict with the Public Sector Equality Duty.

## **8. CONCLUSION**

8.1. The local plan policies most relevant to determining the application are considered to be up-to-date. Accordingly, paragraph 11(d) of the NPPF is not engaged and the application falls to be assessed against a straightforward planning balance.

8.2. The proposed development would support the provision of 12 full-time jobs and would provide a useful facility to residents of the town. These benefits are modest but nonetheless positive and carry moderate weight in favour of granting planning permission.

8.3. Subject to the recommended conditions, the proposal is considered acceptable in all other respects, including in terms of the suitability of the site and the loss of public car parking provision. These matters are neutral in the planning balance.

8.4. The application must be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. In this instance, the proposal is considered to accord with the development plan when read as a whole. Accordingly, it is recommended that planning permission be granted.

## **9. RECOMMENDATIONS**

9.1. That planning permission be GRANTED subject to the conditions set out below, with delegated authority be given to the Director for Planning and Regulation, in consultation with the Chair of the Planning and Development Committee, to amend or add to the conditions subject to which permission would be granted, where such amendments or additions would satisfy the relevant national policy tests and would most effectively deliver the development which the Committee has resolved to approve.

### **Conditions**

#### General

1. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans unless otherwise agreed in writing by the local planning authority:

PP-ERAC-STE-001;  
ERAC-STE-002;  
0002 Rev P02;  
00010  
251217.UK99.CSB.T22;  
ST-01;  
ST-02;  
ST-03;

**REASON:** For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.

2. The development 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).

3. No demolition or construction activities (including any associated collections or deliveries) shall be carried out except between the hours of 07:30 to 18:00 Monday to Friday and 08:00 to 13:00 on Saturdays. For the avoidance of doubt, no such work shall be carried out on Sundays or bank holidays.

**REASON:** In the interests of the living conditions of neighbouring occupiers.

4. The development shall not be open to the public except between the hours of 07:00 to 22:00 on any day.

**REASON:** In the interests of the living conditions of neighbouring occupiers.

5. No external lighting shall be installed or operated at the site other than in accordance with Lighting – Car Park Design Rev 4.

**REASON:** In the interests of the living conditions of neighbouring occupiers.

#### Prior to Commencement

6. Prior to the commencement of the development (excluding site clearance and groundworks), a schedule of external materials shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The development shall then be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

**REASON:** In the interests of the character and appearance of the area.

#### Prior to Occupation

19. Prior to occupation of the development, cycle parking, including one space for adapted cycles, shall be provided in accordance with details which have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The cycle parking shall thereafter be permanently maintained in a manner fit for its intended purpose.

**REASON:** In the interests of sustainable transport and accessibility.

20. Prior to occupation of the development, all accesses, parking, servicing and manoeuvring areas shall be laid out in accordance with the approved plans. Those areas shall thereafter be permanently maintained in a manner fit for their intended purpose.

**REASON:** In the interests of the living conditions of neighbouring occupiers and highway safety.

21. Prior to occupation of the development, all boundary treatments shall be laid out in accordance with the approved plans. The boundary treatments shall thereafter be permanently maintained in a manner fit for their intended purpose.

**REASON:** In the interests of the living conditions of occupiers of the development.

#### **INFORMATIVES**

1. The applicant is advised that the storage 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 County Council

website at <https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/highways-roads-and-pavements/business-and-developer-information/business-licences/business-licences.aspx> or by telephoning 0300 1234047.

2. It is an offence under section 137 of the Highways Act 1980 for any person, without lawful authority or excuse, in any way to wilfully obstruct the free passage along a highway or public right of way. If this development is likely to result in the public highway or public right of way network becoming routinely blocked (fully or partly) the applicant must contact the Highway Authority to obtain their permission and requirements before construction works commence. Further information is available via the County Council website at <https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/highways-roads-and-pavements/business-and-developer-information/business-licences/business-licences.aspx> or by telephoning 0300 1234047.
3. It is an offence under section 148 of the Highways Act 1980 to deposit compost, dung or other material for dressing land, or any rubbish on a made up carriageway, or any or other debris on a highway to the interruption of any highway user. Section 149 of the same Act gives the Highway Authority powers to remove such material at the expense of the party responsible.

Therefore, best practical means shall be taken at all times to ensure that all vehicles leaving the site during construction of the development and use thereafter are in a condition such as not to emit dust or deposit mud, slurry or other debris on the highway. Further information is available by telephoning 0300 1234047.

4. Building Regulations

To obtain advice regarding current Building Regulations please contact Hertfordshire Building Control Ltd. by emailing us at [building.control@hertfordshirebc.co.uk](mailto: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; and completion.

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

## **10. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 10.1. The application file, forms, plans and supporting documents having the reference number relating to this item. Online copies may be obtained at <https://publicaccess.stevenage.gov.uk/online-applications/>
- 10.2. The Stevenage Borough Local Plan 2011-2031  
<https://www.stevenage.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy/local-plan>
- 10.3. The Stevenage Borough Local Plan Partial Update 2025  
<https://www.stevenage.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy/local-plan-partial-update/submission-to-secretary-of-state>
- 10.4. Stevenage Borough Council Supplementary Planning Documents: Parking Provision SPD 2025; Design Guidance SPD 2025; Developer Contributions SPD 2025.  
<https://www.stevenage.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy/planning-library>
- 10.5. Hertfordshire County Council Local Transport Plan LTP4 2018-2031  
<https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/media-library/documents/about-the-council/consultations/ltp4-local-transport-plan-4-complete.pdf>
- 10.6. Government advice contained in the National Planning Policy Framework 2024 and the Planning Practice Guidance.  
[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/67aafe8f3b41f783cca46251/NPPF\\_December\\_2024.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/67aafe8f3b41f783cca46251/NPPF_December_2024.pdf)  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/planning-practice-guidance>
- 10.7. Representations made by statutory consultees and other interested parties referred to in this report. Online copies can be found on Public Access (see paragraph 10.1).