

**Meeting:** Planning and Development Committee    **Agenda Item: 1**

**Date:** 4<sup>th</sup> June 2026

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**Lead Officer:** Alex Robinson

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**Application No :** 26/00197/FP

**Location :** 37 Chancellors Road Stevenage

**Proposal :** Change of use from dwelling Class (C3) to dwelling Class (C2) for the care of children and young adults up to the age of 25

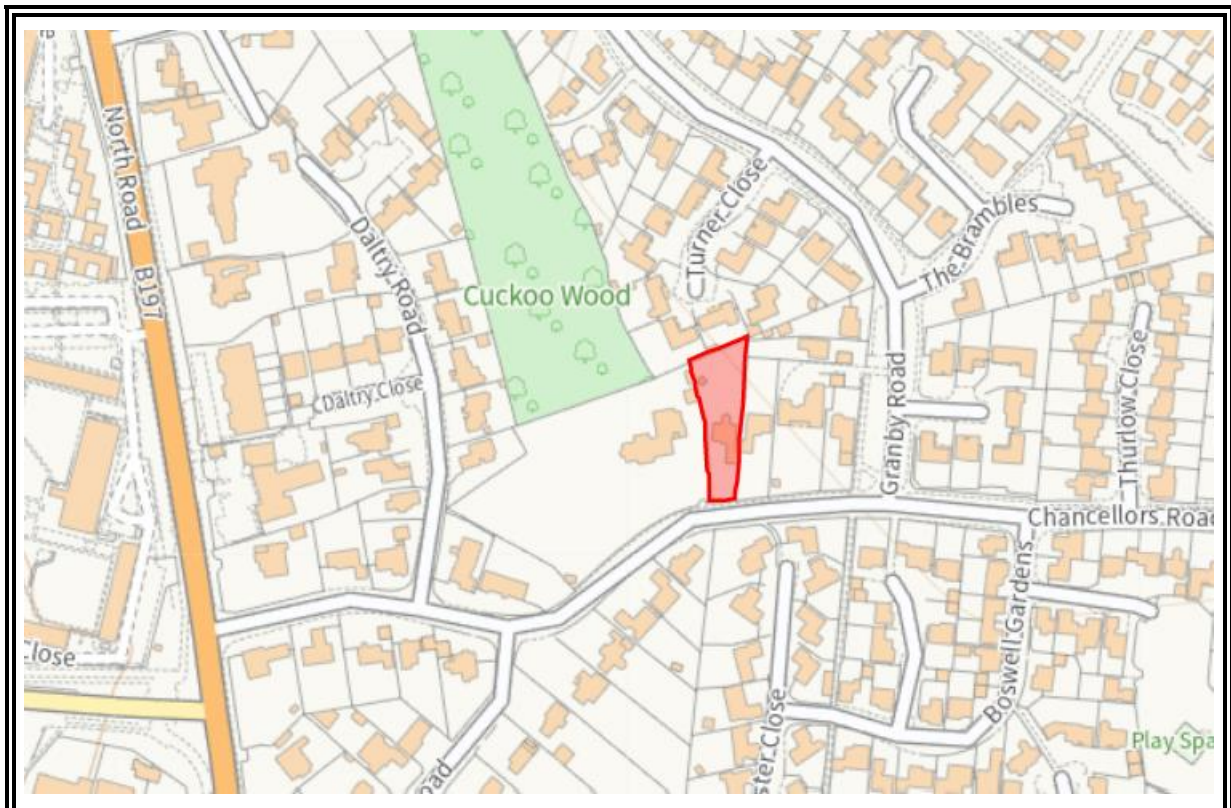
**Drawing Nos.:** 26007 - 001 including Existing Plan; 26007 - 010;

**Applicant :** Jeeves Property Ltd

**Agent:** Mr Joe Reader

**Date Valid:** 31 March 2026

**Recommendation:** GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION



## **1. SITE DESCRIPTION**

- 1.1 The application site currently comprises a large four-bedroom detached dwellinghouse on the northern side of Chancellors Road. To the north, east, south, and west are residential dwellings and to the west is the highway of North Road with residential dwellings beyond.

## **2. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY**

- 2.1 The site has the following planning history on file:

00/00484/TPTPO - Consent to carry out works to a tree, the subject of a Tree Preservation Order (TPO14, T9). Consent granted for the works to the trees on the 14<sup>th</sup> of December 2000.

01/00518/TPTPO - Reduction of branches and pruning to two Oaks (T6 and T7) protected by a Tree Preservation Order (TPO14). Consent granted for the works to the trees on the 21<sup>st</sup> of February 2002.

10/00304/FP - Replacement rear conservatory. This was granted planning permission on the 27<sup>th</sup> of August 2010.

11/00207/TPTPO - Reduction by 30% of 1no. oak (T9) and 1no. ash tree (G2) protected by tree preservation order 14. The proposed works to the trees was refused on the 25<sup>th</sup> of May 2011.

17/00440/TPTPO - Thinning of crown to 2no. oak trees (T9 & T10) and 1no. elm tree (G2) protected by TPO 14. Consent granted for the works to the trees on the 24<sup>th</sup> of August 2017.

18/00689/TPTPO - Reduction of crown by 25% on 1no. oak tree (T7) protected by Tree Preservation Order 14. Consent granted for the works to the trees on the 11<sup>th</sup> of January 2019.

18/00775/TPTPO - Reduction of crown by 3/4 metres on 2no. oak trees (T9 and T10) and reduction of crown by 2/3 metres on 1no. elm tree (within G2) protected by TPO14. Consent granted for the works to the trees on the 8<sup>th</sup> of February 2019.

25/00392/TPTPO - Removal of T2: Medlar, T6: Oak, T7: Oak, T9 and T10: Oak, protected by Tree Preservation Order 14. This application was withdrawn on the 5<sup>th</sup> of June 2025.

## **3. THE CURRENT APPLICATION**

- 3.1 This application seeks planning permission for the change of use from dwelling Class (C3) to dwelling Class (C2) for the care of children and young adults up to the age of 25.
- 3.2 The application comes before the committee as it has been called-in by Councillor Bibby. The Councillor called in this application in terms of impact on the character of the street scene, impact on neighbouring properties and impact on residential amenity.

## **4. PUBLIC REPRESENTATIONS**

- 4.1 Following notification of the application via letters and the erection of site notices, public representations including in the form of petitions have been received from the following properties:

- Chancellors Road: 4; 5; 9; 11; 12; 14; 16; 18; 27; 39; 41; 101; 103; 107; 110; 111; 113; 115; 117; 118; 123; 137.
- Granby Road: 1 Appletree House; 2 Appletree House; 3 Appletree House; 4 Appletree House; 10; 12; 14; 16; 16A; 22; 27; 29; 30; 32; 34; 36; 59; 61; 65; 67; 79; 71.
- Boswell Gardens: 2; 3; 4; 5; 6; 8; 10; 11; 13; 14; 16; 18; 19; 20; 22; 27; 30.
- The Brambles: 2; 3; 5; 6; 8; 9; 11; 13; 14; 18; 21.
- Woodfield Road: Squirrels Drey, 1; 3; 4; 5; 6; 11; 14; 16; 18.
- Foster Close: 2; 3; 5; 6; 7; 10; 11; 12; 15.
- Daltry Road: 5; 11; 9; 15; 19; 20; 21; 28; 30; 32.
- Thurlow Close: 2; 10; 11; 12; 13; 14; 16; 17.
- Morgan Close: 1; 3; 4; 5; 7; 8; 9; 10.
- Wilson Close: 1; 2; 4; 5; 6; 7.
- Turner Close: 2; 3; 4; 6; 7; 9.
- Newbury Close: 1; 3; 5; 6; 8.
- Daltry Close: 1; 3; 4.
- Chouler Gardens: 1; 7.
- Matthews Close: 11; 15.
- Walker Mead: 21.
- Arnold Close: 9.
- Underwood Road: 3.
- Kenmare Close: 1.

4.2 A summary of the comments received are set out below:

- Unsuitable location;
- Cumulative impact and clustering (3 similar facilities within 500 metres);
- Change to the tranquil residential character of the area;
- Increased activity, noise, disturbance, traffic and parking pressures;
- Inclusion of adults aged 18-25;
- Insufficient clarity on management operational arrangements;
- Inappropriate location for people with complex needs;
- Impact on street scene;
- Impact on residential amenity;
- Site security and overlooking concerns;
- Noise disturbances for residential amenities;
- Procedural integrity and reliability of the application;
- Highway safety and visibility;
- Material change of use from C3 to C2;
- Surrounding residents being fearful of young adults with behavioural problems living in the area;
- Lower value the value of properties and make it difficult to sell affect house prices;
- Shortage of aspirational houses;
- Ecology concerns;
- Records of crime at similar facilities.

4.3 The aforementioned is not a verbatim copy of the objections which have been raised. Full copies are available on the Council's website.

## 5. CONSULTATIONS

5.1. Environmental Health – Comments received 12<sup>th</sup> March 2026: “No noise assessment or mitigation proposals have been submitted and therefore if the Local Planning Authority (LPA) is minded to give consent to the application I recommend that the following [noise and disturbance management plan] condition is used.

I would also encourage the LPA to restrict the number of children/residents that may stay at the property, at any one time, to the number set out in the submitted Planning Statement, i.e. four.”

- 5.2. Hertfordshire County Council Highways – Comments received 25<sup>th</sup> March 2026: “Notice is given under article 22 of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 that Hertfordshire County Council as Highway Authority does not wish to restrict the grant of permission.” [subject to informatives]
- 5.3. Crime Prevention Design Service – Comments received 2<sup>nd</sup> of April 2026: “My comments are made from a security, safety and crime prevention perspective only. I do have substantive concerns regarding this application as I do not feel security and crime prevention have been properly considered and therefore I am unable to support this application.”
- 5.4. Environmental Health – Comments received 9<sup>th</sup> April 2026: “I have reviewed the documents submitted in relation to this application, after my earlier memorandum of 12<sup>th</sup> March 2026, and they do not materially change my advice offered to the Local Planning Authority (LPA).”
- 5.5. Hertfordshire County Council Highways – Comments received 21<sup>st</sup> April 2026: “The highway authority considers that; the proposed development is small in scale and would not generate significant number of additional trips to the site that may have unacceptable impacts to the local highway network. So, taking all into account, the highway authority does not wish to object the development.”
- 5.6. Crime Prevention Design Service – Comments received 23<sup>rd</sup> of April 2026: “The role of the Designing Out Crime Officer within the Secured by Design team is to provide proportionate, risk-based advice aimed at reducing opportunities for crime and anti-social behaviour through good design. Our recommendations are grounded in established best practice and are offered to assist applicants in creating safe and sustainable environments.

While engagement with this advice is not mandatory, it is generally well received and often adopted, in full or in part, by applicants seeking to enhance the overall safety and resilience of their developments. I note the points raised in your response and confirm that no further comment will be made on this occasion.”

## **6. RELEVANT PLANNING POLICIES**

### **6.1 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 The latest revision of the NPPF was published in December 2024. The policies it contains are material considerations which will be taken into account in dealing with applications. Due weight will be given to development plan policies according to their degree of consistency with the NPPF. The NPPF should be read as a whole (including its footnotes and annexes).

## **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 Stevenage Borough Local Plan 2011-2031 (Adopted 2019)**

6.4.1 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).

6.4.2. In addition, the council is required to regard the local plan policies most relevant to determining the application as out-of-date because the application involves the provision of housing and the delivery of housing in the borough was substantially below the housing requirement over the last three years. Those policies are:

Policy SP1: Presumption in favour of sustainable development;  
Policy SP2: Sustainable development in Stevenage;  
Policy SP5: Infrastructure;  
Policy SP6: Sustainable transport;  
Policy SP7: High quality homes;  
Policy SP8: Good design;  
Policy SP9: Healthy communities;  
Policy SP11: Climate change, flooding and pollution;  
Policy SP12: Green infrastructure and the natural environment;  
Policy SP13: The historic environment;  
Policy IT5: Parking and access;  
Policy HO6: Redevelopment of existing homes;  
Policy HO10: Sheltered and supported housing;  
Policy HC5: New health, social and community facilities;  
Policy GD1: High quality design;  
Policy FP7: Pollution;

6.4.3 According to the NPPF, the fact that these policies are regarded as out-of-date means that permission should be granted for the proposed development unless: i. the application of policies in the NPPF that protect areas or assets of particular importance provide a strong reason for refusing the development; or ii. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the NPPF taken as a whole, having particular regard to key policies for directing development to sustainable locations, making effective use of land, securing well-designed places and providing affordable homes, individually or in combination.

## **6.5 Local Plan Review and Update (2024)**

- 6.5.1 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).
- 6.5.2. 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.
- 6.5.3. At the time of writing, the partial update has undergone examination by the Secretary of State, and the major modifications consultation has closed. The partial update is 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.

## **6.6 Supplementary Planning Documents**

- 6.6.1 The following supplementary planning documents are relevant to determining the application:
- Parking Provision Supplementary Planning Document (February 2025)

## **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.

# **7. APPRAISAL**

- 7.1 The main issues in the assessment of the application are the acceptability in land use policy terms, impact on the character and appearance of the surrounding area, impact on residential amenity and car parking provision.
- 7.1.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that all planning applications must be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

## **7.2 Principle of Development**

### **7.2 Land Use Policy Considerations**

- 7.2.1 Paragraph 61 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (December 2024) sets out that the overall aim should be to meet as much of an area’s identified housing need as possible, including with an appropriate mix of housing types for the local community.
- 7.2.2 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 outweighed by the provision of a care home for children, for which there is an identified shortfall, and as such, the proposal is compliant with Policy SP7 overall.

- 7.2.3 Policy HO6 of the adopted Local Plan (2019) states that planning permission for schemes resulting in the change of use or redevelopment of existing homes for non-residential purposes will be granted where:
- a) It would provide a small-scale social, health, community or leisure facility or a small-scale extension to an existing business use in the same building;
  - b) It would not adversely affect the surrounding or adjoining properties; and
  - c) A suitable, alternative non-residential site is not available for the proposed use.
- 7.2.4 The aforementioned policy also states that planning permission for residential schemes resulting in a net loss of housing will be granted where it provides demonstrable benefits against the relevant housing policies of this plan. Policy HO10 of the same document stipulates that planning permission for sheltered and supported housing schemes will be granted where the site is well served by passenger transport, there is good access to local services and facilities, there is an appropriate level of amenity space and car parking provision, and the proposal is appropriate to its locality.
- 7.2.5 Turning to Policy HC5, this states that planning permission for new health, social and community facilities on an unallocated site, would be granted where there is:
- An identified need for the facility;
  - The site is appropriately located in terms of its location and accessibility; and
  - The facility is integrated with existing health, social or community facilities, where appropriate.
- 7.2.6 The proposed development seeks a change of use of the existing property (Use Class C3) to a residential care home (Use Class C2) for up to 4 people aged up to 25. The people would live with carers as a single household, although the carers would not live at the property, working on a shift basis. The property would not be altered internally or externally and would continue to be laid out as a typical dwellinghouse where there is a kitchen, dining room and living room area where the people and carers would interact.
- 7.2.7 The applicant advises that there is a shortfall in spaces in Hertfordshire for local children and they often find themselves placed into care homes many miles from their family. They state that there is “a demand for supported care of children in this area. The existing institutions are failing to cope with the number of local childcare housing needs; this application looks to help alleviate this issue.”
- 7.2.8 In terms of siting and location, the development would be approximately 1km from the Sainsbury’s superstore on Hitchin Road. The Saint John Henry Newman secondary school is within 1km, and Barclay Academy and Thomas Alleyne secondary school is within 2km of the site. Almond Hill Junior School and Woolenwick Infant and Nursery schools are also in close proximity. North Road, which is adjacent to Chancellors Road, is well serviced with public transport and the Lister Hospital is very close by to the north. Given this, the site is well served by alternative forms of transport with good access to local services and facilities.
- 7.2.9 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 different type of 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.
- 7.2.10 Having regard to the above, despite the loss of a 1no. four-bedroom dwellinghouse, there are benefits of the development which outweigh its loss. In particular, the proposal would provide a fundamental residential facility for children and young persons where there is an identified need for such facilities. The development would also generate additional employment which is also considered to be a benefit as it supports one of the fundamental aims of the NPPF which is to also deliver sustainable economic development. Therefore, it is considered that the principle of the proposed development

in land use policy terms is acceptable subject to its impact on the appearance of the area and on residential amenities. These are assessed in the following sections of this report.

### **7.3 Impact on Residential / Neighbouring Amenity**

- 7.3.1 The proposed development under this application does not consist of or include any external alterations such as new openings (i.e., additional windows and doors being installed) or extensions to the existing property. Therefore, the proposed development would not impact on the level of privacy and outlook currently enjoyed by neighbouring properties over and above the current situation.
- 7.3.2 Turning to noise which could potentially be generated by the development, the Council's Environmental Health Officer has raised no concerns in this regard. Further, 4 people up the age of 25 living in the property would be in line with that expected of a 4-bedroom family dwelling. However, if there are any statutory nuisances generated by the development, such as noise, in the future then the Council's Environmental Health Department under the Environmental Protection Act 1990 have powers to enforce against this. Furthermore, a condition has been imposed as per the recommendation of the Environmental Health Officer for a noise and noise and disturbance management plan to be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to the occupation as a C2 dwellinghouse.
- 7.3.3 Concerns from local residents regarding a C2 dwellinghouse for children and young people with emotional and behavioural difficulties (EBD) and learning disabilities as not being acceptable in this residential area are noted. However, the use of the premises as a home for children has been assessed to be acceptable in this location and it is not considered that a home occupied by 4 children with staff would be materially different to that of a large single family.
- 7.3.4 This viewpoint has been upheld at a recent appeal in November 2023 (APP/F1040/W/23/3319968, 61 Ashby Road, Woodville, Derbyshire) whereby the Inspector found that a detached five-bedroom family home could accommodate a large family which could include adult children or children with additional needs. He went on to conclude that the proposed conversion would not intensify the use of the site beyond that which is already possible and consequently the level, and character, of noise generated on site by residents would not be dissimilar to a scenario that could occur at the existing dwelling, without planning permission. Further, he stated that although there is a difference between the use of a property as a C3 dwellinghouse and a C2 care home, given the scale of the proposal, the appreciable difference with regards to the living conditions of neighbouring occupiers would not be unacceptable. This decision is pertinent to the application which is before the Council in that it would have similar characteristics to that outlined in the aforementioned appeal decision.
- 7.3.5 In regards to the amenities for the clients at the property, there is an existing private garden area to the rear which measures at least 450m<sup>2</sup>, and which is currently enclosed with a mixture of timber fencing. Given this, the living standards for the clients who would reside within the property would be acceptable in this instance.
- 7.3.6 A large number of local residents raised concerns regarding the clustering of a number of care homes within 500m of the application site, such as Oak Lodge, Rectory Lane (approximately 300m to the south-east of the application site), and 25 North Road (approximately 650m to the south-west of the application site). These are functionally separate sites, with no planning connections other than for the use of the site, and are not located on the same street or within the immediate vicinity of the application site.
- 7.3.7 The applicant has provided a statement on 31<sup>st</sup> of March 2026 (available to view on the public file titled 'Planning Statement'). Page 3 of this document emphasises that the institution will be registered with Ofsted who will carry out a full inspection of the property and assess the risk assessments which have been carried out by the applicant. If they conclude that the property is unsuitable or that children placed in the home will not be safe, then registration is denied, and the home cannot operate. Ofsted will also carry

out regular checks, both announced and unannounced, of the property, staff, and children's welfare and if at any time they find the management of the home to be wanting in any areas, they reserve the right to enforce the closure of the property. This will ensure that the property is managed satisfactorily, and neighbouring amenities are protected from poor management. In addition, the quality of care provided at the site would be governed by a separate regulatory regime under the Department for Education and Ofsted. Government policy requires local planning authorities to a) not attempt to replicate other regulatory regimes and b) assume that those other regimes operate effectively.

- 7.3.8 With those two things in mind, we need to assess the application on the basis that anyone could be managing the site but that whoever that happens to be, they would be regulated effectively by DfE and Ofsted. As such, the identity of the parties involved who would be overseeing this care home is irrelevant to the application from a planning perspective.
- 7.3.9 Concerns from local residents regarding the 'type' of children who would reside at the home are noted, as well as concerns regarding anti-social behaviour. Case Law suggests that anti-social behaviour and fear of crime can be material planning considerations where there is evidential basis for that fear. The Hertfordshire Sufficiency Statement (April) produced by Herts County Council states there are currently 996 children requiring care in Hertfordshire. Of these, 362 are placed outside of Hertfordshire. This is due to a lack of suitable, available places within Hertfordshire. Clearly there is an evidenced need for the proposed development to address the shortfall in places, and whilst 4 spaces would not make a significant improvement in the deficiencies, it nonetheless is a benefit to the proposal and those children and young people requiring care.
- 7.3.10 Anti-social behaviour is not an absolute certainty and can, and does, arise in any residential setting. It should be noted that the applicant has provided additional statements since the initial submission which detail how the property would be regulated by Ofsted and it is further noted that the applicant would work with Herts Police to ensure the property is satisfactorily designed and secured to Police standards.
- 7.3.11 The NSPCC website states that research shows that looked after children tend to have poorer outcomes in education attainment and mental and physical health when compared to children who have not been in, or needed to be in, care. However, when comparing looked after children to other children in need, this is not the case and studies have shown that looked after children have better outcomes than children in need. Other studies have found that most looked after children will say their experiences have been good and it was the right choice for them. Therefore, there is no evidence to say that children in the proposed care home will be any more likely to subscribe to anti-social behaviour than other children. With good care and management, any anti-social behaviour that does arise would be dealt with by the managers and owner of the premises, and the relevant regulatory authorities.
- 7.3.12 Crime data as per the Freedom of Information request under: FOI2026/03383, has been submitted by the applicant as a Supporting Document received on the 15<sup>th</sup> of May.
- 7.3.13 Herts Police Crime Prevention Design Advisor (CPDA) initially raised concerns with regards to a lack of secure office for staff and no liaison between the applicant and themselves in relation to obtaining Secured By Design. They noted seventy-five crime incidents as a combined statistic for both 25 North Road and 23 Rectory Lane, but the data cannot tell us if that was people passing through or residents causing the disturbance. Of these, 29 were a Missing Persons report as legally required for safeguarding reasons, and 23 Concern of Safety reports. It is confirmed that no crimes has taken place on site as per the Supporting Document.
- 7.3.14 Despite this, the crime data is not an accurate predictor of whether the proposed development would cause harm to residential amenity. It is noted that the CPDA did not raise concerns over the principal of the change of use nor the operation of the premises

as a children's care home. Following the provision of additional information, the applicant has confirmed that it would be a staffed environment with 24/7 supervision, ensuring continuous oversight of access and activity, including overnight cover, a ground floor office base, allowing staff to monitor entry and exit in real time, controlled access to the property, with staff managed entry at all times (the home will not operate as an open-access environment) installation of window restrictors where appropriate to prevent unauthorised access or egress, use of secure locking systems to external doors and vulnerable access points, consideration of the flat roof area, with operational controls and supervision mitigating any potential misuse, appropriate external lighting to support visibility and natural surveillance and use of SBD-compliant key safes where required for secure access management. This information had been sent to the Designing Out Crime Officer, who raised no objections.

- 7.3.15 It is also important to highlight that the home would operate under the Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015 and would be subject to ongoing oversight by Ofsted and the Placing Authority. This includes strict safeguarding protocols, staffing ratios, and operational controls which extend significantly beyond physical security design measures alone.
- 7.3.16 The safety and security of the property and residents would be monitored 24 hours a day which exceeds that of a normal family home.
- 7.3.17 Many local residents expressed concern that allowing this application could lead to an intensification of use in future or change to other types of institutions covered by a C2 use. A condition has been agreed with the applicant that would restrict the premises to a children's care home for 4 children. Any deviations from this would require planning permission in order that the Council can fully assess the impacts of any change.
- 7.3.18 On balance, it is considered that the unmet needs of Hertfordshire children are significant, and the proposed development would help address the shortfall in demand. Further, being children, there is a need to be located in a sustainable location, close to educational facilities. The site has been assessed to be in such a location which is afforded some weight in favour of the application.
- 7.3.19 The fear of crime and anti-social behaviour are valid concerns and so are accepted as material considerations. However, the applicant has provided details of how the proposed development would be regulated and run by qualified and experienced staff and equipped with modern security arrangements. As such, the substantial benefits of providing suitable and acceptable housing for children in an accessible location outweigh the identified harms, and there is no justifiable reason to warrant the refusal of planning permission.

#### **7.4 Car Parking and Cycle Provision**

##### *National Planning Policy Framework and Planning Practice Guidance*

- 7.4.1 Chapter 9. (Promoting Sustainable Transport) of the NPPF (2024) sets out a requirement to consider transport issues, which includes parking, at the earliest stages of a development proposal. Paragraph 116 of the NPPF (2024) states "*Development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe.*". Taking this into consideration, paragraph 117 of the NPPF (2024) stipulates that applications for development should:

- a) give priority first to pedestrian and cycle movements, both within the scheme and with neighbouring areas; and second – so far as possible – to facilitating access to high quality public transport, with layouts that maximise the catchment area for bus or other public transport services, and appropriate facilities that encourage public transport use;

- b) address the needs of people with disabilities and reduced mobility in relation to all modes of transport;
- c) create places that are safe, secure and attractive – which minimise the scope for conflicts between pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles, avoid unnecessary street clutter, and respond to local character and design standards;
- d) allow for the efficient delivery of goods, and access by service and emergency vehicles; and
- e) be designed to enable charging of plug-in and other ultra-low emission vehicles in safe, accessible and convenient locations.

7.4.2 Policy IT5 of the local plan requires developments to provide parking in accordance with the council's Parking Provision SPD (2025). Policy SP6 (Sustainable Transport), has been significantly updated in the Local Plan Partial Review and requires, amongst other things, for developments to demonstrate they are in a sustainable location and will promote active travel by non-car modes of transport by providing appropriate cycle parking and prioritise public transport.

7.4.3 The nearest relevant standard associated with the development as set out in the adopted Car Parking Provision SPD (2025) would be "Use Class C2 Residential Institutions".

- a) Institutions/homes with care staff on premises at all times (excluding nursing homes, hospitals, residential schools, colleges or training centres)".

7.4.4 This standard stipulates that 1 space per 5 residents' bed spaces plus 1 space per 2 staff (non-resident) should be provided. The site is not located in a non-residential accessibility zone, although it is on the border of the zone covering North Road and surrounding areas.

7.4.5 Against this requirement, the site is capable of accommodating at least 3 spaces. This has been measured using the HCC Place & Movement Planning and Design Guidance for Hertfordshire Part 4. The front garden amenity has hard standing which would remain in situ, with a width of 5.4 metres and 13 metres in length. Measuring against the maximum sized standard space which is 2.9 metres by 5 metres, this part of the front garden curtilage where Parking Spaces 1, 2, 3 and 4 are labelled can accommodate 2 of these spaces. They have been measured using the maximum standard sized space as they are either obstructed by adjacent parking spaces, trees, or the neighbouring boundary. It is acknowledged that the existing hard standing could accommodate the 5 proposed car parking spaces if the standard measurements were to be used.

7.4.6 As for where the Parking Space 5 is listed, this can also accommodate a 2.9 metre by 5 metre space. In accordance with the Parking SPD, 1 parking space should be provided per 5 residents; this application seeks to house 4 young people.

7.4.7 With regards to staff, Page 14 of the Parking SPD specifies that 1 parking space should be provided per 5 staff. At any one time, there will not be more than 5 staff members on site which would necessitate anymore than one car parking space.

7.4.8 Herts County Council as Highways authority have assessed the application and raised no concerns or objections in relation to access or highway safety as a result of the proposal.

7.4.9 In regards to cycle parking, the Council's Car Parking Standards SPD state that 1 short term space per 20 beds plus 1 long term space per 10 staff on duty should be provided on-site. The private rear garden, and securely gated front curtilage is considered adequate in size for the storage of bicycles. Consequently, sufficient cycle parking would be readily available on-site.

7.4.10 Concerns from local residents regarding the visibility and general highway safety owing to a bend along this part of Chancellors Road are noted. However, the application site is no different and would be the same whether a single-family dwelling with children or a care home with children as no changes are proposed to the existing parking arrangement. HCC Highways raised no concerns in this regard. As such, the application is considered acceptable in this regard as the occupiers would not be any more disadvantaged or at risk than every other property along Chancellors Road.

## **7.5 Biodiversity, Ecology and Protected Species**

7.5.2 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.

7.5.3 Applicants for planning permission are required to make a statement as to whether the biodiversity gain condition will apply if permission is granted, and, if it does not apply, under which exemption they are applying.

7.5.4 A representation received has raised concerns regarding lack of information on Ecology matters. As the application site is not proposing any operational works as part of this proposal, there are no concerns from the Local Planning Authority regarding Ecology, and similarly, there is no statutory requirement for Biodiversity Net Gain as the site is exempt under the 'de minimis' exemption.

## **7.6 Other Matters Raised In Representations**

7.6.1 Fire safety statement – The application falls short of the threshold for provision of a fire statement as set out under Article 9A of the Development Management Procedure Order. Matters of fire safety therefore fall to the Building Control regime.

7.6.2 Transport assessment – The local plan does not set a local threshold for submission of a transport statement or assessment but instead defers to Hertfordshire County Council as the local highway authority for the majority of the road network in Stevenage. In this instance, HCC has been consulted on the application and has not requested further transport analysis, and the council further notes that the scheme falls short of their indicative thresholds for the submission of a transport assessment (for residential developments, typically 80 units or more).

7.6.3 House prices in future sales are not a material planning consideration and cannot be taken into account in the assessment of this application.

7.6.4 The applicant is not required to submit details of those who would oversee this care home as part of this application as this is to be regulated by Ofsted and the relevant authorities.

## **7.7 Other Matters**

### Waste and Recycling

7.7.1 The Design Guide (2025) states, provision should be made within new development for the storage and collection of waste from a site.

Use	Container	Width	Depth	Height
Garden waste	240L Brown bin	580mm	740mm	1070mm
General refuse	180L Black bin	483mm	710mm	1070mm
Dry Recycling	60L Blue and Black bags	490mm	350mm	350mm
Glass	23L Green caddy	320mm	350mm	410mm
Food waste external	23L Green caddy	290mm	350mm	420cm
Kitchen food waste	5L Green caddy	270mm	200mm	210mm

7.7.2 Whilst it is not specifically detailed on the submitted plans, the curtilage surrounding the site can accommodate the required vessels without hindering the car parking provision.

#### Community Infrastructure Levy

7.7.3 The Council adopted CIL on 1 April 2020 and the CIL Charging Schedule specifies a payment for new floorspace in line with the following rates (plus appropriate indexation):

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

7.8.4 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.

#### Equality, Diversity and Human Rights

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

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

7.8.7 Rigorous consideration will ensure that proper appreciation of any potential impact of that decision on the Council's obligations under the Public Sector Equalities Duty. As a minimum this requires decision makers to read and carefully consider the content of any Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA) produced by officers.

7.8.8 The Equalities Act 2010 requires the Council when exercising its functions to have due regard to the need to (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other conduct prohibited under the Act; (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it and (c) foster good relations between persons who share protected characteristics under the Equality Act and persons who do not share it. The protected characteristics under the Equality Act are: age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion and belief; sex and sexual orientation.

- 7.8.9 Residential dwellings are not considered to be a noise-based use. Accordingly, it is not considered that the development would contravene the Human Rights Act by way of preventing or hindering the right to peaceful enjoyment of a home.
- 7.8.10 The care home would provide living accommodation for children in need, who are protected by the Equalities Act. Further, as a large detached residential dwelling, it would be very easy to adapt internally and externally to accommodate the needs of any disabled children.
- 7.8.11 It is considered that the decision has had regard to this duty. The development would not conflict with either Stevenage Borough Council's Equality Policy or the commitments set out in our Equality Objectives and would support the Council in meeting its statutory equality responsibilities.

## **8. CONCLUSIONS**

- 8.1 The policies considered to be most relevant for determining this application are listed above in Section 6.4.1 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.
- 8.2 The proposed development would result in the delivery of a 4-bedroom care home, which would cater for 4 young people. This would make a modest contribution towards addressing the shortfall in children's care home spaces in Hertfordshire and reduce the number of children being placed outside of Hertfordshire away from their family and friends and education premises to the detriment of the mental health and education.
- 8.3 The loss of the single-family dwelling which is currently on the site is also considered in this application. Although this loss does not conflict with any particular policy, boosting the supply of market dwellings, especially aspirational dwellings, is nonetheless a clear objective of the development plan. This does carry 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 in comparison to the benefits this proposal can provide to the surrounding area.
- 8.4 It is acknowledged that there is potential anti-social behaviour and fear of crime which are assessed as a material consideration arising from previous experiences in the vicinity. However, measures would be in place to mitigate this based on additional information provided.
- 8.5 The proposal has been assessed to be acceptable in terms of car parking provision, cycle storage, impact on neighbouring and residential amenity and on the collection of waste and recycling.
- 8.6 Upon balance, it is considered that the need to provide suitable, accessible and safe housing in a residential environment for children in care outweighs the harms identified and the proposal is therefore considered to be acceptable.
- 8.7 Accordingly, the proposal is considered to be in accordance with the development plan when read as a whole. In the absence of any other material considerations which indicate that permission should be refused, it is recommended that planning permission be granted.

## **9. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 9.1 That planning permission be GRANTED subject to the conditions set out below and delegated authority be given to the Director of Planning and Regulation in consultation with the Chair of the Planning and Development Committee, to amend or add to the conditions subject to which the 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.

## **SUBJECT TO THE FOLLOWING CONDITIONS/REASONS**

- 1 The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans:  
26007 - 001 including Existing Plan; 26007 - 010;  
**REASON:-** For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning
- 2 The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.  
**REASON:-** To comply with the requirements of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004).
- 3 The premises shall be used for a residential child care home and for no other purpose, including any other purpose in Use Class C2 of the Schedule to the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended) or in any provision equivalent to that Class in any statutory instrument revoking or re-enacting that order with or without modification. The number of children and young people cared for and resident on the premises shall not exceed four at any one time.  
**REASON:-** In the interests of the amenities of neighbouring properties.
- 4 The premises shall not be occupied before a noise and disturbance management plan has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority which specifies the measures to be taken to control noise and other sources of disturbance associated with residents, staff, and visitors to the premises. Thereafter, the premises shall be operated in full accordance with the approved plan at all times.  
**REASON:-** In the interests of the amenities of neighbouring properties.

## **The Council has acted Pro-Actively for the following reason:-**

- 1 Planning permission has been granted for this proposal. Discussion with the applicant to seek an acceptable solution was not necessary in this instance. The Council has therefore acted pro-actively in line with the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework and in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015.

## **INFORMATIVE**

- 1 **Public Information on Planning Applications**  
Warning: all information provided on your planning application is now publicly available. Individuals and organisations offering their services may contact you. The Council does not endorse or approve any builders, surveyors, trades persons or other supplier, and advises householders to obtain quotes/references, and check the legitimacy of any contractor who contacts them before making payment.
- 2 **Community Infrastructure Levy**  
Stevenage Borough Council adopted a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Charging Schedule at Full Council on 27 January 2020 and started implementing CIL on 01 April 2020.

This application may be liable for CIL payments and you are advised to contact the CIL Team for clarification with regard to this. If your development is CIL liable, even if you are granted an exemption from the levy, please be advised that it is a requirement under Regulation 67 of The Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 (as amended) that CIL Form 6 (Commencement Notice) must be completed, returned and acknowledged by Stevenage Borough Council before building works start. Failure to do so will mean you risk losing the right to payment by instalments and a surcharge will be imposed. NB, please note that a Commencement Notice is not required for residential extensions if relief has been granted.

Stevenage's adopted CIL Charging Schedule and further details of CIL can be found on the Council's webpages at [www.stevenage.gov.uk/CIL](http://www.stevenage.gov.uk/CIL) or by contacting the Council's CIL Team at [CIL@Stevenage.gov.uk](mailto:CIL@Stevenage.gov.uk).

### 3 **Building Regulations**

To obtain advice regarding current Building Regulations please contact Hertfordshire Building Control Ltd. by emailing us at [building.control@hertfordshirebc.co.uk](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, Campus East, Welwyn Garden City, Hertfordshire, AL8 6AE.

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

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

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

### 4 **Party Wall etc. Act 1996**

Any work that affects a party wall, including foundations dug within 3.0m of a neighbouring building, may be controllable under the Act and may require approval from the adjoining owner(s). Party Wall Act matters are always civil matters and it is neither Stevenage Borough Council's nor Hertfordshire Building Control Ltd's remit to control or enforce Party Wall act matters. Please refer to the Government's explanatory booklet The Party Wall etc. Act 1996, a copy of which is available online at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-party-wall-etc-act-1996-revised-explanatory-booklet>

## 5 Biodiversity Net Gain

Applications where Biodiversity Net Gain is not required as development is considered De Minimis

The effect of paragraph 13 of Schedule 7A to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 is that planning permission granted for the development of land in England is deemed to have been granted subject to the condition "(the biodiversity gain condition)" that development may not begin unless:

- a) a Biodiversity Gain Plan has been submitted to the planning authority, and
- b) the planning authority has approved the plan.

The planning authority, for the purposes of determining whether to approve a Biodiversity Gain Plan if one is required in respect of this permission would be Stevenage Borough Council.

There are statutory exemptions and transitional arrangements which mean that the biodiversity gain condition does not apply.

Based on the information available this permission is considered to be one which will not require the approval of a biodiversity gain plan before development is begun because the following statutory exemption or transitional arrangement is considered to apply.

1. Development below the de minimis threshold, meaning development which:
  - a) does not impact an onsite priority habitat (a habitat specified in a list published under section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006); and
  - b) impacts less than 25 square metres of onsite habitat that has biodiversity value greater than zero and less than 5 metres in length of onsite linear habitat (as defined in the statutory metric).

Where the local planning authority considers that the permission falls within paragraph 19 of Schedule 7A to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, the permission which has been granted has the effect of requiring or permitting the development to proceed in phases. The modifications in respect of the biodiversity gain condition which are set out in Part 2 of the Biodiversity Gain (Town and Country Planning) (Modifications and Amendments) (England) Regulations 2024 apply.

Biodiversity gain plans are required to be submitted to, and approved by, the planning authority before development may be begun, and, if subject to phased development, before each phase of development may be begun.

If the onsite habitat includes irreplaceable habitat (within the meaning of the Biodiversity Gain Requirements (Irreplaceable Habitat) Regulations 2024) there are additional requirements for the content and approval of Biodiversity Gain Plans. The Biodiversity Gain Plan must include, in addition to information about steps taken or to be taken to minimise any adverse effect of the development on the habitat, information on arrangements for compensation for any impact the development has on the biodiversity of the irreplaceable habitat. The planning authority can only approve a Biodiversity Gain Plan if satisfied that the adverse effect of the development on the biodiversity of the irreplaceable habitat is minimised and appropriate arrangements have been made for the purpose of compensating for any impact which do not include the use of biodiversity credits.

More information can be found in the Planning Practice Guidance online at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/biodiversity-net-gain>

**6 Hertfordshire County Council as Highways Authority**

Obstruction of public highway land: 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 website:

<http://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/transtreets/highways/> or by telephoning 0300 1234047.

**7 Hertfordshire County Council as Highways Authority**

Gravel / shingle driveways: Where loose gravel or shingle is used, a suitable measure to prevent material spilling onto the road / footpath / verge must be installed. It is an offence under section 148 of the Highways Act 1980 to deposit debris onto the public highway, and section 149 of the same Act gives the Highway Authority powers to remove such material at the expense of the party responsible. Further information is available by telephoning 0300 1234047.

**8 Hertfordshire County Council as Highways Authority**

Debris and deposits on the highway: 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.

## **10. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

- 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/>
- 2 The Stevenage Borough Local Plan 2011-2031 <https://www.stevenage.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy/local-plan>
- 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>
- 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>
- 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>

- 5 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>
- 7 Representations made by statutory consultees and other interested parties referred to in this report. Online copies can be found on Public Access.