

4/01768/18/FUL	DEMOLITION OF GARAGES AND CONSTRUCTION OF 2 TWO BED DWELLINGS WITH OFF STREET PARKING
Site Address	GARAGES ADJ. 8 CUPID GREEN LANE, HEMEL HEMPSTEAD, HP2 7HH
Applicant	Watford Community Housing
Case Officer	Robert Freeman
Referral to Committee	The application has been referred to committee given the Council's interest in the proposals and level of objection thereto.

1. Recommendation

1.1 That planning permission be **GRANTED**

2. Summary

2.1 The proposed development would provide an appropriate redevelopment of this site for residential purposes.

2.2 It would provide for a high quality residential scheme in accordance with Policies CS1, CS4, CS8 and CS12 of the Core Strategy.

2.3 There would be no detrimental impact upon the amenities of neighbouring properties in accordance with Policy CS12 of the Core Strategy and saved Appendix 3 of the Dacorum Borough Local Plan 1991-2011 (DBLP)

2.4 The proposals would not result in significant harm to matters of highways safety in accordance with Policies CS8 and CS12 of the Core Strategy and saved Policy 51 and Appendix 5 of the DBLP.

3. Site Description

3.1 The site is located on the northern side of Cupid Green Lane and on the corner of Yeoman's Ride. The site comprises a block of five garages and an associated hard standing area sold by the Borough Council to Watford Community Housing. The land to the rear of the garages comprises a modest amenity green containing two trees.

4. Background

4.1 In September 2014, Cabinet approved the disposal of 97 garage sites, including that subject to this application, with a view to increasing the supply of housing across the Borough, minimising the future maintenance liability and driving more efficient use of its stock. A number of garages within Council ownership were not suitable for modern vehicles and were used for storage and parking for motorcycles.

4.2 The Council has approximately 7,000 garages in the Borough with over 2,000 currently vacant.

4.3 The Council has disposed of the application site to Watford Community Housing. The site was sold subject to vacant possession with existing tenants offered alternative accommodation in nearby garages.

5. Proposal

5.1 The proposals involve the demolition of an existing block of five garages and the construction of 2 x 2 bedroom dwellings. These would form a natural extension to the existing terrace of properties backing onto Cupid Green Lane with parking being provided to the rear of the plot. The parking spaces would be accessed off Yeoman's Ride as per the current arrangement of garages.

6. Policies

6.1 National Policy Guidance

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG)

6.2 Adopted Core Strategy

NP1, CS1, CS2, CS4, CS8, CS10, CS11, CS12, CS13, CS17, CS19, CS27, CS28, CS29 and CS35

6.3 Saved Policies of the Dacorum Borough Local Plan (DBLP)

Policies 10, 12, 13, 18, 21, 51, 58, 99, 116 and 119.

6.4 Supplementary Planning Guidance / Documents

- Accessibility Zones for the Application of car Parking Standards (July 2002)
- Area Based Policies (May 2004) - Residential Character Area HCA 32: Grovehill
- Energy Efficiency & Conservation (June 2006)
- Environmental Guidelines (May 2004)
- Grovehill Neighbourhood Plan.
- Water Conservation & Sustainable Drainage (June 2005)

6.5 Advice Notes and Appraisals

- Sustainable Development Advice Note (March 2011)

7. Representations

Consultation responses

7.1 These are reproduced in full at Appendix A

Neighbour notification/site notice responses

7.2 These are reproduced in full at Appendix B

8. Considerations

Policy and Principle

8.1 The government places a strong emphasis upon the delivery of new homes in accordance with the NPPF and development plan. There is significant support in the NPPF for the promotion and development of under used land and buildings to meet identified housing needs at paragraph 118 of the NPPF. Paragraph 119 of the NPPF would encourage local authorities to take a proactive role in bringing forward land including the promotion of land within public ownership extending to and including the assembly and disposal of suitable sites for residential use.

8.2 The site is located in a residential area where in accordance with Policies NP1, CS1 and CS4 of the Core Strategy the provision of new dwellings would be appropriate. The proposals would seek to address the general requirements for new housing as expressed under Policy CS17 of the Core Strategy but would also provide affordable as required under Policy CS19 of the Core Strategy.

8.3 The redevelopment of garage sites is encouraged under the Grovehill Neighbourhood Plan; particularly where such garages have no beneficial use or are no longer required. The garages have been sold as part of a wider review of the Council's garage stock and are surplus to its requirements. As such the site is considered appropriate for redevelopment.

Layout and Design

8.4 The proposed development forms a natural extension of the neighbouring terrace with a frontage to Cupid Green Lane and rear garden to the north of the property. Each house would be provided with its own private rear garden incorporating parking, bike storage and refuse storage. The dwellings would be sited approximately 32m from the first floor of units forming 18-28 Essex Mead and with have commensurate amenity space to neighbouring plots in accordance with layout principles in saved Appendix 3 of the DBLP.

8.5 The proposed development is considered to be appropriate in terms of its design, bulk, scale, height and use of materials. The dwellings are commensurate in size with neighbouring properties and would extend the eaves and ridge line thereto. The external appearance of the surrounding buildings is predominantly pebble-dash render with dark roof tiles although brick features significantly on Yeoman's Court which is a mix of red brick, render and timber cladding. The proposals seek to blend into the character of the area whilst refreshing the aesthetics. The proposed dwellings would be constructed from a grey brick which would be more durable and easier to maintain than render and with a similar dark roof tile/slate to the existing properties. This approach would compliment the appearance of neighbouring units.

Impact on Heritage Assets

8.6 Opposite the application site lies Yeoman's Court which was built around the Grade II Listed St Agnells Farmhouse and associated outbuildings. The setting of the listed building has been considered in accordance with Policy CS27 of the Core Strategy. The historic context of the farmhouse has been substantially diminished over time and the proposal is likely to have a negligible impact on the historic setting of the listed buildings. As such no objections would be raised to the proposals by the Conservation Officer and there would be no conflict with Policy CS27 of the Core Strategy.

Loss of Open Space

8.7 The site does not comprise designated open land and as such its protection from loss is limited under both the Core Strategy and saved DBLP policies. Under saved Policy 116 of the DBLP it is appropriate to consider the contribution that the open land makes towards leisure and recreation, townscape, visual amenity and nature conservation and to weigh this against other planning benefits that might arise as a result of development. The site comprises a relatively small area of grassland which historically would have been maintained as part of the highway verge. It contains two trees as discussed below. The site does not perform any significant leisure or recreational function and makes only a limited contribution towards the appearance of the area. The Hertfordshire Ecology unit does not wish to be consulted on the application and have orally confirmed the conclusions in the Arboricultural report namely; that the site has low potential for wildlife and ecological associations as a result of trees upon the site. As such, and despite the residents assertions that the site forms part of a wildlife corridor, the nature conservation value of the site appears limited.

8.8 The benefits of developing the site for housing and affordable housing clearly outweigh any harm identified from the loss of open space.

Impact on Trees and Landscaping

8.9 The proposed development will result in the removal of a small Silver Birch tree (T1) and the pruning of a larger Maple tree (T2) on the corner of Yeoman's Ride and providing screening to the Cupid Green Lane frontage of the site. The smaller tree is classified as a poor specimen and as such there would be no objection to its removal.

8.10 The larger Maple tree is shown for retention and will be subject to pruning to remove ivy, reduce the size of the tree crown and reduce the length of a defective limb. These works do not require the permission of the Council. Whilst the larger tree is identified for retention; there may be some pressure for it to be regularly pruned given its close proximity to the proposed dwellings. Its loss would be unfortunate in the event of excessive development pressure however the tree is neither subject to or worthy of a Tree Preservation Order. Such matters were discussed with the Tree Officer at the pre-application stage. As such a refusal of the proposals on the impact on trees could not be justified either under Policies CS12 and CS29 of the Core Strategy nor under saved Policy 99 of the DBLP.

8.11 The proposed landscaping scheme for the site is considered to be acceptable with new enclosures to the rear gardens and between the proposed dwellings and 8 Cupid Green Lane. The front gardens meanwhile would retain a relatively open appearance bounded by modest hedgerows and with new gates. As such the proposals, although incorporating the amenity space at the junction of Cupid Green Lane and Yeoman's Ride, are not considered to diminish the amenity value of the green space nor its contribution to the overall character and appearance of the area.

Impact on Residential Amenities

8.12 The proposed development is not considered to result in any significant harm to the residential amenities of neighbouring properties in accordance with Policy CS12 of the Core Strategy and having regard to Saved Appendix 3 of the DBLP. The proposals would be constructed in line with the existing terrace of 2-8 Cupid Green Lane and such

distance from properties in Essex Mead and Yeoman's Court that it would have no significant impact in terms of daylight or sunlight to these properties.

8.13 There would also be no significant harm to the privacy of neighbouring properties with distances to properties in Essex Mead significantly exceeding the back to back recommendations in saved Appendix 3 of the DBLP. Although new windows would be located within the flank elevation of the proposed units and facing Yeoman's Court, these would provide light to the stairs rather than substantive views into neighbouring land and property.

8.14 The use of the proposed dwellings should not generate a noise nuisance and in the event of excess noise or anti social behaviour should be dealt with in accordance with other legislation.

8.15 A number of residents have concerns that the proposed units will be visually intrusive or oppressive. Furthermore it would result in the loss of a view for properties in Essex Mead. The proposed development would not project beyond the front or rear elevations of neighbouring properties and as such it cannot be considered as being overbearing to them. The loss of view is not material to the determination of this proposal.

Impact on Highway Safety

8.16 The proposed development will provide for a single space per 2 bedroom property within the garden area. There would be a modest shortfall against the adopted maximum standard in saved Appendix 5 of the DBLP. However this provision is considered appropriate for the scale of the units proposed and having regard to Policies CS8 and CS12 of the Core Strategy and saved Policy 51 and Appendix 5 of the DBLP. The County Council has indicated that the proposals would not result in significant harm to matters of highways safety.

8.17 Paragraph 109 of the NPPF states that “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” This would not be the case with this proposal.

8.18 A number of cars currently park on the hard standing to the front of the garages and will be displaced as a result of this development. This land is within the ownership of the applicant and as such cannot be relied upon to provide parking for other dwellings within the vicinity of the site. There would appear to be little legitimate grounds for refusal of the application on the basis that parking may be displaced as a result of development, notwithstanding the issues that this clearly raises.

8.19 The Estates team have indicated that there are a number of nearby garage blocks which are available for use including 4 garage within separate garage blocks to Yeoman's Roads, 4 garages at St Agnells Lane and 4 at Essex Mead.

8.20 A number of properties appear to have addressed their own concerns with parking through the provision of parking within their residential curtilages and there appears to be scope for more properties to undertake such measures should the need arise. Furthermore there are no on-street parking restrictions to either Cupid Green Lane or Yeoman's Ride. There would be no concerns that the displaced vehicles would

lead to conditions prejudicial to highways safety in accordance with CS8 of the Core Strategy.

Response to Neighbour comments

8.21 These points have been addressed above other than those relating to concerns over construction and maintenance of the units and a loss in property value as a result of development. Whilst these concerns are understandable given the close proximity of the proposed dwellings, it is not within the remit of the planning application to consider finer details of such matters. It is the purpose of the Building Regulations to deal with such matters, with the impact on current properties being adequately covered under the Party Wall Act.

CIL

8.22 The proposed development would be subject to CIL charges in accordance with Policy CS33 of the Core Strategy and the CIL Charging Schedule. A charge of £100 per square metre (plus indexation) would be levied against the proposals. The applicants may be eligible for a exemption from the charge as an affordable housing provider and subject to the submission of a relevant and complete relief claim. These should be submitted and agreed with the Council prior to the commencement of works.

S106 and Planning Obligations

8.22 The proposed development falls below the affordable housing threshold in Policy CS19 of the Core Strategy and as such it is not considered reasonable to tie the tenancy of the proposed units via the planning system. The units themselves will be developed as affordable units and are subject to a separate Capital Subsidy Agreement with the Council incorporating nomination rights for the Council's housing team. It is considered that the application site should not be subject to any other planning obligations under S106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) and in accordance with the CIL Regulations.

9. Conclusions

9.1 They proposals would provide a high quality residential scheme on the site without any significant adverse impacts to neighbouring property, the surrounding highways network or ecology.

9.2 The proposals are considered to be acceptable and would be in accordance with the development plan

10. RECOMMENDATION – That planning permission be **GRANTED** for the reasons referred to above and subject to the following conditions/for the following reasons :

Conditions/Reasons for Refusal

No	Condition
1	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 (1) of the Town and

	Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by Section 51 (1) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.
2	<p>No development shall take place until details of the materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted have been submitted and approved in writing by the local planning authority. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details. Please do not send materials to the council offices. Materials should be kept on site and arrangements made with the planning officer for inspection.</p> <p>Reason: To ensure a satisfactory appearance to the development in accordance with Policy CS12 of the Core Strategy.</p>
3	<p>No development shall take place until further details of both hard and soft landscape works shall have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. These details shall include:</p> <p>hard surfacing materials; trees to be retained and measures for their protection during construction works; proposed finished levels or contours;</p> <p>The approved landscape works shall be carried out prior to the first occupation of the development hereby permitted.</p> <p>Reason: To ensure a satisfactory appearance to the development and to safeguard the visual character of the immediate area.</p>
4	<p>Prior to the commencement of the development hereby permitted a Phase I Report to assess the actual or potential contamination at the site shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. If actual or potential contamination and/or ground gas risks are identified further investigation shall be carried out and a Phase II report shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority prior to the commencement of the development. If the Phase II report establishes that remediation or protection measures are necessary a Remediation Statement shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.</p> <p>For the purposes of this condition:</p> <p>A Phase I Report consists of a desk study, site walkover, conceptual model and a preliminary risk assessment. The desk study comprises a search of available information and historical maps which can be used to identify the likelihood of contamination. A simple walkover survey of the site is conducted to identify pollution linkages not obvious from desk studies. Using the information gathered, a 'conceptual model' of the site is constructed and a preliminary risk assessment is carried out.</p> <p>A Phase II Report consists of an intrusive site investigation and risk assessment. The report should make recommendations for further investigation and assessment where required.</p> <p>A Remediation Statement details actions to be carried out and timescales so that contamination no longer presents a risk to site users, property, the</p>

	<p>environment or ecological systems.</p> <p>Reason: To ensure that the issue of contamination is adequately addressed and to ensure a satisfactory development.</p>
5	<p>All remediation or protection measures identified in the Remediation Statement referred to in Condition 4 shall be fully implemented within the timescales and by the deadlines as set out in the Remediation Statement and a Site Completion Report shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority prior to the first occupation of any part of the development hereby permitted.</p> <p>For the purposes of this condition a Site Completion Report shall record all the investigation and remedial or protection actions carried out. It shall detail all conclusions and actions taken at each stage of the works including validation work. It shall contain quality assurance and validation results providing evidence that the site has been remediated to a standard suitable for the approved use.</p> <p>Reason: To ensure that the issue of contamination is adequately addressed and to ensure a satisfactory development.</p> <p>Informative: Paragraph 121 of the NPPF states that all site investigation information must be prepared by a competent person. This is defined in the framework as 'A person with a recognised relevant qualification, sufficient experience in dealing with the type(s) of pollution or land instability, and membership of a relevant professional organisation.'</p> <p>Contaminated Land Planning Guidance can be obtained from Regulatory Services or via the Council's website www.dacorum.gov.uk</p>
6	<p>The proposed development shall be carried out in accordance with the Sustainable Drainage Strategy by David French Partnership and containing reference 15495/JAE unless otherwise approved in writing by the local planning authority.</p> <p>Reason: To ensure that the site is subject to an acceptable drainage system serving the development.</p>
7	<p>The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans/documents:</p> <p>001_PL1 rev PL1 (Location Plan) 100_PL1 rev PL1 (Proposed Site Plan) 101_PL1 rev PL1 (Proposed Elevation) 102_PL1 rev PL1 (Proposed Floor Plan) MR/170306R/sh (Tree Report) MR/170306TCP (Tree Plan) 15495/JAE (Sustainable Drainage Strategy)</p> <p>Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.</p>

Appendix A

Consultation responses

Hertfordshire County Council - Highways

The proposal will not have a severe residual impact on the safety and operation of the adjoining highways and as such we do not wish to restrict the grant of planning permission.

Hertfordshire County Council - Lead Local Flood Authority

As it is a minor application the Lead Local Flood Authority is not a statutory consultee. However we can offer advice to the Local Planning Authority to place them in a position to make their own decision regarding surface water and drainage.

Following the review of the Environment Agency maps for surface water flood risk, the proposed development is at a predicted low risk of flooding from surface water and we do not have any records of flooding in this location. Therefore we can confirm that we would have no objection to the proposals.

We note that drainage proposals have been submitted based on utilising soakaways however no infiltration tests have been undertaken. We would recommend including a pre-commencement condition to obtain infiltration tests to ensure the feasibility of the soakaways in this location. We note that there are Thames Water surface water sewers in the vicinity therefore should infiltration not be feasible an alternative based on discharge into the public should be proposed.

Hertfordshire County Council - Property Services

Herts Property Services do not have any comments to make in relation to financial contributions required by the Toolkit, as this development is situated within Dacorum CIL Zone 3 and does not fall within any of the CIL Regulation 123 exclusions. Notwithstanding this, we reserve the right to seek Community Infrastructure Levy contributions towards the provision of infrastructure as outlined in your Regulation 123 List through the appropriate channels.

Building Control

No comments

Conservation and Design

The impact on the setting and the significance of the listed building is minimal and as such there would be no object to the application. I would request that details of external materials are secured by condition.

Strategic Housing

The site falls below the affordable housing threshold.

Appendix B

Neighbour notification/site notice responses

Objections

Grovehill Neighbourhood Forum

The Grovehill Neighbourhood Plan supports redevelopment of garage blocks which are no longer required, however, the Neighbourhood Forum is concerned about loss of garage parking and the associated creation of new housing units which is likely to result in fewer parking spaces and greater demand for parking

2 Cupid Green Lane

The related development of 2 dwellings will not be using the same materials or have the same design features as the houses already in the lane and therefore will not be in keeping with the aesthetic look of the row of houses.

There also needs to be adequate consideration to parking matters as highway safety would be compromised. The lane is a busy country lane with tractors from the farms, ambulances (regularly attending the nursing home at the end) and many other large vehicles using the lane for access. There is not enough parking with more than 1 space allocation per house would need to be allowed for if the application was to be supported.

6 Cupid Green Lane

I am strongly against this planning proposal in any way shape or form. This planning will take away valuable green space. The properties are not in keeping with the current properties in the area. Parking is already at a premium around the area and this will only add to the burden by taking away vital parking and adding more cars. As a rentee of one of the garages, I can say the garages were in fantastic condition and there is no need for the demolition of perfect garages that were well used by the local community.

8 Cupid Green Lane (x3)

a) This planning permission goes totally against Grovehill Future Plans. I object for a number of reasons which I will put into an email. The garages are vacant due to tenants being evicted. These garages eased up the parking & having 2 houses is going to cause more parking problems. These plans were originally for the garages at the start of Cupid Green Lane which are not used and there was a miss communication. There is a lack of green space in the area and is a very small piece of land. The plans do not keep into the local area with regards to look and building close to no 8 will cause us not to be able to maintain our wall/gables when needs be. Also concrete build & these plans can damage our & other houses. There is no need to build on this land for 2 houses and cause distress to local residents. We're an end terrace house and forcing us to be mid-terrace which is not where we wish to live. We will be objecting any planning to join on to our property. We strongly object to this!

b) I am strongly objecting to the planning application regarding Cupid Green Lane. I am the owner at number 8 Cupid Green Lane and this is going to have a negative impact on myself, my family, my house as well as all the other local residents.

Loss of light- we will lose the natural light that we get from that area as houses will be blocking it out, the sun sets there in the evenings

Overlooking/loss of privacy- we will lose the privacy of our front garden with the 2 properties to the side. You cannot see clearly our garden from the other houses on the road. The back garden would be overlooked by others resulting in less privacy for all of us as a family including young children

Adequacy of parking/turning- 10 parking spaces will be lost with only 2 spaces created. Reduction of 8 parking spaces. Parking is already an issue in this area with cars parking on corners and pavements which is a health and safety issue. On top of this, Cupid Green Lane gets extremely busy with cars travelling at speed. Combined with further cars this will only be a negative.

Noise/ disturbance resulting from use- We are an end terrace property and having 2 family properties next to us will cause noise and disruption. Especially on the outside wall which is our youngest child's bedroom is. Not to mention the noise that we would be subjected to if this planning gets approval whilst the houses are built.

Visual intrusion- intrusion of our garden space. We are quite secluded at the moment and our garden is not really overlooked due to next door number 6 not using the back bedroom on a daily basis and no other houses being able to see into our garden. This would change and the houses would have a direct view into my garden and others. Privacy is very important to us, especially taking into regard our young children.

Design/appearance/type of materials- Your proposed plans of brick build and dark grey windows/doors does not fit in with the surrounding area as you state. Surrounding houses are all concrete build with white UPVC window frames and doors. These plans go totally against the Grovehill future plan

As well as the above, we have concerns over the following:

In the plans, the properties are very close to our property with cladding on to ours. After taking legal advice, you would not be able to do this without our consent and under no circumstances shall we be giving permission for this to happen. Due to our property being a concrete build and built in the 60's, the upheaval of the work/heavy machinery on the land could cause damage to our property and therefore if the planning is approved, our solicitor has instructed that Watford Community Housing building the properties will be liable to pay for a structural survey on our property both before and after the works. This must be carried out by someone of our choosing should the plans get the go ahead. With this in mind, this would leave a gap which would not be safe and animals/children could easily go down the gap and get stuck.

With the plans wishing to build so close to our property, if we had the need to do any work on that wall or the gables, we would not have access to it which is a major concern and could become critical for our property due to the concrete build. A couple of years ago, we were getting damp on our wall and Dacorum council had to come and view this. Work was completed on the land and shingle laid to reduce the water logged grass area

next to our property. Should this happen in the future, it would be impossible to get to the outside wall and would then cause further damage to our property.

The loss of value of our property. We bought this property due to it being an end terrace and having the open land next to us. We did not want to live in a mid-terrace house, and these plans will force us into this position. After speaking to local estate agents, this is going to lower the price of our house by around £20k and we do not see why our family life and financial circumstances should be affected by Watford Community Housing wishing to build on this small section of land. I understand the need for social housing but to build 2 properties on this land which goes against Grove Hill future plan and affecting so many people is not justified or needed.

We are now in a situation, where we are not happy with where we are living and cannot move due to the plans that have been proposed. As advised by an estate agent, it would be extremely hard, if not impossible to sell our home at this time.

c) As the owner of eight Cupid green Lane I strongly object to this planning application. This will affect our privacy. It will reduce the number parking spaces in an already congested area of Grovehill. The houses are not in keeping with the current properties on Cupid Green Lane. We lose precious green space which my young children and other children from the estate use. We will lose access to our far wall for any care and maintenance that will be needed in the future. We have been told from local estate agents that we will lose around £20,000 on our house if this goes ahead. I understand the need for social housing and improving people's quality of life. But why should that come at the reduction of our quality of life, both personally and financially. Had DBC been upfront and honest about it, I would have never purchased this house to raise my family. Quite frankly this application is not welcome or warranted and DBC should be ashamed of how they have conducted themselves.

Additional comments

My objections are :

- Loss of Green space
- Loss of parking , whilst adding to the congestion by introducing more vehicles that will come with extra residents
- Loss of privacy – currently we are only overlooked on one side of our property .Building on this land will reduce our privacy even further
- Reduction of quality of life - Disruptions that building work will bring , we have two young children under four years of age . We spend a lot of time In the garden with them , something we will be unable to do whilst build work is being carried out
- Health and safety – leaving a 400mm gap between properties is a health a safety concern especially with small children and it being to small for an adult to access
- Not being able to access our outside wall for care and maintenance in the future
- Damage to our property that might occur during building works . Our property was built in the 1960's and is of wimpy no fines construction . Building so close may cause irreparable damage to our property .
- Loss financially – we've spoken to local estate agents who believe building this close to our boundary will reduce the value of our property by around £20,000

.This is not really acceptable

- Loss of Fencing . Currently the garage closest to our boundary which your planning to demolish makes up part of our fencing
- Going against the Grovehill future plan of utilizing dilapidated and unused garages . These garages were neither dilapidated or unused

We moved here four years ago to start a family and we have gone on to have two children. We bought an end of terrace for this purpose of having a certain amount of privacy and not having residents either side of us to reduce neighbour intrusion. I feel now we will be forced to live in a mid terrace which certainly was not our intention and it certainly is not now . If we had wanted a mid terrace we would have bought one and saved £20,000 on our mortgage .As I've said in my objection I understand the need for social housing and improving peoples quality of life . What I don't see is why this should come at the cost of our quality of life both personally and financially .

We have had zero communication from DBC in regards to this other than the letter for planning application . It seems to me that in order to make a quick buck the council have shown a total disregard to the local community and ourselves .

There are far more suitable places to build affordable accommodation in Grovehill other than trying to shoehorn two houses onto the corner plot of land that is barely big enough to accommodate them . With 3000 houses being built in the Margaret Lloyd field I really don't see what the need is to build these two houses which is taking so much from the local community

20 Essex Mead (x2)

a) These 5 garages are only empty because all tenants were evicted from them by DBC. These are 5 good, sound and well maintained garages that should be used for this purpose. The 2 new houses will over populate the area and further increase cars parked in this area. The houses would be built too close to 8 Cupid Green Lane and will not allow the home owners to maintain their outside wall and gable end. My greatest concern however is the further diminishing of green space in this locality for a development which is NOT in keeping with the Grovehill Futures Plan. Whilst I fully appreciate the need for housing, I strongly object to planning being granted in such a small space and eroding the health and well being of people who already live in this area.

b) Firstly I am disgusted by the way DBC conducted the sale of the site, disposing of 5 perfectly good and fully occupied garages in order to allow the redevelopment of them. This does in fit in with Grovehill Future Plan for the area. I would appeal to the council in future to be more open and transparent with residents in a area that they are proposing a development.

I object to the planning application for a number of reasons; squeezing 2 houses onto a very small plot, using up green space in a rural environment, putting pressure on parking making for a unsafe place for pedestrians particularly when Cupid Green Lane is use as a rat run. The development would be too close to No.8 and would not allow them to maintain there property.

28 Essex Mead

I would object to this development for the following reasons:

- It will ruin my vista
- Ruin the appearance of the area
- The proposals would create a dangerous blind corner
- Cause major disruption to a tiny busy road for a long and sustained period
- Bring unwanted traffic and people into an already overcrowded estate
- Overlook my property
- Decrease the value of my house and the other properties in the area
- There is a lack of amenities and infrastructure to support the current properties let alone additional development.
- Limited information supplied by developers
- We need more green areas near our house for our children to use.
- There has been a complete lack of consideration for current residents including the sale of the green land to a developer.

30 Essex Mead

We object to the proposals for the following reasons:

- There is limited space for these dwellings which will encroach on house next to the garages
- The new dwellings would affect the view of the properties opposite
- Trees with established roots would need to be removed for the build.
- New dwellings would restrict the view when driving in or out of Yeoman's Drive
- Additional dwellings with car parking spaces would result in further vehicles in the area. This is already a problem with access in and out of the area
- Additional dwellings connected to a water main which is already struggling with present demands.
- Poor water drainage within road which had not been maintained nor monitored by the council and additional dwellings would compound this issue
- New builds will not be in the style of current housing in the road/area
- The new dwellings are owned by a community housing trust which suggests the properties will not have home owners. This will lead to a lack of maintenance and respect for the homes to the detriment of the appearance of the estate.

3 Yeoman's Court

I have a number of serious concerns about the principle of this Application as well as the design approach that has been taken. This is mainly because of the adverse impacts the proposal would have on local amenity, including highway safety, two street scenes and the setting of the Listed Building.

I have looked at some national and local Planning policies / guidance that I feel are relevant to this Application and have discussed below the reasons why I feel that there are a number of key conflicts. This includes the Grovehill section (HCA32) of the Council's Supplementary Planning Guidance document (SPG) entitled 'Development in Residential Areas (Residential Character Areas) and our recent Neighbourhood Plan.

At the outset, however, I would like to question whether an Ecological Report is needed at this stage - the Tree Report recommends that professional detailed advice from an ecologist is sought (paragraph 1.5). The semi-mature woodland perimeter boundary to the secondary school is in close proximity and the application site forms part of a wildlife corridor.

MY OBJECTIONS REGARDING THE PRINCIPLE OF THE DEVELOPMENT

Fundamentally, I don't consider that:-

- the loss of 10 parking spaces and
- the incorporation of the original green space into a private curtilage

to be acceptable in principle. These issues are discussed below.

The loss of the garage block and the additional 5 spaces has not been justified in terms of DEMAND, as required

The Area 2 Policy in the Grovehill Neighbourhood Plan deals specifically with garage blocks. Notably, it states that new development will only be supported if the garage block in question is no longer in use OR IN DEMAND.

The Application Form states that the use of the garages ceased in May this year (following the change in ownership) but no evidence has been provided in respect of the DEMAND for them. This is necessary because of the wording of the Neighbourhood Plan Policy.

The number of parking spaces quoted in Section 9 of the Application Form is incorrect and misleading because vehicles park directly in front of the garages as well. In addition to the use of the garages, I have seen all 5 of these spaces occupied and this open provision allows for unrestricted use by modern-day cars.

The Design & Access Statement confirms that, during the public consultation, locals expressed a view that parking stress in the surroundings roads is high. No evidence has been submitted to demonstrate that this is not true and, as a local resident I know that parking is a problem here. Furthermore, I note that the Council's website confirms that there is a waiting list for garages. Significant weight should be given to this parking stress.

I therefore feel that it is not appropriate for this garage block, and the additional 5 spaces on the hard-standing, to be lost and redeveloped for housing.

The proposed off-street parking provision is insufficient and the displaced parking spaces would result in increased highway safety risks

Following on from the above, I consider that the two proposed spaces are insufficient in this location and that the displaced parking for 10 vehicles would result in increased highway safety risks. Core Policy 12 and criterion (h) of Core Strategy Policy CS8 ensure sufficient, safe and convenient parking based on car parking standards is provided. The latter confirms that the application of those standards will take into account the safeguarding of residential amenity and will ensure highway safety.

The SPG explains that on-street parking is heavier within residential roads and cul-de-sacs leading off from the main distributor roads in the locality and specifically states that

adequate provision for off-street parking should be made in Grovehill. The SPG also makes it clear, on page 220, that the redevelopment of garage blocks will only be acceptable if alternative provision is made for displaced vehicle parking. This is linked with the DEMAND issue above and I don't consider this requirement to be met.

No information has been provided about the displaced spaces and no parking survey has been carried out. The area already suffers from poor visibility due to on-street parking close to the junctions in this part of Grovehill and this development would exacerbate the problem. I know from personal experience that these two roads are difficult to negotiate and any intensification of on-street parking would become too dangerous.

The loss of a prominent open green space next to a Listed Building would be harmful

The SPG confirms that Grovehill:-

- *has mature, established planting throughout and that amenity land forms an integral part of the area's structure and*
- *is strongly characterised by high standards of open land, amenity space and mature, structured public landscaping.*

With this in mind, the application site certainly makes a significant contribution to local character because of its prominent position. Its primary contribution to character is to reinforce the sense of open space at this sensitive junction.

Although there are rows of terraced housing, the area retains a sense of space and openness here due to the layout and position of the dwellings relative to the junction. In this context, the primary effect of the development would be the loss of openness and consequently there would be an adverse effect on local character.

This is particularly important because of the relationship this open green space has with the Grade II Listed St Agnells Farmhouse (now Yeoman's Court where I live). It forms part of the surroundings in which the heritage asset is experienced (the definition set out in the NPPF's Glossary) and is an important buffer to the estate housing. The erection of additional housing would harm the positive linkage which is long established. On this point, the Design & Access Statement that accompanies the Application incorrectly states that the Application Site is not adjacent to any Listed Buildings.

The SPG makes it clear that the loss of amenity land to built development or their inclusion within private domestic curtilages will only be permitted where it can be clearly demonstrated that the proposal will not result in the loss of:-

“smaller areas making a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the area and its amenities”.

This is reflected in the Neighbourhood Plan where the Theme 2 Policy states that new residential development should complement and integrate with the existing community.

It is also a requirement that new homes should preserve areas with existing open characteristics within Grovehill and retain existing trees for biodiversity reasons. With reference to Core Strategy Policy CS1, the loss of the existing Silver Birch (T3) may be justified due to its current condition but the lack of a replacement tree is not.

In my view there would be conflict with Policies CS1, CS4, CS10, CS1 and CS12 in the Core Strategy as well as the Theme 2 Policy in the Neighbourhood Plan. In respect of the setting of the Listed Building there is further conflict with Section 12 of the NPPF, Policy CS27 in the Core Strategy and saved Policy 119. Policy CS27 specifically states that the setting of designated heritage assets will be protected,

conserved and if appropriate enhanced. This proposal fails to adhere to any of these requirements.

MY OBJECTIONS REGARDING THE SCHEME ITSELF

Too high a density, especially for a semi-detached, and inadequate spacing

The SPG explains that there is a variation in density throughout Grovehill, ranging from over 45dph for HIGH DENSITY FLAT developments to 15-25 for low density detached house. The proposed density is over 53dph (as confirmed by the Agent) and this exceeds what is considered to be acceptable, especially for a semi-detached. The excessive density of the scheme would adversely affect the amenity and character of the surrounding area and is in conflict with saved Policy 21.

Criterion (iii) of A3.6 in Appendix 3 of the Local Plan (Layout and Design of Residential Areas) deals with spacing of dwellings and states that there should be sufficient space around residential buildings to avoid a cramped layout and maintain residential character and to enable movement around the building for maintenance and other purposes.

It specifically states that spacing between dwellings should be provided at a distance which is consistent with the surrounding areas, as recommended with the development principles in the SPG. For Grovehill this needs to be within the 'medium' range of 2m to 5m - this proposal fails to adhere to this.

Under the 'layout' heading this document confirms that overall the perception is generous and this is considered particularly relevant to the proposal. The fact that the two storey elevation of the house on Plot 2 would sit tight to the edge of the pavement results in a sense of enclosure and encroachment (and there are no detailed plans showing drainpipes etc on the end gable). This particularly intrusive element is highlighted on the image attached.

The lack of any set back on this side and the nominal gap with the terrace on the other demonstrates that this proposal is being inappropriately squeezed onto the Application Site. This, along with the choice of external materials and fenestration proportions, would emphasise the dominance and overbearing nature of the proposal within the constrained plot, as well as the loss of openness.

Poor and insufficient private amenity space

Areas that are set aside to accommodate parking and associated access, as well as selective storage areas, further contribute to the sense that there is a lack of space and separation.

Criterion (ii) of A3.6 in Appendix 3 deals with gardens and amenity space and states that all residential development is required to provide private open space for use by residents whether the development be houses or flats. It goes on to say that private gardens should have an average minimum depth of 11.5 m. Furthermore, all gardens should be of a width, shape and size to ensure the space is functional and compatible with the surrounding area.

The proposed Site Plan clearly shows that the private gardens would be extremely limited in size. The maximum length of approximately 8m for Plot 1 would be for less than a third of its width and the central area would be just 3m in length, taking into account the hedge and the rear access route from the parked car. Furthermore, three 240L and one 23L bins, a parking space and cycle storage are all shown to have a poor relationship with both gardens. There is also no garden building shown for garden maintenance tools and equipment etc - this would reduce the size of the garden even further.

The gardens serving the terrace to the west do not incorporate parking and the gardens to the north (with garages) are bigger than those proposed. In this respect there is conflict with criteria (g) of Core Strategy Policy CS12.

Overall cramped appearance

Taking all of the above into consideration, it is clear that the proposed scheme is unduly cramped and this would have an adverse impact on the street scene. A3.1 in Appendix 3 explains that in particular there must be adequate space for the proposed development without creating a cramped appearance.

Core Strategy Policy CS1 focuses on the quality of neighbourhood design and I consider that this proposal fails to meet the required criteria because it would not respect the typical density intended in the area nor enhance spaces between buildings and general character. There are also various conflicts with the objectives and requirements set out in Core Strategy Policy CS12.

On a more local level, there is conflict with the Neighbourhood Plan Area 2 Policy because the proposal would not complement or integrate well with the surrounding area. The SPG explains that, despite variation over the HCA32 / Grovehill area as a whole, there is regularity of appearance within groups of dwellings. I don't consider that this proposal reflects or respects this regularity.

Likely threat to the Norway Maple (T2)

The submitted Tree Report states that the Norway Maple is considered to have a moderate level of public visibility and amenity value. I cannot concur with this statement.

This tree is highly visible, given its location within the residential estate and its proximity to the public footpath at this junction. It is approximately 14m high and is in good condition. In fact the Design & Access Statement confirms that the Maple "*is visually significant*" to the street scene - both Cupid Green Lane and Yeoman's Ride. The Design & Access Statement also confirms that it "*adds value to the area*".

In my opinion, this tree would have a poor relationship with the development, especially the house proposed on Plot 2. Consequently it conflicts with criteria (d) of Core Strategy Policy CS12 and saved Policy 99 because it does not give a high priority to the retention of the Norway Maple, as required. The latter specifically states that in order to minimise unnecessary loss the Council will carefully consider the positions of existing trees with the proposed development so that a harmonious relationship is achieved.

I don't feel that such a relationship can be achieved in the long run and the 'shade arc' raises a particular concern. I cannot agree that its shadowing and obstructing natural light would only be noticeable within the afternoon to the east of the site (paragraph 5.3 of the Tree Report). The Norway Maple shown on the elevation plans doesn't seem to be a true reflection of its height, even when taking into account the proposed crown reduction. It is highly likely that its effect on the habitable rooms on Plot 2 would lead to future pressure for its felling and this scenario should be carefully considered at this point of the process.

MY CONCLUSIONS

In conclusion, I consider that the principle of this development is unacceptable for a number of different reasons. The scheme itself would cause further, unacceptable harm to the character and appearance of the area.

In terms of Policies it fails to take account of the Neighbourhood Plan, Section HCA32 of the SPG and numerous Core Strategy Policies. There is additional conflict with saved

Policies 21, 99 and 119, as well as the guidelines set out in Appendix 3 (Layout and Design Residential Areas), in the Local Plan.

The proposal would not successfully integrate with this part of Grovehill and in environmental terms it would cause unacceptable harm. Consequently it does not represent sustainable development when assessed against the NPPF and should be refused.

4 Yeoman's Court

Raises a number of highway safety and parking concerns including:

- The front of the existing garages are used presently for parking on the forecourt and there is limited parking available so this will reduce the parking available in the parking bay
- Already people park on Yeoman's Ride which is not ideal and makes going onto Cupid Green Lane more difficult.
- There are a number of children living in the area and their safety must be taken into account.
- The proposed houses are not in line with the existing houses appearance and as Yeoman's Court has restricted planning because of the farm house I see no difference in that applying to any house that is opposite the farmhouse.
- I assume that the drivers view of Cupid Green Lane will not be obstructed by the construction or parking because turning right presently is difficult due to the sharp bend in the road and turning left you have to move right out to be able to see past the parked cars.

The off street parking will be for two cars and as you are aware the normal is two per household so again will increase