

MADDOX PLANNING
PLANNING
STATEMENT

33 JULIANS ROAD, STEVENAGE, SG1 3ES

20.11.23

Description of development

Demolition of the existing yard buildings (office and storage) and their replacement with six terraced family houses with associated gardens, landscaping, car and cycle parking. Retention of existing residential (two flats) and office building to the front of the site (33 Julians Road).

Type of application

Full planning application

Applicant

ACRE Stevenage Ltd

List of supporting documents

1. Plans and drawings, Downen Farmer Architects ('DFA') (November 2023)
 2. Design and Access Statement, DFA (November 2023)
 3. Planning Statement, Maddox Planning (November 2023)
 4. Transport Statement, EAS Transport Planning (November 2023)
 5. Geo-Environmental desk-study, Brown 2 Green (November 2023)
 6. Aboricultural Report, DCCLA (November 2023)
 7. Tree Protection Plan, DCCLA (November 2023)
 8. Preliminary Ecology Appraisal (November 2023)
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Development plan

The adopted development plan comprises:

1. Stevenage Borough Local Plan, 2019
2. Policies Map, 2019

Currently, there is no review of the adopted Local Plan.

Policies map

The following designations on the adopted policies map (2019) are particularly relevant:

1. Orchard Road Conservation Area (NH10: Conservation areas)
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Planning policies

The following adopted planning policies are particularly relevant:

Document	Policy number	Policy title	Referred to in paragraph number of this statement
Local Plan 2019	SP1	Presumption for Sustainable Development	
Local Plan 2019	SP2	Sustainable Development in Stevenage	
Local Plan 2019	SP6	Sustainable Transport	
Local Plan 2019	SP7	High Quality Homes	3.3
Local Plan 2019	SP8	Good Design	3.14, 3.21, 3.22, 3.23
Local Plan 2019	SP11	Climate Change, Flooding and Pollution	
Local Plan 2019	SP13	The Historic Environment	3.18
Local Plan 2019	GD1	High Quality Design	3.14, 3.21, 3.22, 3.23
Local Plan 2019	HO5	Windfall Sites	3.4, 3.9, 3.15, 3.21
Local Plan 2019	HO7	Affordable Housing Targets	3.36
Local Plan 2019	HO9	House Types and Sizes	3.33
Local Plan 2019	IT5	Parking and Access	3.37, 3.39, 3.40
Local Plan 2019	FP1	Climate Change	
Local Plan 2019	NH5	Trees and Woodland	3.42
Local Plan 2019	NH10	Conservation Areas	3.18

Other material considerations

Other material considerations (such as national planning policy and supplementary planning documents, area action plans and design briefs) include:

1. National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2023)
 2. National Design Guide (2019)
 3. Planning Practice Guidance
 4. Stevenage Design Guide SPD (2023)
 5. SBC Parking Provision and Sustainable Transport SPD (2020)
 6. Orchard Road Conservation Area Management Plan SPD (2012)
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Relevant planning decisions

Reference/address	Description	Status/decision date	Referred to in paragraph number of this statement
On-site			
09/00108/CA	Conservation area consent for demolition of rear warehouse building	Approved / 16.09.2009	3.19
LPA Ref: 09/00107/FP Appeal Ref: APP/K1935/A/10/21 21338/NWF	Change of use from B8 to B1 (office/light industrial purposes) of site and change of use of part of residential rear garden at 31 Julians Road to B1 use. Part demolition of 33 Julians Road. Refurbishment of northern warehouse and replacement of southern warehouse building. Erection of a single storey building to the rear of the site. Alterations to existing access and provision of associated parking facilities	Refused / 16.09.2009 Dismissed at appeal / 10.09.2010	3.17, 3.27
09/00007/FP	Part demolition and re-building of existing flats incorporating single storey extension to offices. Two storey extension to existing building to facilitate use for B1 (office/light industrial purposes) and erection of detached two storey building B1/B8 (light industrial purposes). Alterations to existing access and provision of associated parking facilities.	Withdrawn / 25.02.2009	
09/00008/CA	Conservation Area application for part demolition of rear barn	Withdrawn / 25.02.2009	
Off-site			
21/00819/FP 29-31 Orchard Road	Full planning permission for the demolition of existing builders' yard and car sales business (Sui Generis) and erection of 7 no dwellings (Use Class C3)	Approved / 19.08.2022	1.9, 3.35

Density and height

Units per hectare	31.6
Habitable rooms per hectare	189.5
Beds per hectare	221.1 (assumed on bed spaces)
Floor area ratio (total gross external area of all floors/site area)	0.41
Site coverage ratio (gross external area of ground floors/site area)	0.52
Maximum height in metres above ground level of each building and at AOD (above sea level)	Units: 8.5m, 103200AOD

Contents of this statement

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2. Proposed development
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Main benefits of the scheme

The proposed development is an excellent opportunity to improve the economic, social, and environmental conditions of the area and it is in overall accordance with the development plan policies on housing and employment. Notably, the proposed development will:

- Deliver decent new family housing on a brownfield site in an accessible location in line with national and local planning policy objectives.
- Deliver beautifully designed new buildings that will improve the local townscape.
- Deliver much needed family housing, which helps to meet an identified need.
- Retain a proportion of employment floorspace within the site, which will continue to provide proportionate employment opportunities for local people.
- Provide for a new pedestrian connection across the site, towards the public footpath to the south, which will improve pedestrian permeability and encourage walking.
- Result in the creation of local employment opportunities through the construction of the development and provision of management roles during the operational phase.
- Encourage new residents to use more sustainable modes of transport through the provision of easily accessible cycle storage.
- Provide for a contribution towards the Council's Community Infrastructure Levy that will enable the delivery of wider benefits to Stevenage Borough Council.

1.0 Site and area description

- 1.1 The site address is 33 Julians Road, Stevenage, with the site area being 0.19ha.
- 1.2 The site currently comprises a detached house fronting Julians Road (no. 33), separated into two flats at the front and a two-storey office element (Use Class E) serving the yard and barn buildings at the rear.



View of front of 33 Julians Road (to be retained)



View of rear of 33 Julians Road (to be retained)

- 1.3 The central part of the site is currently occupied by two x two and a half to three storey warehouse buildings adjacent to the boundary with the rear gardens of Orchard Road properties. One of the warehouse buildings comprises an office, with the other being an old barn used for storage to the south.



Existing view of the 'yard buildings' from the entrance off Julians Road

- 1.5 In terms of boundary treatments, the site is primarily enclosed by close boarded timber fences. There is a stone wall on the north eastern and north western boundaries (as pictured above). There are trees along the western boundary.
- 1.6 Pedestrian and vehicular access is drawn from Julians Road. In terms of existing parking, both the existing flats and the offices (to be retained) benefit from designated parking. The two-yard buildings proposed to be demolished currently have an informal parking arrangement.
- 1.7 The site is situated within Flood Zone 1 'low probability of flooding' (with reference to the Environment Agency Flood Map for Planning as held online).
- 1.8 The buildings are not statutorily listed, but the site is situated within the Orchard Road Conservation Area in Stevenage Old Town. 35 Julians Road (directly adjacent to the west of the entrance point) is identified as both a Landmark building and building of local importance within the Conservation Area Management Plan (2012). There is a public footpath running along the southern boundary of the site (no 005).
- 1.9 In terms of neighbouring land uses, the surroundings are primarily residential in nature. The prevailing character in terms of scale is of two – 2.5 storey buildings. Within the Orchard Road Conservation Area, the buildings are predominantly characterised by Victorian and Edwardian residential dwellings (Orchard Road Conservation Area Management Plan 2012). Further to the west off Orchard Road, there are commercial units located in 'Stevenage Enterprise Centre'. At 29-31 Orchard Road, planning permission was recently granted for the demolition of the existing builder's yard and car sales business, and their replacement with seven three-bedroom dwellings.
- 1.10 Julians Road and the adjoining roads are single yellow line, controlled parking zones. There is to be no stopping between 8:30am-6:30pm Monday to Saturday. Refuse for the surrounds is collected off Julians Road.
- 1.11 The site is sustainably located, in proximity to services and public transport. Notably, the site is served by popular bus routes (SB8 and SB9) from a bus stop less than 90m to the north-west, which provide half-hourly services into Stevenage Bus Station. In addition, the site is an approximate 20-minute walk to Stevenage train station.

2.0 Proposed development

2.1 The proposed description of development is for:

“Demolition of the existing yard buildings (office and storage) and their replacement with six terraced family houses with associated gardens, landscaping, car and cycle parking. Retention of existing residential (two flats) and office building to the front of the site (33 Julians Road)”.

2.2 The full application proposes a high-quality residential scheme. There will be a total of six family sized dwellinghouses provided, and a breakdown of the existing (to be demolished) and proposed floorspace is provided in the accommodation schedules below.

Table 1: Existing floorspace to be demolished accommodation schedule

Unit	Storeys	GIA
Commercial unit	2	220
Storage Barn	2.5-3	244

Table 2: Schedule of proposed accommodation

Unit	Storeys	Bedrooms	Persons	GIA (sqm)	External amenity space
House 01	2	4	7	130	58.4
House 02	2	4	8	137.8	51.5
House 03	2	4	8	130	52.5
House 04	2	3	6	130	55.4
House 05	2	4	7	140.1	50.8
House 06	2	3	6	130	57.3

Layout

2.3 The proposed development will see the provision of two terraces of three residential dwellings, towards the western and southern portion of the site. The northern terrace will be situated on the footprint of the existing barn. In terms of internal arrangements, living, kitchen and dining areas will be located on the ground floor, whilst the bedroom accommodation will be provided on the upper floors.

2.4 A total of 12 car parking spaces are to be provided as part of the proposals, with four spaces located in the southern portion of the site, and the other eight provided in the northern portion.

Scale and massing

2.5 All dwellinghouses will be two storeys in height, with accommodation in the roof space (thus resembling the scale of the existing storage barn to be demolished as part of the proposal).

Tenure

2.6 All dwellinghouses will be market housing. In terms of mix, all dwellinghouses will be family sized as per the above, comprising four, four-bedroom properties, and two three-bedroom properties.

External appearance

- 2.7 The proposed building style seeks to complement the architectural character and detailing of the surrounding Conservation Area. The proposals provide for a mix of red / pink brick walls, with clay roof tiles. A full material schedule is set out within the plans and drawings prepared by DFA.
- 2.8 Mock Tudor detailing is provided on the eastern flank elevation of unit 03, to pay homage to the architectural detailing of 35 Julians Road (a landmark building and building of local importance within the Conservation Area Management Plan (2012)).

Landscaping

- 2.9 Hard and soft landscaping is incorporated throughout the proposals, with each property possessing grassed areas for their private amenity space. The internal access road will be hard landscaped with a standard finish and site boundary fences are shown as 1.8m, to protect privacy and safety of the site.

Amenity space

- 2.10 Private outdoor amenity space is provided in the form of private gardens. The houses will have a small area of garden space at the front with larger private gardens at the rear. These rear gardens will equate to a minimum of 50sqm per property and have a minimum depth of 10m.

Access and parking

- 2.11 Access will be gained off Julians Road as existing, with the internal access road running along the eastern boundary of the site. There are no proposed changes to the access off Julians Road.
- 2.12 12 car parking spaces are provided for the proposed dwellings (equating to two spaces per dwelling). The accompanying tracking diagram demonstrates the acceptability of the car parking layout proposed.
- 2.13 Cycle parking will be provided for all residents with cycle storage facilities located in the rear of properties 01-03 and to the front of properties 04-06.
- 2.14 A private pedestrian access is provided along the western boundary of the site, which then adjoins the public footpath to the south, in the interest of shortening the walking distance into Stevenage Town Centre.

Accessibility

- 2.15 100% units are Part M Compliant, which ensures that the dwellings are designed and constructed in a way that provides equal access for all, regardless of their physical abilities.

Refuse and servicing

- 2.16 A designated refuse point is provided per terrace (two in total), which has adequate capacity to serve each dwelling's requirements. It is proposed that the refuse will be moved onto Julians Road on collection day, as is the current arrangement for the properties on site and the adjoining properties along Julians Road.

3.0 Considerations

3.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that proposals be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. This section therefore assesses the proposal against the development plan policies outlined above and examines relevant material considerations where appropriate. The assessment draws on the application documents listed on page 2 of this statement. The main planning considerations are:

- Principle of new residential development
- Loss of existing commercial use
- Design and visual impact on the character and appearance of the area
- Quality of accommodation
- Impact on neighbouring amenity
- Housing mix
- Affordable housing
- Transport considerations
- Trees
- Fire safety
- Ecology
- Refuse and recycling

Principle of new residential development

3.2 The site is not allocated for housing within the adopted Stevenage Borough Local Plan 2011-2031 (2019) and is therefore regarded as a 'windfall site'.

3.3 Policy SP7 identifies that there is a need to provide 7,600 new homes within Stevenage and allocates 1,950 new homes to be provided on windfall sites. Therefore, the proposals support the Council's aim of delivering a number of homes, outside of the designated allocations.

3.4 Policy HO5 (windfall sites) of the Local Plan (2019) stipulates that residential development proposals will be granted where:

- a. The site is on previously developed land or is a small, underused urban site;
- b. There is good access to local facilities;
- c. There will be no detrimental impact on the environment and the surrounding properties;
- d. Proposals will not prejudice our ability to deliver residential development on allocated sites; and
- e. The proposed development would not overburden existing infrastructure.

3.5 The site constitutes previously developed land, in that it comprises land which is occupied by permanent structures (the existing storage barn and commercial units), and the curtilage of the developed land, and is therefore in keeping with the definition of previously developed land as per its definition within the NPPF (2023).

3.6 Regarding criterion b), the site is located close (approximately 90m) to an established bus route along Essex Road. Several supermarkets, three secondary schools and at least one primary school are within 20 minutes' walk of the site. As such, the application site is considered to have a good level of access to local facilities and alternative forms of travel to the private car and therefore deemed to be within a sustainable location.

3.7 In terms of criterion c), this will be addressed within the proceeding sections, albeit the proposals have been carefully developed to mitigate impact on the character and appearance of the area, and the impact on neighbouring amenity, and in some instances, improving the existing situation.

- 3.8 For criterion (d), the proposal is of a minor scale, and therefore the proposals should not prejudice the ability to deliver any allocated residential sites. This is supported by the findings of the Transport Statement enclosed as part of this application, whereby the proposals would result in no additional vehicle movements that would impact local highway network, and therefore would not impact the delivery of these allocated sites.
- 3.9 Finally, as outlined above, the site has good access to local facilities and services and good access to the public transport network. The site is therefore in a sustainable location, and therefore adequately meets the provisions of criterion (e), and therefore is compliant with Local Plan Policy HO5.

Loss of existing commercial use

- 3.10 Policy EC7 states that “Planning permission for the loss of employment land on sites not allocated for any specific purpose will be granted where;
- i. There is sufficient suitable and employment land available elsewhere;
 - ii. The proposals provide overriding benefits against other objectives or policies in the plan; or
 - iii. It can be demonstrated that a unit has been unsuccessfully marketed for its existing use, or has remained vacant, over a considerable period of time”.
- 3.11 The proposals result in the loss of two no of employment uses: one no. E Class office and a storage use (B8).
- 3.12 In terms of criterion i) an element of office provision will be retained as part of the proposals (to the north), so there is no complete loss of employment space. In addition, there is a sufficient quantum of employment provision within the immediate vicinity, with Stevenage Enterprise Centre being located less than 100m to the west. As of July 2023, there were two no. vacant commercial units (of 790sq ft to 1100 sq ft) for let within this employment site.
- 3.13 For criterion ii), the proposals result in the delivery of six additional family-sized homes, on a partly redundant brownfield site within the urban grain of Stevenage. As such, there are substantial benefits provided as part of the application, which weigh in favour of the proposals. The proposals therefore adequately meet the requirements of criterion i and ii of Policy EC7, and the loss of non-allocated employment land is considered to be policy compliant.

Design and visual impact on the character and appearance of the area

- 3.14 Policy SP8 of the Local Plan requires new development to achieve the highest standards of design and sustainability. Policy GD1 generally requires all forms of development to meet a high standard of design which includes form of built development, elevational treatment and materials along with how the development would integrate with the urban fabric, its relationship between buildings, landscape design and relevant aspects of sustainable design.
- 3.15 Policy HO5: windfall sites require residential development on unallocated sites to not have a detrimental impact on the environment and on surrounding properties. The Council’s Design Guide SPD (2023) generally reflects the aforementioned policies, whereby it seeks development to respect surrounding buildings in terms of scale, massing, height and design. As such, it encourages good design as it can enhance the appearance of places.
- 3.16 The overall design of the buildings is that of traditional Edwardian terraces, which seeks to reflect the architectural design along Julians Road and Orchard Road and contribute to the character of the Conservation Area. In terms of scale, the proposed northern terrace (units 01 to 03) is to be built on the footprint of the existing commercial building and storage barn. This will reduce the overall bulk of this barn building when viewed from key sightlines within the Conservation Area.
- 3.17 The development proposes a rear terrace, which has limited visibility from the surrounds. Within appeal reference APP/K1935/A/10/2121338/NWF, the Inspector confirmed that the erection of a building within

the southern portion of the site would avoid any unacceptable loss of daylight, sunlight or outlook (to be assessed further within the following sections).

- 3.18 Given the site's Conservation Area designation, Policy SP13 applies, which seeks to preserve and enhance the most important historic areas and characteristics of Stevenage. Policy NH10 sets out that proposals within a Conservation Area should have regard to the relevant Conservation Area Management Plan SPD.
- 3.19 The proposed buildings will have limited visibility from outside of the site boundaries, with the site previously benefiting from Conservation Area Consent for the demolition of the rear buildings in Sept 2009 (Ref. 09/00108/CA). Within this previous application, consultee comments from English Heritage (now Historic England) confirmed that they had no objection to the amount of demolition proposed.
- 3.20 The heritage value of the site has been used to inform the design evolution of the proposals, with the planning application being supported by a Heritage Statement prepared by HCUK. The statement assesses that taking into consideration the existing poor quality of the Site and the high quality and quantum of the proposed new development, the proposals are not considered to result in any harm to the significance of the conservation area and are in-keeping with its character and appearance. The overall effect of the proposed development will be to bring about an enhancement to character and appearance of the Orchard Road Conservation Area for the purposes of section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. There will be no harm. Paragraph 202 of the NPPF will not be engaged, and there will be no conflict with relevant local heritage policies.
- 3.21 With respect to the locally listed building, the heritage statement found that there would be no harm to their significance, as both buildings (No. 35 and No. 37C Julians Road) will be appreciated and understood in the same way as they are currently once the site has been redeveloped. As such, the proposals are considered to adequately satisfy the provisions of Local Plan policies SP8, GD1 and the relevant design criteria of HO5, as well the aims of the Council's Design Guide SPD (2023).

Quality of accommodation

Living space standards

- 3.22 Policies GD1 and SP8 of the Local Plan (2019) relate to High Quality and Good Design. These policies state that planning permission will be granted where the proposed scheme, under criterion j of GD1 and criterion d of SP8, meets, and where possible, exceeds the nationally described space standards ('NDSS'). Appendix C of the Local Plan (2019) sets out the minimum gross internal floor space standards for dwellings which is in line with the NDSS.
- 3.23 All the proposed dwellings demonstrably exceed the respective space standards, and therefore the proposals are compliant with policies GD1 and SP8 of the Local Plan.

Private amenity space

- 3.24 In respect to private amenity space, paragraph H.15 of the Stevenage Design Guide SPD (2023) requires that all dwellings should have private amenity space of at least 50sqm with a minimum rear garden depth of 10m. All the units have private amenity spaces which exceed these standards.

Impact on neighbouring amenity

- 3.25 The Design Guide (2023) sets out within paragraph U.21 that in order to ensure that a reasonable degree of privacy for residents is provided, both within their habitable rooms and garden areas, the position of dwellings, and the arrangement of their rooms and windows, should not create significant overlooking of other dwellings' windows or private garden areas and not lead to any overbearing impacts or adversely affect the residential amenities of existing dwellings.
- 3.26 Between existing and new 2 storey dwellings, a minimum back-to-back distance of 25m is required, as well 15m back to side distances. Between new 2 storeys, a back-to-back distance of 20m is required.

- 3.27 All the units maintain policy compliant separation distances, except in two minor instances for unit's 01 and 03. However, these buildings are proposed to be built within the footprint of the existing storage barn, and therefore there is an improvement in terms of reduced scale and massing when viewed from neighbouring properties (as shown within page 41 – 48) of the Design and Access Statement). Within appeal reference APP/K1935/A/10/2121338/NWF, a replacement building in the location of proposed unit 01 (albeit slightly closer to the existing site boundary with 20 Orchard Road) was considered acceptable by the Inspector. No windows have been proposed on the western elevation of unit 01, to mitigate for any overlooking conflicts with 20 Orchard Road.
- 3.28 Unit 04 has a 21.7m back to side distance to the habitable windows of 16 Orchard Road (as the rear extension's eastern elevation does not comprise any windows which serve habitable windows), and therefore 16 Orchard Road will have an acceptable outlook from windows.
- 3.29 Units 02, 04, 05 and 06 all maintain a minimum of 15m back to side distances to all other properties along Orchard Road and Julians Road.
- 3.30 No windows are provided on the western or eastern flank elevations of any of the units, except the ground floor of unit 03, to mitigate against any loss of privacy.
- 3.31 In terms of separation distances within the proposed development, a minimum 23.5m is provided back-to-back between the two rows of terraces. This exceeds the 20m Design Guide requirements.
- 3.32 As such, the proposals are considered to have an acceptable impact in terms of privacy and outlook, in line with paragraph U.21 of the Design Guide (2023).

Housing mix

- 3.33 Policy HO9 states that housing mix should be informed by the housing needs of the Borough. Whilst there isn't an up-to-date housing needs assessment within the Borough (with the most recent study dated August 2016), the proposed development provides much needed family-sized housing units.
- 3.34 Local Authority statistics are contained in the ONS local area reports (2021), which identifies that 65% of households within Stevenage are single family households, which is 2% higher than the average for this type of household across England and Wales. One-person households in Stevenage comprise 29% of the population, which is lower than the 30.2% average for this household type across the study area (England and Wales). As such, Stevenage has a higher proportion of family sized households, and therefore the proposed development will contribute to meeting the demand for family sized housing in an area with an explicit demand for these types of units.
- 3.35 In addition, within application ref. 21/00819/FP at 29-31 Orchard Road, a uniform seven dwelling, three-bedroom scheme was considered acceptable by Officers, evidencing the demand for this type of housing.

Affordable housing

- 3.36 Policy HO7 sets out that affordable housing provision will apply to schemes that meet the threshold set out in national guidance. As per paragraph 64 of the NPPF (2023), provision of affordable housing should not be sought for non-major developments. The proposals constitute minor development, and therefore do not qualify for the provision of affordable housing.

Transport considerations

- 3.37 Policy IT5 of the Local Plan (2019) states that planning permission will be granted where proposals comply with the parking standards set out in the plan.
- 3.38 The Parking Provision SPD sets out the maximum amount of off-street parking for residential development, which for the development proposals would be 14 spaces (two spaces per three-bedroom dwelling and 2.5 spaces per four-bedroom unit). In addition, a total of 2 visitor parking spaces are required.

- 3.39 A total of 12 parking spaces is provided as part of the proposals which falls two parking spaces below the requested provision. However, paragraph 2.18 of the parking SPD allows for a 25% reduction in parking provision in Accessibility Zone 3 (the application site), which would result in a total of 12 spaces across the development (including visitor parking). As such, the proposals accord Policy IT5 and the Parking Provision SPD.
- 3.40 In terms of cycle parking, Policy IT5 of the Local Plan (2019) also requires developments to provide secure cycle parking provision in line with the Parking Provision SPD (2020). This SPD requires one cycle parking space per bedroom. The proposals incorporate cycle storage facilities within the rear curtilage, which accommodate the necessary provision, and therefore the proposals are in according with Policy IT5.
- 3.41 A Transport Statement has been prepared as part of the planning application by EAS Transport Planning, which found that the proposed parking provision is acceptable given the site's locality to Stevenage's residential accessibility Zone 3. In addition, the proposals would result in an imperceptible change in vehicle trips in the AM and PM peak hours (-one and zero vehicle movements respectively). The proposals will thus not generate a negative material change to the nature and character of the traffic in the vicinity of the site.

Trees

- 3.42 Policy NH5 of the Local Plan (2019) states that development proposals will be expected to protect and retain individual trees within the development site and should include new planting where appropriate.
- 3.43 An arboricultural report (and associated Tree Protection Plan) which accompanies this submission concludes that no trees will need to be removed to implement the development, and that any selective pruning undertaken will be "minor and insignificant within the current form and condition of the trees" (DCCLA Arboricultural Report, paragraph 6.27). In addition, in circumstances where the proposals encroach within off-site tree Root Protection Area's (RPA), the incursions within the RPA's will have either a minimal or insignificant impact on retained trees. As such, the proposals provide due regard for the trees on site and are therefore policy compliant in this regard.

Fire safety

- 3.44 Policy SP8 requires that new development should achieve the highest standards of design and sustainability, to ensure the delivery of high-quality schemes. Fire safety has been considered as part of the proposals and the design includes, albeit is not limited to, automatic sprinklers and LD1 fire alarms within all dwellings, a hydrant within 90m from the most remote main entrance of the houses and a dry riser extension to connect from the main street to the most remote house on site.

Ecology

- 3.45 Section 15 of the NPPF (2023) sets out that development proposals should assist in conserving and enhancing the natural environment. The proposals are supported by a preliminary ecological appraisal undertaken by AA Environmental Limited, which sets out the ecological value of the site to inform appropriate mitigation and enhancement actions. The report sets out that there are no habitats of international, national, county or local importance that would be directly affected by the proposals. The site is of overall low ecological value, with the species recorded described as common or abundant and are found in similar places across much of Britain. Overall, the findings of this ecological appraisal would indicate that there are no over-riding ecological constraints to the redevelopment proposals to preclude planning permission being granted at this stage, subject to suitably worded conditions.

Refuse and recycling

- 3.46 The Design Guide (2023) states that provision should be made within new development for the storage and collection of waste from site. The Guide sets out requirements for waste and recycling per household, which will be accommodated within the two designated refuse areas (one per terrace). The proposed refuse areas can accommodate the required vessels without hindering the car parking provision, and therefore considered acceptable in this regard.

4.0 Conclusions

- 4.1 The proposed development complies with Section 38(6) of the Planning Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, which states that determination of planning application's must be made in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. This Planning Statement has demonstrated that the proposal is in accordance with the aims of the Development Plan, with a range of planning benefits that weigh strongly in favour of the scheme.

Benefits of the proposal

- Deliver decent new family housing on a brownfield site in an accessible location in line with national and local planning policy objectives.
 - Deliver beautifully designed new buildings that will improve the local townscape.
 - Deliver much needed family housing, which helps to meet an identified need.
 - Retain a proportion of employment floorspace within the site, which will continue to provide proportionate employment opportunities for local people.
 - Provide for a new pedestrian connection across the site, towards the public footpath to the south, which will improve pedestrian permeability and encourage walking.
 - Result in the creation of local employment opportunities through the construction of the development and provision of management roles during the operational phase.
 - Encourage new residents to use more sustainable modes of transport through the provision of easily accessible cycle storage.
 - Provide for a contribution towards the Council's Community Infrastructure Levy that will enable the delivery of wider benefits to Stevenage Borough Council.
- 4.2 The application is supported and has been informed by several technical reports listed within the introduction that demonstrates the proposal is acceptable and comprises a valid planning application.