

<b>4/00931/19/FUL</b>	<b>DEMOLITION OF GARAGES AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF 4 DWELLINGS COMPRISING, 1 X THREE BEDROOM HOUSE, 1 X ONE BEDROOM FLAT AND 2 X TWO BEDROOM DWELLINGS AND ASSOCIATED LANDSCAPING AND PARKING AND REMOVAL OF CROSS OVER/ REINSTATEMENT OF THE PEDESTRIAN FOOTPATH TO THE NORTH PART OF THE SITE.</b>
<b>Site Address</b>	<b>GARAGE SITE, MIDDLEKNIGHTS HILL, HEMEL HEMPSTEAD</b>
<b>Applicant</b>	<b>Thrive Homes, Westside</b>
<b>Case Officer</b>	<b>Elsbeth Palmer</b>
<b>Referral to Committee</b>	<b>The application has been referred to committee in view of the Councils financial interest in the site.</b>

## **1. Recommendation**

1.1 That planning permission be **GRANTED**.

## **2. Summary**

2.1 The proposals would provide an appropriate use for this large area of vacant previously developed land within Hemel. The residential scheme is well designed having careful regard to the topography of the area and amenity of neighbouring dwellings. The proposals are not considered to result in significant harm to the amenities of these units through a loss in privacy, daylight or sunlight and are not considered visually intrusive. The scheme has been carefully considered to ensure that it does not result in any detriment to matters of highways safety.

2.2 The proposal is considered to meet the planning requirements set out at Policies CS4, CS8, CS12 and CS17 of the Core Strategy and as set out in Saved Policies 51, Appendices 3 and 5 of the Dacorum Borough Local Plan 1991-2011.

## **3. Site Description**

3.1 The site lies within the established residential area of Gadebridge, this particular area features New Town development comprising predominantly terraced dwellings. shallow gable roofs, brick exteriors and regular layout pattern with defined building lines and gardens typically to the rear are characteristic of the area.

3.2 The site comprises two garage courtyards to the north and south of Middleknights Hill with 36 garages in total. There are two rights of way through the garage blocks serving dwellings along Fennycroft Road, Plantation Walk and Spencer Way.

3.3 Levels fall gently in a north-easterly direction down Middleknights Hill towards its intersection with Fennycroft Road. There are landscape features evident in the vicinity; however, the immediate street scene (between Fennycroft and Plantation Walk / Spencer Way) is dominated by hard landscaping with high boundary fencing enclosing rear gardens.

3.4 There is a high level of accessibility to services including Gadebridge (Rossgate shops at Galley Hill) local centre which is also on a bus route, located to the south of the

site. Open space in the locality includes Gadebridge Park to the east and Warners End Valley to the west.

#### **4. Proposal**

4.1 The proposal is for the demolition of the garages and construction of 4 affordable residential units comprising:

- Unit 1 - 1 bedroom (50 sqm);
- Unit 2 - 3 bedrooms (104 sqm);
- Unit 3 - 2 bedrooms (80 sqm); and
- Unit 4 - 2 bedrooms (80 sqm).

Units 1 and 2 are to be located on the northern side of Middleknights Hill with 3 and 4 on the southern side.

4.2 The tenure of the new dwellings would be for 'Affordable rent', charged at no more than 80% of market rent values in the locality. After three years, tenants will be offered the option to buy a share of their home on a Shared Ownership basis, subject to their financial circumstances.

4.3 The proposed dwellings will be two storey with hipped roofs facing Middleknights Hill. Parking for 7 vehicles will be provided.

#### **5. Relevant Planning History**

5.1 No relevant planning application for the land as it has been a garage site for many years.

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

#### **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, CS11, CS12, CS17, CS18 and CS32.

##### 6.3 Saved Policies of the Dacorum Borough Local Plan

Policies 10, 13, 18, 21, 51, Appendix 3 and 5.

##### 6.4 Supplementary Planning Guidance / Documents [include only those relevant to

case]

- Environmental Guidelines (May 2004)
- Area Based Policies (May 2004) - Residential Character Area HCA 6 - Gadebridge
- Water Conservation & Sustainable Drainage (June 2005)
- Energy Efficiency & Conservation (June 2006)
- Accessibility Zones for the Application of car Parking Standards (July 2002)
- Planning Obligations (April 2011)
- Affordable Housing (Jan 2013)

6.5 Advice Notes and Appraisals [include only those relevant to case]

- Sustainable Development Advice Note (March 2011)

## **7. Constraints**

- 15.2M AIR DIR LIMIT
- HCA 6 Gadebridge
- CIL3

## **8. Representations**

Consultation responses

8.1 These are reproduced in full at Appendix 1

Neighbour notification/site notice responses

8.2 These are reproduced in full at Appendix 2

## **9. Considerations**

Main issues

9.1 The main issues to consider are:

- Policy and principle
- Layout, design and scale of the development;
- Density;
- Impact on street scene;
- Impact on neighbouring properties;
- Amenity Space;
- Impact on trees and landscaping; and
- Access, parking and highways safety.

Policy and Principle

9.2 The application site is located within an established residential area of Hemel Hempstead wherein residential development is acceptable in accordance with Policy CS4 of the Core Strategy. Furthermore, there is a strong presumption in Policy CS17

in favour of promoting residential use of the land to address a need for additional housing within the Borough. Core Strategy (2013) Policy CS1 states that Hemel Hempstead will be the focus for homes and Policy CS4 states that appropriate residential development within residential areas in the Towns and Large Villages is encouraged.

9.3 Within the Core Planning Principles outlined in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) there is a strong emphasis on the planning system's responsibility to deliver more homes. Paragraph 47 of the NPPF stresses this further seeking to boost the supply of housing. In addition, the NPPF encourages the provision of more housing within towns and other specified settlements and the effective use of land by reusing land that has been previously developed. Saved Policy 10 of the Local Plan (2004) also seeks to optimise the use of available land within urban areas.

9.4 The proposal would make a valuable contribution to the Borough's existing housing stock (in accordance with Policy CS17). The development would be located in a sustainable location and seeks to optimise the use of previously developed urban land; the proposal is therefore in accordance with policies CS1, CS4, and CS17 of the Core Strategy (2013), saved Policy 10 of the Local Plan (2004) and the NPPF (2012).

9.5 The site lies within HCA 6: Gadebridge Residential Character Area. Development principles for this area include:

- a variety of designs is acceptable;
- all types of dwellings are acceptable although the specific type should relate well to adjacent and nearby development in terms of design, scale and height;
- should not exceed two storeys;
- small to medium sized dwellings are acceptable;
- dwelling should front the road with a spacing of 2m to 5m expected between dwellings or group of dwellings;
- development must mainly be provided within the medium density range (30 to 35 dwellings/ha (net)). This may rise to a higher density in the range of 35-50 dwellings/ha (net) for sites at or close to the Rossgate Local Centre in cases where the character and appearance of the area is not unduly harmed.

#### Layout, Design and Scale

9.6 The proposed new dwellings face Middleknights Hill with landscaped parking areas along the frontage and amenity space to the side and rear. This part of the street scene is unusual in that few houses face the road but as you progress up the Hill most dwellings face the road with a variety of frontage widths and depths. The scheme provides more than 2m to 5m spacing between groups of dwellings. The scale of the dwellings in terms of height and bulk are similar to that found along Middleknights Hill. The design of the proposed dwellings in that they are brick, two storey with hipped roofs and a small single storey front projection will be in character with the surrounding area.

## Density

9.7 The Site measures approximately 0.1ha that equates to 40 dwellings per hectare. The Character Area Appraisal (HCA6) advocates a medium density of 25-35 dwellings/hectare in the area, rising to 50 dph at or close to Rossgate Local Centre. Saved Local Plan Policy 21, advises that: *'Densities will generally be expected to be in the range of 30 to 50 dwellings per hectare net'*. Therefore, the proposed residential density is considered sustainable given the Site's context.

9.8 The proposal will comply with CS12 in terms of respecting adjoining properties.

## Impact on Street Scene

9.9 The proposed new dwellings do not sit forward of the existing building line at first floor level so do not project forward in a way that dominates in the street scene. They are of similar scale, design and materials to the neighbouring dwellings.

9.10 The proposed frontages will comprise landscaped parking areas for the new dwellings.

9.11 There will be no detrimental impact on the street scene as a result of the proposal so the proposal will comply with CS12 in terms of being compatible with the existing street scene.

## Impact on neighbouring properties

9.12 The NPPF (2012) outlines the importance of planning in securing good standards of amenity for existing and future occupiers of land and buildings. Saved Appendix 3 of the Local Plan (2004) and Policy CS12 of the Core Strategy (2013), seek to ensure that new development does not result in detrimental impact to neighbouring properties and their amenity space. Thus, the proposed should be designed to reduce any impact on neighbouring properties by way of visual intrusion, loss of light and privacy.

9.13 There will be no significant loss of sunlight and daylight for the adjacent neighbours as a result of the proposal. Plans 407-326 Rev 1 demonstrate using the 25 degree test that the development will not result in a loss of sunlight and daylight for adjacent neighbours.

9.14 Units 3 and 4 will only have one first floor window each in the side elevation but this will be a fixed window with obscure glazed glass and top opening light 1.7 m above internal floor level. This window will serve a bathroom. There will be no overlooking from this window due to restrictions described.

9.15 The rear windows at first floor level of unit 3 and 4 will be 11.5 metres away from the site boundary and will face the far end of the rear gardens of properties along Plantation Walk and Fennycroft Road. It is considered the distance and direction of view would not result in a loss of privacy for these properties.

9.16 The first floor windows in the rear elevation of Units 1 & 2 will be high level ie. window sills 1.7 m above internal floor level to avoid overlooking of the properties to the rear. There are no first floor windows proposed for Units 1 & 2.

9.17 The proposal will comply therefore comply with CS12.

#### Amenity Space

9.18 Units 3 & 4 have a garden depth of 11.5m which meets the standard required under the Saved Appendix 3 of the DBLP. The total area for Unit 3 is 131 square metres and Unit 4 is 144 square metres.

9.19 The garden depth for Unit 1 - the one bedroom dwelling is 5.3 metres with a total area of 64 square metres and for Unit 2 the garden depth is 6.6 metres with a total area of 92 square metres.

9.20 Appendix 3 of the DBLP states, "Ideally a range of garden sizes should be provided to cater for different family compositions, ages and interests. A reduced rear garden depth may be acceptable for small starter homes." Based on the above advice it is considered that the amenity space for unit 1 is acceptable. The garden depth of 6.6 m for Unit 2 is balanced with the fact that there is amenity space to the side of the dwelling (approx. 4.3 m) as well as to the rear creating an acceptable useable area of amenity space.

#### Impact on Trees and Landscaping

9.21 There are no significant trees affected by the proposed development. The proposal therefore complies with CS 12 in terms of retention of trees.

#### Impact on Highway Safety

9.22 Policies CS8 and CS12 of the Core Strategy seek to ensure that any new development provides a safe and satisfactory means of access for all users. Paragraph 91 of the NPPF (2019) states that planning decisions should aim to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places which are safe and accessible.

Highways have raised no objection to the proposal.

#### Parking

9.23 The standards required by Appendix 5 of the DBLP for Zone 4 include:

1 bedroom - 1.25 spaces

2 bedroom - 1.5 spaces

3 bedroom - 2.25 spaces

As there are two x two bed units the total required is 6.6 spaces.

9.24 The proposed development will provide for a total of 7 spaces.

9.25 This would meet the parking standards in saved Appendix 5 of the DBLP. This provision is considered appropriate for the scale of the proposed properties.

#### Response to Neighbour comments

9.26 These points have been addressed above.

## 9.27 CIL

9.28 All new residential development is expected to contribute towards the provision or cost of on site, strategic or local infrastructure necessary as a result of the proposed development. The Council adopted a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) in February 2015 and now requires CIL payments to address the requirements of Policy CS35. The site is located in CIL Charging Zone 3 where a levy of £100 per square metre (plus indexation) will be charged for residential development. The site may be able to claim an exemption from payment as affordable housing and subject to the submission of a relief claim.

## 10. Conclusions

10.1 The redevelopment of the garages for residential purposes would bring the land into productive use and assist the Borough Council in the overall supply of new homes required under Policy CS17 of the Core Strategy. The layout and design approach is considered to be satisfactory providing a high standard of development and one which does not prejudice either the amenity of neighbouring property nor matters of highways safety under Policies CS8 and CS12 of the Core Strategy and Saved Appendix 3 and 5 of the Local Plan.

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

### Conditions

No	Condition
1	<p><b>The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.</b></p> <p><u>Reason:</u> 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.</p>
2	<p><b>Prior to the erection of any structure above ground level, 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.</b> 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><u>Reason:</u> To ensure a satisfactory appearance to the development and to comply with CS12.</p>
3	<p><b>No development (other than demolition/site preparation works) shall take place until full 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:</b></p> <p><b>hard surfacing materials;</b> <b>means of enclosure;</b> <b>soft landscape works which shall include planting plans; written specifications (including cultivation and other operations associated with plant and grass establishment); schedules of plants, noting species,</b></p>

	<p>plant sizes and proposed numbers/densities where appropriate;  proposed finished levels or contours;  scaled plans showing garden shed/bicycle storage and design of bin store;  car parking layouts and other vehicle and pedestrian access and circulation areas; and  proposed and existing functional services above and below ground (e.g. drainage, power, communications cables, pipelines etc, indicating lines, manholes, supports etc).</p> <p>The approved landscape works shall be carried out prior to the first occupation of the development hereby permitted.</p> <p><u>Reason:</u> To ensure a satisfactory appearance to the development and to safeguard the visual character of the immediate area and to comply with CS12.</p>
4	<p><b>Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015 (or any Order amending or re-enacting that Order with or without modification) no development falling within the following classes of the Order shall be carried out without the prior written approval of the local planning authority:</b></p> <p><b>Schedule 2 Part 1 Classes A, B, and E</b></p> <p><u>Reason:</u> To enable the local planning authority to retain control over the development in the interests of safeguarding the residential and visual amenity of the locality and to comply with CS12. The properties are sited on a compact site with limited amenity space and close relationships with neighbouring dwellings.</p>
5	<p><b>No development above ground level shall commence until a Construction Management Plan (or Construction Method Statement) has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Thereafter the construction of the development shall only be carried out in accordance with the approved Plan. The Construction Management Plan shall include details of:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>a. Construction vehicle numbers and type;</b></li> <li><b>b. Access arrangements to the site;</b></li> <li><b>c. Traffic management requirements</b></li> <li><b>d. Construction and storage compounds (including areas designated for car parking, loading / unloading and turning areas);</b></li> <li><b>e. Siting and details of wheel washing facilities;</b></li> <li><b>f. Cleaning of site entrances, site tracks and the adjacent public highway;</b></li> <li><b>g. Timing of construction activities (including delivery times and removal of waste) and to avoid school pick up/drop off times;</b></li> <li><b>h. Provision of sufficient on-site parking prior to commencement of construction activities;</b></li> <li><b>i. Post construction restoration/reinstatement of the working areas;</b></li> <li><b>j. where works cannot be contained wholly within the site a plan should be submitted showing the site layout on the highway including extent of hoarding, pedestrian routes and remaining road width for vehicle movements.</b></li> </ul> <p><b>Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved</b></p>



	<p><b>Management Plan.</b></p> <p><u>Reason:</u> In order to protect highway safety and the amenity of other users of the public highway and rights of way in accordance with Policies 5, 12, 17 and 22 of Hertfordshire's Local Transport Plan (adopted 2018) and to comply with Core Strategy Policy 12.</p>
6	<p><b>Prior to the commencement of any above ground development details of any front boundary treatment shall be submitted and approved by the local planning authority. Development shall be constructed in accordance with the approved details.</b></p> <p><u>Reason:</u> To ensure suitable, safe and satisfactory planning and development of the site in accordance with Policy 5 of Hertfordshire's Local Transport Plan (adopted 2018) and to comply with Core Strategy Policy CS12.</p>
7	<p><b>Prior to the first occupation of the development hereby permitted, vehicular access to and egress from the adjoining highway shall be limited to the accesses shown on drawing number 407-320 P2 only. Any other access shall be permanently closed, and the footway and a full height kerb shall be reinstated in accordance with a detailed scheme to be agreed with the Local Planning Authority, concurrently with the bringing into use of the new access. Prior to use arrangements shall be made for surface water drainage to be intercepted and disposed of separately so that it does not discharge from or onto the highway carriageway.</b></p> <p><u>Reason:</u> To ensure construction of a satisfactory access and in the interests of highway safety, traffic movement and amenity in accordance with Policy 5 of Hertfordshire's Local Transport Plan (adopted 2018) and to comply with Core Strategy Policy 12.</p>
8	<p><b>Prior to the first occupation of the development hereby permitted the proposed access, on-site car parking and turning area shall be laid out, demarcated, levelled, surfaced and drained in accordance with the approved plan and retained thereafter available for that specific use.</b></p> <p><u>Reason:</u> To ensure construction of a satisfactory development and in the interests of highway safety in accordance with Policy 5 of Hertfordshire's Local Transport Plan (adopted 2018) and to comply with Core Strategy Policy 12.</p>
9	<p><b>The windows at first floor level in the side elevations of unit 3 &amp; 4 hereby permitted shall be fixed with obscure glass and top opening light 1.7 metres from the internal finished floor level.</b></p> <p><u>Reason:</u> In the interests of the residential amenities of the occupants of the adjacent dwellings along Plantation Walk and Fennycroft Road and to comply with CS12.</p>
10	<p><b>The windows at first floor level in the rear elevation of Units 1 &amp; 2 hereby permitted shall be top hung and permanently fitted with obscured glass.</b></p> <p><u>Reason:</u> In the interests of the amenity of adjoining residents along Fennycroft Road and Spencer Way and to comply with CS12.</p>
11	<p><b>The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans/documents:</b></p>

**407/301 Rev P2 Site as Existing**  
**407/312 Location Plan**  
**407/320 Rev P2 Site as Proposed**  
**407/321 Rev P2 Proposed ground floor plans in context**  
**407/322 Rev P1 Proposed first floor plans in context**  
**407/323 Rev P1 Plans as Proposed - floor plans**  
**407/324 Rev P1 Elevations as proposed Units 3 & 4**  
**407/325 Rev P2 Elevations as proposed Units 1 & 2**  
**407/326 Rev P1 Proposed site sections showing 25 degree test**  
**Planning Statment dated August 2019 prepared by Litmus Planning and Development Consultancy**  
**Design and Access Statement Rev 1-21/08/2019 prepared by Evolution Chartered Architects**  
**Phase 1 Desk Study Report dated August 2019 prepared by Earth Environmental and Geotechnical**  
**Phase 1 Desk Study Report Part Two Ref GS-5619504 prepared by Groundsure Location Intelligence**

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

Informatives:

Highways

AN) Agreement with Highway Authority: The applicant is advised that in order to comply with this permission it will be necessary for the developer of the site to enter into an agreement with Hertfordshire County Council as Highway Authority under Section 278 of the Highways Act 1980 to ensure the satisfactory completion of the access and associated road improvements. The construction of such works must be undertaken to the satisfaction and specification of the Highway Authority, and by a contractor who is authorised to work in the public highway. Before works commence the applicant will need to apply to the Highway Authority to obtain their permission and requirements.

Further information is available via the website

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

**REFUSE / WASTE COLLECTION:** Provision has been made for on-site refuse/recycling stores within 30m of each dwelling and within 25m of the kerbside/bin collection and not stored on the highway, the arrangements of which are considered to be acceptable by HCC as Highway Authority. The collection method must be confirmed as acceptable by DBC waste management.

**EMERGENCY VEHICLE ACCESS:** The proposed dwellings are within the recommended emergency vehicle access of 45 metres from the highway. This adheres to guidelines as recommended in 'MfS', 'Roads in Hertfordshire; A Design Guide' and 'Building Regulations 2010: Fire Safety Approved Document B Vol 1 – Dwellingshouses'.

Thames Water

As you are redeveloping a site, there may be public sewers crossing or close

to your development. If you discover a sewer, it's important that you minimize the risk of damage. We'll need to check that your development doesn't limit repair or maintenance activities, or inhibit the services we provide in any other way. The applicant is advised to read our guide working near or diverting our pipes. <https://developers.thameswater.co.uk/Developing-a-large-site/Planning-your-development/Working-near-or-diverting-our-pipes>.

With regard to surface water drainage, Thames Water would advise that if the developer follows the sequential approach to the disposal of surface water we would have no objection. Where the developer proposes to discharge to a public sewer, prior approval from Thames Water Developer Services will be required. Should you require further information please refer to our website.

<https://developers.thameswater.co.uk/Developing-a-large-site/Apply-and-pay-for-services/Wastewater-services>

#### Ecology

Any building clearance should be undertaken outside the nesting bird season (March to August inclusive) to protect breeding birds, their nests, eggs and young. If this is not practicable, a search of the area should be made no more than two days in advance of clearance by a competent Ecologist and if active nests are found, works should stop until the birds have left the nest.

In the event of bats or evidence of them being found, work must stop immediately and advice taken on how to proceed lawfully from an appropriately qualified and experienced Ecologist or Natural England.

The inclusion of gardens within the development will provide net gain for biodiversity. Any enhancements for wildlife, in the form of native planting, wildflower planting, garden pond, bat and bird boxes, etc, would be welcomed.

#### Article 35 Statement

Planning permission has been granted for this proposal. The Council acted pro-actively through early engagement with the applicant at the pre-application stage and positive engagement during the determination process which lead to improvements to the scheme. The Council has therefore acted pro-actively in line with the requirements of the Framework (paragraph 38) and in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) (Amendment No. 2) Order 2015.

## Appendix 1

### Highways

#### Comments received 5/9/19

Notice is given under article 18 of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 that the Hertfordshire County Council as Highway Authority does not wish to restrict the grant of permission subject to the following conditions:

1. Prior to the commencement of the development hereby permitted full details shall be submitted and approved in writing in relation to: • Any front boundary features (e.g. walls, fence, hedge) of a height of no greater than 0.6m to ensure that visibility levels

for vehicles and pedestrians are sufficient and maximised. Reason: To ensure suitable, safe and satisfactory planning and development of the site in accordance with Policy 5 of Hertfordshire's Local Transport Plan (adopted 2018).

2. Access and Highway Works Prior to the first occupation of the development hereby permitted, vehicular access to and egress from the adjoining highway shall be limited to the accesses shown on drawing number 407-320 P2 only. Any other access shall be permanently closed, and the footway and a full height kerb shall be reinstated in accordance with a detailed scheme to be agreed with the Local Planning Authority, concurrently with the bringing into use of the new access. Prior to use arrangements shall be made for surface water drainage to be intercepted and disposed of separately so that it does not discharge from or onto the highway carriageway. Reason: To ensure construction of a satisfactory access and in the interests of highway safety, traffic movement and amenity in accordance with Policy 5 of Hertfordshire's Local Transport Plan (adopted 2018).

3. Provision of Parking & Servicing Areas Prior to the first occupation of the development hereby permitted the proposed access, on-site car parking and turning area shall be laid out, demarcated, levelled, surfaced and drained in accordance with the approved plan and retained thereafter available for that specific use. Reason: To ensure construction of a satisfactory development and in the interests of highway safety in accordance with Policy 5 of Hertfordshire's Local Transport Plan (adopted 2018).

4. Construction Management No development shall commence until a Construction Management Plan (or Construction Method Statement) has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Thereafter the construction of the development shall only be carried out in accordance with the approved Plan. The Construction Management Plan shall include details of: a. Construction vehicle numbers, type, routing; b. Access arrangements to the site; c. Traffic management requirements d. Construction and storage compounds (including areas designated for car parking, loading / unloading and turning areas); e. Siting and details of wheel washing facilities; f. Cleaning of site entrances, site tracks and the adjacent public highway; g. Timing of construction activities (including delivery times and removal of waste) and to avoid school pick up/drop off times; h. Provision of sufficient on-site parking prior to commencement of construction activities; i. Post construction restoration/reinstatement of the working areas; j. where works cannot be contained wholly within the site a plan should be submitted showing the site layout on the highway including extent of hoarding, pedestrian routes and remaining road width for vehicle movements. Reason: In order to protect highway safety and the amenity of other users of the public highway and rights of way in accordance with Policies 5, 12, 17 and 22 of Hertfordshire's Local Transport Plan (adopted 2018).

HIGHWAY INFORMATIVE: HCC recommends inclusion of the following highway informative / advisory note (AN) to ensure that any works within the public highway are carried out in accordance with the provisions of the Highway Act 1980:

AN) Agreement with Highway Authority: The applicant is advised that in order to comply with this permission it will be necessary for the developer of the site to enter into an agreement with Hertfordshire County Council as Highway Authority under Section 278 of the Highways Act 1980 to ensure the satisfactory completion of the access and associated road improvements. The construction of such works must be undertaken to the satisfaction and specification of the Highway Authority, and by a

contractor who is authorised to work in the public highway. Before works commence the applicant will need to apply to the Highway Authority to obtain their permission and requirements. Further information is available via the website <https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/highways-roads-and-pavements/business-and-developer-information/development-management/highways-development-management.aspx> or by telephoning 0300 1234047.

**COMMENTS / ANALYSIS:** The proposal comprises of the demolition of an existing garage area and construction of four dwellings at Middleknights Hill, Hemel Hempstead. Middleknights Hill is designated as an unclassified local access road, subject to a speed limit of 30mph and is highway maintainable at public expense.

**VEHICLE ACCESS:** There are two existing accesses into the site, one on each side of the road. The proposals include closing off the existing accesses and the provision of four new vehicle crossover (VXO) accesses, the layout of which is shown on submitted drawing number 407-320 P2. The general arrangements are considered to be acceptable by HCC as Highway Authority although it should be noted that the previous layout (with one vehicle access) would be the preferred option to minimize the number of vehicles accesses and encourage the free flow of pedestrian highway users.

Any front boundary fences or hedges would need to installed and/or maintained at a height of no greater than 0.6m to ensure that the required visibility levels can be permanently achieved.

In order for the proposals to be acceptable, the applicant would need to enter into a Section 278 agreement with HCC as Highway Authority in relation to the alterations required on the highway land including: • reinstating the footway and a full height kerb where the existing VXOs are no longer required and ensuring that there is a full height kerb and reinstated footway between the proposed VXO accesses. The exact width of the VXOs can be detailed as part of the Section 278 process.

**CAR PARKING & MANOEUVRABILITY:** The proposals include the provision of seven on site / off street car parking spaces. The dimensions of the proposed parking areas are considered to be acceptable and in accordance with Manual for Street (MfS). Vehicles would not be able to turn around and egress to the highway in forward gear although this is considered to be acceptable onto a local access road. Although there would be a loss of the existing garage area for parking, it is unlikely that any effects from parking would be significant enough to recommend refusal from a highway perspective and therefore HCC as Highway Authority considers this level to be acceptable. Dacorum Borough Council (DBC) is the parking authority for and therefore would ultimately need to be satisfied with the level of parking.

**REFUSE / WASTE COLLECTION:** Provision has been made for on-site refuse/recycling stores within 30m of each dwelling and within 25m of the kerbside/bin collection and not stored on the highway, the arrangements of which are considered to be acceptable by HCC as Highway Authority. The collection method must be confirmed as acceptable by DBC waste management.

**EMERGENCY VEHICLE ACCESS:** The proposed dwellings are within the recommended emergency vehicle access of 45 metres from the highway. This adheres to guidelines as recommended in 'MfS', 'Roads in Hertfordshire; A Design Guide' and 'Building Regulations 2010: Fire Safety Approved Document B Vol 1 – Dwellings'.

CONCLUSION: HCC as Highway Authority considers that the proposal would not have an unreasonable impact on the safety and operation of the surrounding highway and the trips generated from four dwellings would not be significant. The applicant will need to enter into a Section 278 Agreement with HCC to cover the technical approval of the design, construction and implementation of the highway works required within the existing public highway. Therefore HCC has no objections on highway grounds to the application, subject to the inclusion of the above planning conditions and informatives.

#### Comments received 30/4

Notice is given under article 18 of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 that the Hertfordshire County Council as Highway Authority does not wish to restrict the grant of permission subject to the following conditions:

1. Access and Highway Works Prior to the first occupation of the development hereby permitted, vehicular access to and egress from the adjoining highway shall be limited to the access shown on drawing number 407-310 P2 only. Any other access shall be permanently closed, and the footway and a full height kerb shall be reinstated in accordance with a detailed scheme to be agreed with the Local Planning Authority, concurrently with the bringing into use of the new access. Prior to use arrangements shall be made for surface water drainage to be intercepted and disposed of separately so that it does not discharge from or onto the highway carriageway.

Reason: To ensure construction of a satisfactory access and in the interests of highway safety, traffic movement and amenity in accordance with Policy 5 of Hertfordshire's Local Transport Plan (adopted 2018).

2. Provision of Visibility Splays – Dimensioned in Condition Prior to the first occupation of the development hereby permitted a visibility splay measuring 2.4m x 31 metres shall be provided to each side of the vehicle access where it meets the highway and such splays shall thereafter be maintained at all times free from any obstruction between 600mm and 2m above the level of the adjacent highway carriageway.

Reason: To ensure construction of a satisfactory development and in the interests of highway safety in accordance with Policy 5 of Hertfordshire's Local Transport Plan (adopted 2018).

3. Provision of Parking & Servicing Areas Prior to the first occupation of the development hereby permitted the proposed access, on-site car parking and turning area shall be laid out, demarcated, levelled, surfaced and drained in accordance with the approved plan and retained thereafter available for that specific use.

Reason: To ensure construction of a satisfactory development and in the interests of highway safety in accordance with Policy 5 of Hertfordshire's Local Transport Plan (adopted 2018).

4. Construction Management No development shall commence until a Construction Management Plan (or Construction Method Statement) has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Thereafter the construction of the development shall only be carried out in accordance with the approved Plan. The

Construction Management Plan shall include details of: a. Construction vehicle numbers, type, routing; b. Access arrangements to the site; c. Traffic management requirements d. Construction and storage compounds (including areas designated for car parking, loading / unloading and turning areas); e. Siting and details of wheel washing facilities; f. Cleaning of site entrances, site tracks and the adjacent public highway; g. Timing of construction activities (including delivery times and removal of waste) and to avoid school pick up/drop off times; h. Provision of sufficient on-site parking prior to commencement of construction activities; i. Post construction restoration/reinstatement of the working areas; j. where works cannot be contained wholly within the site a plan should be submitted showing the site layout on the highway including extent of hoarding, pedestrian routes and remaining road width for vehicle movements.

Reason: In order to protect highway safety and the amenity of other users of the public highway and rights of way in accordance with Policies 5, 12, 17 and 22 of Hertfordshire's Local Transport Plan (adopted 2018).

HIGHWAY INFORMATIVE: HCC recommends inclusion of the following highway informative / advisory note (AN) to ensure that any works within the public highway are carried out in accordance with the provisions of the Highway Act 1980:

AN) Agreement with Highway Authority: The applicant is advised that in order to comply with this permission it will be necessary for the developer of the site to enter into an agreement with Hertfordshire County Council as Highway Authority under Section 278 / 38 of the Highways Act 1980 to ensure the satisfactory completion of the access and associated road improvements. The construction of such works must be undertaken to the satisfaction and specification of the Highway Authority, and by a contractor who is authorised to work in the public highway. Before works commence the applicant will need to apply to the Highway Authority to obtain their permission and requirements. Further information is available via the website <https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/highways-roads-and-pavements/business-and-developer-information/development-management/highways-development-management.aspx> or by telephoning 0300 1234047.

COMMENTS / ANALYSIS: The proposal comprises of the demolition of an existing garage area and construction of four dwellings at Middleknights Hill, Hemel Hempstead. Middleknights Hill is designated as an unclassified local access road, subject to a speed limit of 30mph and is highway maintainable at public expense.

VEHICLE ACCESS: There are two existing accesses into the site, one on each side of the road. The proposals use the existing access southern access through a widening of the existing vehicle crossover (VXO) and closing the VXO on the northern side of the road, the layout of which is shown on the submitted plan no. 407-310 P2. The arrangements are considered to be acceptable by HCC as Highway Authority. A standard VXO (rather than formalised bellmouth) would be acceptable for the size of the development – any widening of the VXO .

Following consideration of the classification of road and speed of traffic, vehicle to vehicle visibility splays of 2.4m by 31m would be required and is available from the access in both directions. The majority of the splay would be through the existing highway footway. However any boundary fences or hedges within the splay line would

need to installed and/or maintained at a height of no greater than 0.6m to ensure that the required visibility levels can be permanently achieved.

In order for the proposals to be acceptable, the applicant would need to enter into a Section 278 agreement with HCC as Highway Authority in relation to the alterations required on the highway land including: • reinstating the footway kerb to a full height at the closure of the existing VXO on the northern side of Middleknights Road • any widening to the existing VXO on the southern side of Middleknights Road (to a maximum width of 7.2m made up of six flat kerbs and two ramped kerbs).

**CAR PARKING & MANOEUVRABILITY:** The proposals include the provision of six on site / off street car parking spaces. The proposed layout and design of the parking and the width of the access way into the main car park at the rear (as shown on the submitted drawing 407-310 P2) is acceptable for the size of the proposals and in accordance with design guidance in 'MfS' Sec. 8.3.48 and 'Roads in Hertfordshire'. Vehicles would be able to turn around and egress to the highway in forward gear. Although there would be a loss of the existing garage area for parking, it is unlikely that any effects from parking would be significant enough to recommend refusal from a highway perspective and therefore HCC as Highway Authority considers this level to be acceptable. Dacorum Borough Council (DBC) is the parking authority for and therefore would ultimately need to be satisfied with the level of parking.

**REFUSE / WASTE COLLECTION:** Provision has been made for on-site refuse/recycling stores within 30m of each dwelling and within 25m of the kerbside/bin collection and not stored on the highway, the arrangements of which are considered to be acceptable by HCC as Highway Authority. The collection method must be confirmed as acceptable by DBC waste management.

**EMERGENCY VEHICLE ACCESS:** The proposed dwellings are within the recommended emergency vehicle access of 45 metres from the highway. This adheres to guidelines as recommended in 'MfS', 'Roads in Hertfordshire; A Design Guide' and 'Building Regulations 2010: Fire Safety Approved Document B Vol 1 – Dwellings'.

**CONCLUSION:** HCC as Highway Authority considers that the proposal would not have an unreasonable impact on the safety and operation of the surrounding highway and the trips generated from four dwellings would not be significant. The applicant will need to enter into a Section 278 Agreement with HCC to cover the technical approval of the design, construction and implementation of the highway works required within the existing public highway. Therefore HCC has no objections on highway grounds to the application, subject to the inclusion of the above planning conditions and informatives

### **Trees and Woodlands**

With regards to the above planning application, there are a number of garden ornamental trees which do not merit retention. Subsequently I have no objections to the application being approved in full.

### **Thames Water**

#### **WASTE COMMENT**

As you are redeveloping a site, there may be public sewers crossing or close to your



development. If you discover a sewer, it's important that you minimize the risk of damage. We'll need to check that your development doesn't limit repair or maintenance activities, or inhibit the services we provide in any other way. The applicant is advised to read our guide working near or diverting our pipes. <https://developers.thameswater.co.uk/Developing-a-large-site/Planning-your-development/Working-near-or-diverting-our-pipes>.

With regard to surface water drainage, Thames Water would advise that if the developer follows the sequential approach to the disposal of surface water we would have no objection. Where the developer proposes to discharge to a public sewer, prior approval from Thames Water Developer Services will be required. Should you require further information please refer to our website.

<https://developers.thameswater.co.uk/Developing-a-large-site/Apply-and-pay-for-services/Wastewater-services>

Thames Water would advise that with regard to waste water network and waste water process infrastructure capacity, we would not have any objection to the above planning application, based on the information provided

#### WATER COMMENT

With regard to water supply, this comes within the area covered by the Affinity Water Company. For your information the address to write to is - Affinity Water Company The Hub, Tamblin Way, Hatfield, Herts, AL10 9EZ - Tel - 0845 782 3333.

#### Growth and Infrastructure

Hertfordshire County Council's Growth & Infrastructure Unit do not have any comments to make in relation to financial contributions required by the Toolkit, as this development is situated within Dacorum's CIL Zone 3 and does not fall within any of the CIL Reg123 exclusions. Notwithstanding this, we reserve the right to seek Community Infrastructure Levy contributions towards the provision of infrastructure as outlined in your R123 List through the appropriate channels.

#### **HCC - Ecology**

The site consists of 36 individual residential garages and hardstanding. It is split into two by a road (Middleknights Hill) with 14 garages on the north side and 22 to the south. There are no semi-natural habitats within the site. There are some trees adjacent to the site, however none will be affected by the proposal.

It is likely bats and common bird species will be foraging, commuting and roosting / nesting in the neighbourhood. However, I consider the risk to protected species is negligible. Due to the nature and scape of the proposal, I do not consider any ecological surveys are necessary on this occasion. Notwithstanding the above, I would recommend a precautionary approach to the demolition works, and advise the following Informatives are added to any consent granted:

"Any building clearance should be undertaken outside the nesting bird season (March to August inclusive) to protect breeding birds, their nests, eggs and young. If this is not practicable, a search of the area should be made no more than two days in advance of clearance by a competent Ecologist and if active nests are found, works should stop until the birds have left the nest."

“In the event of bats or evidence of them being found, work must stop immediately and advice taken on how to proceed lawfully from an appropriately qualified and experienced Ecologist or Natural England.”

The inclusion of gardens within the development will provide net gain for biodiversity. Any enhancements for wildlife, in the form of native planting, wildflower planting, garden pond, bat and bird boxes, etc, would be welcomed.

### **Cupid Green**

Comments will be reported to the Development Management Committee meeting.

## **Appendix 2**

### **Neighbour notification/site notice responses**

#### **Objections**

6 objections were received for this application. The following is a list of those objections:

#### **1. Removal of Existing Parking Facilities & Change of Use**

The submitted "Design and Access Statement" states in section 6.6 that:

"The Council is also currently undertaking a Verge Hardening Project due to an evident lack of parking in the Borough".

Given that the Council has recognised that the parking situation in the area is suboptimal, I would argue that the change of use to remove existing parking facilities for 36 vehicles, while simultaneously increasing the housing density (thereby almost certainly increasing the number of vehicles present), is not in the best interest for the area as a whole.

On-street parking surrounding the proposed development site is already extremely crowded. This results in long stretches of road forced to be single-file traffic, including around poorly-sighted corners, which and does lead to accidents. One such example of which is on the nearby Fennycroft Road and Raybarn Road, where bollards separating the road from the pavement have had to be replaced and resettled numerous times in recent years due to traffic hitting them. This safety concern has been recently highlighted by a number of residents during neighbourhood policing surveys.

In the Traffic Statement that was submitted, national figures have been used as a basis of vehicle ownership levels. I would surmise from my daily observations that vehicle ownership in the area immediately surrounding the development plot is higher than those figures provided, which means these figures are not a suitable basis for inclusion as part of this summary as they do not accurately reflect the area in question.

Even ignoring the removal of the 36 existing parking facilities, the supporting documentation states that Dacorum Borough Council is currently in the process of re-

assessing if the existing requirement of 1.5 spaces per property is sufficient, which is the level of parking provided by the current plans. If these standards are soon to be rendered outdated, possibly even prior to the time that the development is completed, I would question if the currently proposed level of parking is of an adequate level for the new properties.

Furthermore, the application states that the existing garages are vacant. This is because the surrounding residents have not been given the option to make use of them. It is my understanding that those who were renting the garages had their option to lease them revoked. This action has caused the displacement of vehicles and so made the current on-street parking situation on Middleknights Hill and the adjacent roads worse.

## 2. Impact on Local Area

A number of other new developments are occurring in this local area, including those on nearby Spring Lane and Boxted Road, have already received planning approval. I would question if the cumulative impact of further residential properties being introduced into the area in such a short timespan been considered in regards to the impact on local services, such as GPs surgeries & schools? There appears to be no evidence submitted as part of this application to demonstrate that local services will not be negatively affected by the total number of new properties being introduced to the Gadebridge area, which this application contributes to.

## 3. Submitted Building Designs & Impact to Neighbours

The designs submitted do not demonstrate how the drains on site will be relocated, or if there will be any impact to existing utilities which may run beneath the site. They also do not detail what utilities are currently available to the plots or how any new utilities required for the houses are to be provided to the properties.

The application does not appear to include any kind of assessment as to how the demolition of garages & removal of the concrete base will affect drainage and runoff of water to the immediate and surrounding properties. I would like to know what effect this change of terrain would have on the vegetation in properties surrounding the development.

When referring to the impact of changes to lighting levels caused by the development of the new houses, the current application only takes into account direct light reaching a select choice of windows of neighbouring properties. The plans do not take into account the lighting levels sustaining the mature gardens in some of the adjacent gardens, which would be negatively affected to a far greater degree. The ecosystems in these gardens currently support a diverse range of wildlife, including nesting birds, and large number of local bees.

While the plans submitted detail opaque glass windows on the side elevations, there appears to have been no consideration shown for residents who will be overlooked from the rear aspects of the new dwellings. From this aspect, occupants of the new homes would readily see into the rear of properties on Spencer Way, Plantation Walk and Fennycroft Road within a standard field of view. Given the positioning of the proposed new properties midway between two rows of houses, this effect of being overlooked is approximately three-times as great as the current situation as it exists

between the current houses.

Beyond the houses themselves, the effect of overlooking of the gardens of neighbouring properties caused by construction of the new properties would negatively affect the residential amenity of the existing homes which lie to the rear elevations of the new buildings. This effect is exacerbated to residents on both the north and south sides of the development whose gardens extend to lie along the end of the planned home's rear gardens, as the upper rear windows of the new properties would directly look down into their garden area.

#### 4. Boundary Walls Design & Practicality

A key part of the plan as it currently stands revolves around the idea of retaining the existing garage walls to form part of the boundary between the new development and the surrounding properties.

As noted in the Sections Diagram, the site in question is on a slope down towards Fennycroft Road. The plans call for the removal of the concrete base currently in place which completely covers the plot of land, including spanning under the existing garage block, ending immediately under garage walls which are proposed to be retained. There is no protrusion of the concrete base into the adjacent properties' gardens.

There appears to be no structural survey of the garages, or other indication submitted as part of this application which supports the idea that the existing garage walls are in a condition that they could support themselves when the majority of the concrete foundation on which they are built is removed, especially given sloping elevation of the land.

#### 5. Risks to Surrounding Properties During Development

Given that this construction site will be immediately adjacent to residential properties, there has also been no consideration shown on how the planning applicant plans to protect neighbouring residents and their property from a risk of collapse of these walls during the demolition & construction processes.

No plans have currently been submitted how the demolition & construction plans to meet Policy CS29 of the Dacorum Borough Council's Core Strategy, covering storage and disposal of hazardous materials. I feel like this is a crucial to be detailed in advance, given that the existing application has highlighted that there is a significant risk to the environment and neighboring residents due to the presence of asbestos-contaminated waste which could be produced on-site during the demolition of the existing structures when combined with the limited space allowed by the plot of land.

Furthermore, I would also like to point out that the neighbouring properties are home to a number of young children, whom it has been identified are at a greater risk of complications due to asbestos exposure than adults. Therefore any risk of exposure should be kept to an absolute minimum.

#### General comments

- We object to the building of these houses along the property boundary line . The new property's are to be built higher than our property at the end of our garden encroaching on our privacy and sunlight . This will also have a severe impact on my

livelihood as a self employed carpenter as my rear access is essential for loading and unloading my tools and materials . The property was only purchased recently because of the excellent rear access .

- The plans indicate that 6 parking spaces will be constructed on the southern plot. Will all of these spaces be allocated to the 4 new properties? If so how will this be enforced? What restrictions will be placed on contractors vehicles/access/parking during demolition/construction?
- Is the developer aware that the current western rear wall of the garages on both north and south sides of Middleknights Hill provide a certain amount of retaining to the gardens backing onto them?
- Whilst we are in support of the planned development of the site as it has become an eyesore in recent years and the location of many instances of fly tipping and antisocial behaviour there are inconsistencies in the papers submitted that need to be corrected and areas where further clarifications are required.
- Geo-Environmental Assessment, page 6, Fig 7 shows a property labelled as 38 Plantation Walk. This is incorrect. This property is 1 Middleknights Hill.

#### Design and Access Statement.

- When describing the properties whose gardens form the boundary of the proposed development to the south of Middleknights Hill the garden of 1 Middleknights Hill is missing from the description.
- Describes the plan to retain the existing garage walls as boundary walls for the development. We have concerns regarding the stability of these walls, particularly the section that forms the end wall of our garden as it is riddled with deep cracks running top to bottom. The top 3 layers of bricks have separated from the rest of the wall due to water ingress and failure of the mortar. A vast proportion of the bricks have failed also due to water ingress. We would seek reassurance that a thorough assessment is undertaken regarding the safety of these walls prior to the demolition of the garages.

#### Planning Statement.

- No mention is given regarding the distance of Plot 4 from 1 Middleknights Hill. 1 Middleknights Hill is the end property of a terrace of 4 consisting of 36 - 32 Plantation Walk.

#### Proposed Plans in context

- Plan shows 1 Middleknights Hill as 38 Plantation Walk. To clarify it is 1 Middleknights Hill that backs on to parking spaces P4 - P6. This plan mentions retaining access to the garage located at 2 Spencer Way. There is no mention of retaining access to the drive way of 1 Middleknights Hill via the dropped kerb on to Middleknights Hill, bordering the proposed development site.
- Again this plan mentions retaining the existing garage wall as a boundary to the development. Please see above comments for our concerns regarding this wall.

#### Site and Block plans

- Again 1 Middleknights Hill is referred to as 38 Plantation Walk. This plan clarifies the route of the right of way that is being retained and will run behind the parking spaces along the boundary line of our property. We seek reassurance that the wall is of a suitable condition to remain standing once the garages are demolished and of a height sufficient to maintain the security of our garden and home.
- Parking for current residents of the properties bordering the proposed development site is often problematic. We seek reassurance that the impact of construction related traffic on local residents is taken in to consideration when reviewing this planning application to minimise the impact on the public highway such as detailed by the Considerate Constructors scheme. We ask that construction related vehicles are parked only within the confines of the development and this is made a condition of the planning approval.
- Finally we ask that access to our driveway remains clear at all times and that no debris or other building materials are allowed outside the confines of the site particularly in relation to our drive way which borders the site.
- The masterplan for the proposed development produced by Evolution Chartered Architects states that the development will provide four (C3 Use Class) affordable residential units with six dedicated parking spaces. The development is effectively split in two parts either side of Middleknights Hill, to the north and south of Middleknights Hill.
- The transport statement states that Informal car parking is available in the area around Middleknights Hill, Plantation Walk, Fennycroft Road and other local streets and that no waiting restrictions are identified in the proximity of the site. The proposals seek to remove existing garages and replace with residential units. It should be noted that car parking in the immediate area is saturated, the fact that the garages are empty does not address the shortfall of car parking spaces available for residents. The proposals would add more stress to the existing shortfall in car parking. The justification of the scheme as stated in the Transport Statement is based on a similar development that was granted consent at Turners Hill (Planning Reference 4/00545/17/MFA), which included the demolition of 18 existing garages and construction of 14 new flats.
- The reason for our objection is that at no point has the council offered the use of the garages to the local residents, by doing so the existing car parking issue would be resolved and the additional benefits afford by road safety would be addressed.
- Importantly seeking advice from a transport consultant we are surprised that no car parking survey has been undertaken to determine car parking stress levels existing and proposed, no traffic and speed surveys along Middleknights Hill have been undertaken and more importantly the visibility splays to and from the proposed car parking area on the northern site have been provided. In terms of layout the schematic drawing do not provide sufficient information if the car parking spaces can access the spaces safely in a forward gear. Furthermore, the Transport Statement states that the site is readily accessible, however by virtue of car ownership and location the site is not, the 6 car parking spaces will not be sufficient and hence this will add more burden on the existing car parking stress levels.

- Parking and driving in the surrounding area, are not the easiest in the borough. There are times that access for emergency vehicles to the area causes me an amount of concern. There are few corners in the area that do not have vehicles parked opposite or very close to them. Add in delivery or tradesman vehicles and it gets even more difficult. There are regularly times when council refuse collection vehicles are in the area that I have had to find an alternative route to or from my house, because there is nowhere to pass it.
- A number of times we have found delivery or tradesman vehicles parked in our disabled bay. Having 2 building sites in such close proximity will only make parking and access worse. Vehicles delivering or removing material at the site will cause chaos.
- In the last several years the council has increased the number of parking bays in Middleknights Hill to try and improve the parking. A better use for the site in this application would be to change it into open air parking with clearly marked bays.
- Several comments are about the garages being vacant. To the best of my knowledge the garages were empty because the council had cancelled all rental agreements. One of my neighbours had rented a garage there and was informed that they had to vacate their garage by the beginning of April 2018. Cancelling rentals and effectively forcibly emptying them does not make them vacant through lack of usage.
- We noted from the drawings provided that the development to the rear of Spencer Way has a widow facing out onto our property, the annotation on the drawing states that the wind is to opaque. Whilst this addresses to the overlooking no further levels or dimensions have been provided. In addition, the introduction of the building will result in a loss of light, once again the developer and his consultants have not undertaken or provided any calculations and therefore whilst we appreciate the daylight in its current status the proposed development will impact on the light.
- Other comments are about the walls that are planned to be left in place. The wall at the end of my garden, providing retaining to the end of the garden and the foot path, are in poor condition, I am reasonably sure removing the walls that form the sides of the individual garages will result in the rear walls collapsing.
- My personal view is that this whole plan needs to be reviewed and the whole area carefully surveyed and fully assessed for it's impact on local utilities, environment, access and parking.

Address	Comments
	We object to the building of these houses on our boundary line . The new property's are to be built higher than our property at the end of our garden encroaching on our privacy and sunlight . This will also have a severe impact on my livelihood as a self employed carpenter as my rear access is essential for loading and unloading my tools and materials . The property was only purchased recently because of the excellent rear access .

We write to inform you of our objection to the proposed planning application to build residential development on land occupied by garages to the rear of Spencer Way, the proposed location as set out in the planning application is site located at Middleknights Hill, Hemel Hempstead, HP1 3NA.

We have a number of objections and in order for the proposal to proceed further there has been no consultation on the proposals and we are therefore relying on the information contained on Decorum Planning portal.

The masterplan for the proposed development produced by Evolution Chartered Architects states that the development will provide four (C3 Use Class) affordable residential units with six dedicated parking spaces. The development is effectively split in two parts either side of Middleknights Hill, to the north and south of Middleknights Hill.

We have two formal objections:

1) The transport statement states that Informal car parking is available in the area around Middleknights Hill, Plantation Walk, Fennycroft Road and other local streets and that no waiting restrictions are identified in the proximity of the site. The proposals seek to remove existing garages and replace with residential units. It should be noted that car parking in the immediate area is saturated, the fact that the garages are empty does not address the shortfall of car parking spaces available for residents. The proposals would add more stress to the existing shortfall in car parking. The justification of the scheme as stated in the Transport Statement is based on a similar development that was granted consent at Turners Hill (Planning Reference 4/00545/17/MFA), which included the demolition of 18 existing garages and construction of 14 new flats.

The reason for our objection is that at no point has the council offered the use of the garages to the local residents, by doing so the existing car parking issue would be resolved and the additional benefits afford by road safety would be addressed.

Importantly seeking advice from a transport consultant we are surprised that no car parkgn survey has been undertaken to determine car parking stress levels existing and proposed, no traffic and speed surveys along Middleknights Hill have been undertaken and more importantly the visibility splays to and from the proposed car parking area on the northern site have been provided. In terms of layout the schematic drawing do not provide sufficient information if the car parking spaces



	<p>can access the spaces safely in a forward gear. Furthermore, the Transport Statement states that the site is readily accessible, however by virtue of car ownership and location the site is not, the 6 car parking spaces will not be sufficient and hence this will add more burden on the existing car parking stress levels.</p> <p>2) Our second objection relates to the loss of light and privacy, we noted from the drawings provided that the development to the rear of Spencer Way has a widow facing out onto our property, the annotation on the drawing states that the wind is to opaque. Whilst this addresses to the overlooking no further levels or dimensions have been provided. In addition, the introduction of the building will result in a loss of light, once again the developer and his consultants have not undertaken or provided any calculations and therefore whilst we appreciate the daylight in its current status the proposed development will impact on the light. Given the objections raised above, the proposals for the development to the rear of Spencer Way is not supported and as a duty of care we request that the council planning department recommend refuse planning.</p>
	<p>I am writing to object to the proposed development of new houses on Middleknights Hill which are detailed in Application Reference: 4/00931/19/FUL.</p> <p>1. Removal of Existing Parking Facilities &amp; Change of Use</p> <p>The submitted "Design and Access Statement" states in section 6.6 that:</p> <p>"The Council is also currently undertaking a Verge Hardening Project due to an evident lack of parking in the Borough".</p> <p>Given that the Council has recognised that the parking situation in the area is suboptimal, I would argue that the change of use to remove existing parking facilities for 36 vehicles, while simultaneously increasing the housing density (thereby almost certainly increasing the number of vehicles present), is not in the best interest for the area as a whole.</p> <p>On-street parking surrounding the proposed development site is already extremely crowded. This results in long stretches of road forced to be single-file</p>

traffic, including around poorly-sighted corners, which and does lead to accidents. One such example of which is on the nearby Fennycroft Road and Raybarn Road, where bollards separating the road from the pavement have had to be replaced and resettled numerous times in recent years due to traffic hitting them. This safety concern has been recently highlighted by a number of residents during neighbourhood policing surveys.

In the Traffic Statement that was submitted, national figures have been used as a basis of vehicle ownership levels. I would surmise from my daily observations that vehicle ownership in the area immediately surrounding the development plot is higher than those figures provided, which means these figures are not a suitable basis for inclusion as part of this summary as they do not accurately reflect the area in question.

Even ignoring the removal of the 36 existing parking facilities, the supporting documentation states that Dacorum Borough Council is currently in the process of re-assessing if the existing requirement of 1.5 spaces per property is sufficient, which is the level of parking provided by the current plans. If these standards are soon to be rendered outdated, possibly even prior to the time that the development is completed, I would question if the currently proposed level of parking is of an adequate level for the new properties.

Furthermore, the application states that the existing garages are vacant. This is because the surrounding residents have not been given the option to make use of them. It is my understanding that those who were renting the garages had their option to lease them revoked. This action has caused the displacement of vehicles and so made the current on-street parking situation on Middleknights Hill and the adjacent roads worse.

## 2. Impact to Local Area

A number of other new developments are occurring in this local area, including those on nearby Spring Lane and Boxted Road, have already received planning approval. I would question if the cumulative impact of further residential properties being introduced into the area in such a short timespan been considered in regards to the impact on local services, such as GPs surgeries & schools? There appears to be no evidence submitted as part of this application to demonstrate that local services will not be negatively affected by the total number of new properties being introduced to the

Gadebridge area, which this application contributes to.

### 3. Submitted Building Designs & Impact to Neighbours

The designs submitted do not demonstrate how the drains on site will be relocated, or if there will be any impact to existing utilities which may run beneath the site. They also do not detail what utilities are currently available to the plots or how any new utilities required for the houses are to be provided to the properties.

The application does not appear to include any kind of assessment as to how the demolition of garages & removal of the concrete base will affect drainage and runoff of water to the immediate and surrounding properties. I would like to know what effect this change of terrain would have on the vegetation in properties surrounding the development.

When referring to the impact of changes to lighting levels caused by the development of the new houses, the current application only takes into account direct light reaching a select choice of windows of neighbouring properties. The plans do not take into account the lighting levels sustaining the mature gardens in some of the adjacent gardens, which would be negatively affected to a far greater degree. The ecosystems in these gardens currently support a diverse range of wildlife, including nesting birds, and large number of local bees.

While the plans submitted detail opaque glass windows on the side elevations, there appears to have been no consideration shown for residents who will be overlooked from the rear aspects of the new dwellings. From this aspect, occupants of the new homes would readily see into the rear of properties on Spencer Way, Plantation Walk and Fennycroft Road within a standard field of view. Given the positioning of the proposed new properties midway between two rows of houses, this effect of being overlooked is approximately three-times as great as the current situation as it exists between the current houses.

Beyond the houses themselves, the effect of overlooking of the gardens of neighbouring properties caused by construction of the new properties would negatively affect the residential amenity of the existing homes which lie to the rear elevations of the new buildings. This effect is exacerbated to residents on both the north and south sides of the development whose gardens extend to lie along the end of the planned home's rear gardens, as the

upper rear windows of the new properties would directly look down into their garden area.

#### 4. Boundary Walls Design & Practicality

A key part of the plan as it currently stands revolves around the idea of retaining the existing garage walls to form part of the boundary between the new development and the surrounding properties.

As noted in the Sections Diagram, the site in question is on a slope down towards Fennycroft Road. The plans call for the removal of the concrete base currently in place which completely covers the plot of land, including spanning under the existing garage block, ending immediately under garage walls which are proposed to be retained. There is no protrusion of the concrete base into the adjacent properties' gardens.

There appears to be no structural survey of the garages, or other indication submitted as part of this application which supports the idea that the existing garage walls are in a condition that they could support themselves when the majority of the concrete foundation on which they are built is removed, especially given sloping elevation of the land.

#### 5. Risks to Surrounding Properties During Development

Given that this construction site will be immediately adjacent to residential properties, there has also been no consideration shown on how the planning applicant plans to protect neighbouring residents and their property from a risk of collapse of these walls during the demolition & construction processes.

No plans have currently been submitted how how the demolition & construction plans to meet Policy CS29 of the Dacorum Borough Council's Core Strategy, covering storage and disposal of hazardous materials. I feel like this is a crucial to be detailed in advance, given that the existing application has highlighted that there is a significant risk to the environment and neighboring residents due to the presence of asbestos-contaminated waste which could be produced on-site during the demolition of the existing structures when combined with the limited space allowed by the plot of land.

Furthermore, I would also like to point out that the neighbouring properties are home to a number of young

children, whom it has been identified are at a greater risk of complications due to asbestos exposure than adults. Therefore any risk of exposure should be kept to an absolute minimum. The government advisory report stating this can be found at the link below.

[https://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/2014050612222/http://www.iacoc.org.uk/statements/documents/Asbestosinschoolsstatement\\_000.pdf](https://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/2014050612222/http://www.iacoc.org.uk/statements/documents/Asbestosinschoolsstatement_000.pdf)