

**4/01919/16/FUL - DEMOLITION OF EXISTING DWELLING AND CONSTRUCTION OF REPLACEMENT DWELLING. (AMENDED SCHEME)..
THE RETREAT, NEWGROUND ROAD, ALDBURY, TRING, HP235SF.
APPLICANT: M. PHILIPS .**

[Case Officer - Tineke Rennie]

Summary

The application is recommended for approval. The proposed development seeks to replace an existing dwelling in the rural area with no architectural merit with a dwelling that is sympathetic to the former Aldbury Isolation Hospital buildings in terms of scale and design. Due to its position at a lower level and within the group of buildings that are well screened from the wider area, the proposals are considered to accord with the character and appearance of the countryside and not adversely affect the AONB. The proposed development would not be harmful to the setting of the non-designated heritage buildings of the former hospital. As such the proposals accord with adopted Core Strategy Policies CS7, CS12, CS24 and CS27.

Site Description

This site lies within the Rural Area, outside the village of Aldbury. It also lies within the Chilterns AONB and an area of archaeological significance.

The application site comprises a timber clad single storey building with some accommodation in the loft space, known as The Retreat. It was part of the complex of buildings that formed the former Aldbury Isolation Hospital. The hospital was established by the Berkhamsted Union and Rural Sanitary Authority in circa 1872. The Isolation Hospital was built to treat those with infectious diseases such as scarlet fever, diphtheria and typhoid (amongst others) – it had 16 beds in 1871 and this increased to 24 beds by 1948. In 1902 Tring and Aldbury Isolation Hospitals joined forces, Tring took smallpox cases and Aldbury took all the scarlet fever cases. During World War One it was used as a military hospital. Upon the creation of the NHS in 1948 the Aldbury Isolation Hospital was closed.

The Isolation Hospital site originally comprised the buildings now known as The Cottage and Woodlea that were linked by a covered walkway; there were outbuildings to the north (two of these remain in situ). The Lodge was built in the early 20th century adjacent to Newground Road. An additional building was constructed to the west of Woodlea (this was later demolished). The small (still part of the Water Pumping Station) pump house was also built at this time. The Lodge, Woodlea and The Cottage are all now in residential use. Conservation and Design have commented that all these buildings are considered to be of historic and architectural interest and should be considered non-designated Heritage Assets. The whole site is of historic interest.

The Retreat is also in residential use following the granting of planning permission in 2004. Access to The Retreat is from the access road which slopes down from Newground Road and follows the northwest boundary of The Lodge. The access road swings around to the west providing access to The Retreat and branches off to the northwest providing vehicle access to Woodlea and The Cottage. Trees bound the former Isolation Hospital site generally screening it from public viewpoints at Newground Road and nearby walkways; The Cottage and Woodlea can be glimpsed

through the trees. The Lodge stands out to a greater extent due to its scale and elevated position adjacent to the road. The other buildings are 1 ½ storey and more modest in scale.

There has been some question about the history of The Retreat in terms of when it was constructed and the role it played in the functioning of the hospital. A structure on the site of The Retreat is first shown on the 1950 Ordnance Survey map – it was a rectangular building on the site of the existing building. The 1976 OS map shows a square building on the site of The Retreat. This indicates that a structure was built on the site of The Retreat between 1925 and 1950. This structure may have been built as part of the hospital, perhaps as a store, it was of timber construction and it seems to have been largely rebuilt and clad in new timber boarding as part of the previous conversion to residential use.

The current building known as The Retreat is not considered to hold any architectural significance and as a much later addition to the hospital it is of little historic interest. Local residents have contended that the building has historic interest due to its connection with the use of the hospital. However, no evidence has been produced to confirm the precise use of the building during its life in connection with the hospital. Reference was made to its use as an isolation ward in the officer's report in 2003 however there is no information on the file to validate this supposition. It appears that this was reported to the officer by the applicant at that time. Conservation and Design have subsequently confirmed that it cannot be considered a non-designated heritage asset.

Following the demise of the hospital it is understood that The Retreat remained unused and became derelict until it was bought by the previous owner/occupier of The Cottage. It was used by this occupier for business purposes providing aircraft pilots with information and manuals etc since around the mid to late 1990s following renovation. The operation continued without the benefit of planning permission until permission was granted for a change of use to residential in 2004.

Proposal

The proposal is for demolition of the existing building and construction of a new 4-bed dwelling. The building would be positioned more centrally within the plot and slightly to the south from the existing footprint. The access drive would be widened and realigned to reduce the sharpness of the bend and provide vehicle access and parking the front of the proposed dwelling; a new entrance and parking area would also be provided for The Cottage. The existing 1.8m high close boarded fencing aligning the access drive would be replaced with 1.2m high post and railing fencing that would improve visibility for users.

The replacement dwelling broadly reflects the design of The Cottage, it is 1 ½ storeys with a low eaves height, of brick construction with appropriate brick detailing, tile cladding to gables and a clay tile roof. The dormers are modest in size and the fenestration generally matches the existing. Following comments from Conservation and Design, the fenestration to the front elevation has been amended to replace the larger windows in the facing gable with two 6-over-2 sashes at ground floor level and one above.

Referral to Committee

The application is referred to the Development Control Committee due to the contrary views of Aldbury Parish Council.

Planning History

4/04075/15/FU DEMOLITION OF EXISTING DWELLING AND CONSTRUCTION
L OF REPLACEMENT 4-BED DWELLING
Withdrawn
12/02/2016

4/02411/03/FU CHANGE OF USE FROM OFFICE/WAREHOUSE TO
L RESIDENTIAL AND EXTENSION
Granted
10/02/2004

Policies

National Policy Guidance

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

Planning Practice Guidance

Adopted Core Strategy

Policy NP1 - Supporting Development

Policy CS1 - Distribution of Development

Policy CS7 - Rural Area

Policy CS12 - Quality of Site Design

Policy CS24 - The Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

Policy CS29 - Sustainable Design and Construction

Policy CS31 - Water Management

Policy CS35 - Infrastructure and Developer Contributions

Saved Policies of the Dacorum Borough Local Plan

Policy 23 - Replacement Dwellings in the Green Belt and Rural Area

Policy 58 - Private Parking Provision

Appendix 3 – The Design and Layout of Residential Areas

Appendix 5 - Parking Provision

Supplementary Planning Guidance / Documents

Accessibility Zones for the Application of Car Parking Standards (July 2002)

Chilterns Buildings Design Guide

Advice Notes and Appraisals

Sustainable Development Advice Note (March 2011)

Summary of Representations

Aldbury Parish Council

Aldbury Parish Council OBJECT to this application for the same reason they objected to the application submitted in December 2015. Namely based on the recommendation of the planning officer in February 2004 that no further development should take place on the site. As far as the PC are concerned, nothing significant has happened that overturns this recommendation.

Further comments received from Aldbury Parish Council on 07.09.2016:

Aldbury Parish Council OBJECT to this application for the same reason they objected to the application submitted in December 2015. Namely based on the recommendation of the planning officer in February 2004 that no further development should take place on the site. As far as the PC are concerned, nothing significant has happened that overturns this recommendation.

In order to respond to the supplementary planning statement, Aldbury Parish Council wishes to add the following comments:

- 1) The buildings at the Isolation Hospital site were built and renovated at various times so that the exact date of the building now known as The Retreat is not relevant.
- 2) The change of use from commercial to residential was granted in January 2004 under what the officer called "very special circumstances" and presented the arguments "for refusing any possible redevelopment of the site in future and thus safeguard the local residents from the threat of a replacement, larger dwelling". The planning officer was prescient in that just such an application has now been put forward. Her comments remain valid, and indeed have become even more valid with the passage of time.
- 3) Basically the building known as The Retreat is a shed and remains a shed although permission has been given for that shed to be occupied. It is no less of a shed and it would be bad practice to set a precedent whereby every shed in the AONB can, after a period of occupancy, be extended on the nod to become a four bedroomed detached house. Some objectors have put forward the view that approval in accordance with Building Regulations has never been granted.
- 4) A modern four bedroomed house will not blend into an historic and much valued local area and will stick out like a sore thumb.
- 5) Approving this application will open up adjacent land to future development.
- 6) Changing the layout of the road will remove some of the attraction of the immediate area and is intended only to enable the applicant to carry out this development as it will provide the land for the siting of the new larger building on a different axis.

Conservation and Design

The application site comprises a timber clad single storey building with some accommodation in the loft space, it is known as The Retreat. The Retreat is situated within part of a larger site once occupied by the former Aldbury Isolation Hospital. The hospital was established by the Berkhamsted Union and Rural Sanitary Authority in

circa 1872. The Isolation Hospital was built to treat those with infectious diseases such as scarlet fever, diphtheria and typhoid (amongst others) – it had 16 beds in 1871 and this increased to 24 beds by 1948. In 1902 Tring and Aldbury Isolation Hospitals joined forces, Tring took smallpox cases and Aldbury took all the scarlet fever cases. During World War One it was used as a military hospital. Upon the creation of the NHS in 1948 the Aldbury Isolation Hospital was closed.

The Isolation Hospital was sited to the south of the village of Aldbury and accessed from Newground Road (it is set well back from the road). The site originally comprised the building now known as The Cottage and Woodlea, they were linked by a covered walkway; there were outbuildings to the north (two of these remain in situ). The Lodge was built in the early 20th century adjacent to Newground Road. An additional building was constructed to the west of Woodlea (this was later demolished). The small (still part of the Water Pumping Station) pump house was also built at this time. All these buildings are considered to be of historic and architectural interest and should be considered non-designated Heritage Assets. The whole site is of historic interest.

A structure on the site of The Retreat is first shown on the 1950 Ordnance Survey map – it was a rectangular building on the site of the existing building. The 1976 OS map shows a square building on the site of The Retreat. So it seems as if a structure was built on the site of The Retreat between 1925 and 1950. This structure may have been built as part of the hospital, perhaps as a store, it was of timber construction (not brick) and it seems to have been largely rebuilt and clad in new timber boarding as part of the previous conversion to residential use. The current building known as The Retreat is not considered to hold any architectural significance and as a much later addition to the hospital it is of little historic interest – it cannot be considered a non-designated heritage asset.

The site is within the Chilterns AONB and as such is within a sensitive landscape setting. The former Isolation Hospital site occupies a rectangular area of land with trees to much of the boundaries and it slopes down away from the road. The trees provide some screening to the site and The Cottage and Woodlea can be glimpsed through the trees. The Lodge stands out to a greater extent due to its scale and elevated position adjacent to the road. The other buildings are 1 ½ storey and more modest in scale.

A considerable amount of discussion has taken place regarding the replacement of the current building known as The Retreat with a new building. Its replacement was supported at the pre-application stage in 2015. An application was then submitted and withdrawn. Since then various plans have been considered and the overall scale of the proposed new dwelling reduced and the design improved. It is understood the scale of the proposed replacement dwelling is acceptable in planning terms.

The replacement dwelling broadly reflects the design of The Cottage, it is 1 ½ storeys with a low eaves height, of brick construction with appropriate brick detailing, tile cladding to gables and a clay tile roof. The dormers are modest in size and the fenestration generally matches the existing – the front elevation gable incorporates two wide windows, one at ground floor and one at first floor. I suggest the design is amended to have two 6-over-2 sashes at ground floor level and one above – this would be more characteristic of the fenestration on The Cottage which features single and paired sashes. Ideally the rear kitchen window should also be a sash.

In summary the existing building known as The Retreat is not considered to be of any historic or architectural merit, however it is located on the site of the former Aldbury Isolation Hospital (a historically interesting site) and the surrounding 19th and early 20th century properties are of historic and architectural merit and should be considered non-designated heritage assets. Overall the proposed replacement dwelling, whilst larger than the existing structure is of an acceptable design and is not considered to harm the setting of the nearby 19th century former hospital buildings. The new dwelling will need to be constructed of good quality construction materials and carefully detailed, to sit comfortably in this sensitive location and preserve the beauty of the Chilterns AONB.

Suggest the fenestration details are amended as set out above.

Hertfordshire Highways

Decision

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:

Hertfordshire County Council as Highway Authority does not object to the development, subject to the conditions and informative notes below.

CONDITIONS

1. All materials and equipment to be used during the construction shall be stored within the curtilage of the site unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Highways Authority prior to commencement of the development.

Reason: In the interest of highway safety and free and safe flow of traffic.

I should be grateful if you would arrange for the following note to the applicant to be appended to any consent issued by your council:-

INFORMATIVES

1. Obstruction of public highway land: It is an offence under section 137 of the Highways Act 1980 for any person, without lawful authority or excuse, in any way to wilfully obstruct the free passage along a highway or public right of way. If this development is likely to result in the public highway or public right of way network becoming routinely blocked (fully or partly) the applicant must contact the Highway Authority to obtain their permission and requirements before construction works commence. Further information is available via the website: <http://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/transtreets/highways/> or by telephoning 0300 1234047.

2. Road Deposits: It is an offence under section 148 of the Highways Act 1980 to deposit mud or other debris on the public highway, and section 149 of the same Act gives the Highway Authority powers to remove such material at the expense of the party responsible. Therefore, best practical means shall be taken at all times to ensure that all vehicles leaving the site during construction of the development are in a

condition such as not to emit dust or deposit mud, slurry or other debris on the highway. Further information is available via the website <http://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/transtreets/highways/> or by telephoning 0300 1234047

COMMENTS

These proposals are for the DEMOLITION OF EXISTING DWELLING AND CONSTRUCTION OF REPLACEMENT DWELLING (AMENDED SCHEME).

PARKING

Three new parking spaces will be provided for the new property.

ACCESS

The site is accessed via a private drive with vehicular and pedestrian access onto New Ground Road, which is an Unnumbered Classified "C" road, subject to a 60mph speed limit. No changes are required to the vehicular or pedestrian access and no changes are required in the highway. There have been no recorded injury accidents within the vicinity in the last five years.

CONCLUSION

HCC as highway authority considers that the proposals would not have an unreasonable impact upon highway safety or capacity, subject to the conditions and informative notes above.

Trees and Woodlands

Concerning The Retreat, I have no objection to make with regard to the effect of proposed works on trees.

The site and surroundings do contain trees of significant size and amenity value. However, I haven't seen any reference to tree removal within the application and it is feasible that demolition and construction could occur with tree protection measures in place.

Measures would need to be BS5837:2012 compliant, agreed in advance with Trees & Woodlands Officers and be installed prior to any other site works.

Hertfordshire Biological Records Centre

Thank you for consulting Herts Ecology on the above for which I have the following comments:

1. We have no ecological information on record for this site although the area is likely to be used by bats given its location and nature.
2. The demolition of the smaller building could affect bats if present. The building has an old origin but not part of the original complex of Victorian buildings. Whilst there has been some speculation regarding its previous use, it would appear that it has

undergone relatively recent renovation as outlined within the Planning Statement:
3 The principle of redevelopment of The Retreat The case officer report relating to the permission that was granted on 9 February 2004 makes some strong comments to the effect that permitting change of use at that time should “preserve this building as it is” and ensure that “the character of this building is not destroyed.” However, that consent allowed the building to change to one clad in stained weatherboarding (retrospectively permitted) and for the roof to change to clay tiles.

4. The weatherboarding cladding could certainly provide opportunities for crevice dwelling bats but given this feature seems relatively recent, I am unconvinced that it would afford the same opportunities as more historic weatherboarding. Modern boarding is more cleanly sawn, less overlapped and less warped and would not provide the gaps associated with older structures of a similar nature.

5. Furthermore, the clay tiles are likely to be modern and in good condition, again reducing the likelihood of gaps. I also note that the upper levels of the building have been in residential use so there is no large enclosed roof space which would also provide potential for cavity dwelling bats.

6. Consequently, I consider the building possibly to be less than likely to support bats; however, this is an assumption based on a description and crude plans; no photos of the building have been included so there is no further evidence to demonstrate this is the case. If bats are present, any roost would be destroyed by the proposals. Therefore I advise that further photographs are submitted of this building to demonstrate the nature of the features I have described. I have attached a list with **highlighted features** that would provide further information in this respect and that would enable me to make a more informed judgement. The alternative is to request that a Preliminary Roost Assessment is undertaken to demonstrate the likely presence of bats.

7. Either way, the LPA is not in a position to determine the application given it has insufficient information upon which to judge the potential impact on bats. I am happy to advise further if further photos are provided or a PRA is undertaken and submitted.

8. There are – or were - several mature trees on the site, none of which are reflected in the plans or in any arboricultural report. These provide(d) considerable local ecological and visual amenity value within the site and location within an otherwise open arable farmland location. If these trees are to be removed – or already have been – consideration should be given to replacing trees on the site as part of any landscaping, none of which has been proposed as yet although the proposals do limit the extent of open land available for this. However if any landscaping is proposed, this should include fruit trees as it is clear from the 1924 map that part of the ground associated with the original older buildings was an orchard, and this feature would restore or improve the ecological value of the site if the opportunity was available.

Further comments were received from Hertfordshire Ecology on 23rd September 2016 following the submission of further information:

Thank you for sending me the photographs of the above building which are very helpful. I can provide the following comments:

1. I am satisfied that bats are likely to be in the area from the location of the site with adjacent trees and shrubs. Any property in the area could potentially have bats if

suitable opportunities exist.

2. There is no available roof space in the building suitable for cavity-dwelling bats, given that this area has been converted / is used as part of the residential function of the building.

3. The tiled roof is in good condition and well fitting; the roof ends have tiles which are well sealed with concrete. These characteristics indicate there is little or no opportunities for access between tiles and / or to any space suitable for crevice dwelling bats between the tiled surface and the roof lining. Consequently this area appears to be of negligible potential for bats.

4. The weatherboarding is relatively modern – evenly sawn, straight edged, no warping, close fitting and in good condition. There do not appear to be any likely access opportunities for bats.

5. The soffit and fascia create a well-sealed box in good condition, with little or no likely access opportunities for bats into the soffit box or beyond.

6. The only possible concern have is with the overlapping barge boards at the gable ends which create a potential crevice-type covered space over the weatherboarding at the gable ends. However it appears that the boards are reasonably proud of the weatherboarding and create a rather larger space in comparison to a crevice. I consider this is less likely to provide suitable opportunities for crevice dwelling bats. There are no obvious areas of staining which may also provide evidence for bats, although I do not know how common or widespread this type of evidence is.

7. However, on the basis of the above, I consider that the construction and nature of the building is as I suspected, namely a relatively modern renovation and in good condition affording little or no opportunities for bats. Consequently I do not consider that the LPA is reasonably justified in requiring a bat assessment of the building.

8. However given the limited possibility of the space behind the barge boards being used, I advise that as a precautionary measure, the barge boards are removed during the winter months to avoid the chance of bats being affected by any proposals. This is solely a precaution to avoid the low risk of bats using this space during the active season and being disturbed if demolition takes place during the summer – I do not consider features to have a reasonable likelihood of supporting a bat roost. I would advise the LPA to attach this guidance to any permission as an Informative, in addition to the standard Informative below:

- “Bats and their roosts remain protected at all times under National and European law. If bats or evidence for them is discovered during the course of works, work must stop immediately and advice sought on how to proceed lawfully from Natural England (Tel: 0300 060 3900) or a licensed bat consultant.”

Comments received from Hertfordshire Archaeology Advisor:

I note that the amended scheme succeeds application ref. 4/04075/15/FUL on which this office commented on 29th January 2016.

The site lies within Area of Archaeological Significance No.26, as identified in the Local Plan. This notes that the area contains a number of important earthworks including sections of the prehistoric (Late Iron Age) earthworks known as Grim's Ditch, a medieval earthwork known as 'Stool Baulk' (a Scheduled Monument, [HER 6316]), and several prehistoric burial mounds. To the north of the site is a slight bank and ditch [HER 1430] which may be a continuation of Grim's Ditch, and therefore potentially of prehistoric date. This feature is shown on the Aldbury parish tithe map of 1840 as a field boundary that then continued to the south-east, through the application site, to end at Newground Road. The feature appears to be visible on vertical aerial photographs of the area, in the garden of the adjacent property, The Cottage.

I believe that the position and details of the proposed development are such, that it should be regarded as likely to have an impact on significant heritage assets with archaeological interest. I recommend, therefore, as per previous advice, that the following provisions be made, should you be minded to grant consent:

- 1 the archaeological evaluation of the footprint of the new dwelling (further to the demolition of the existing dwelling on the site), via a process of 'strip, map and record' to the archaeological horizon, and the archaeological investigation of any remains encountered during this process
- 1 the archaeological monitoring of the groundworks of the development, such as services, footings, revised access and landscaping, as appropriate, and the archaeological investigation of any remains encountered during this process
- 1 the analysis of the results of the archaeological work with provisions for the subsequent production of a report and an archive and if appropriate, a publication of these results
- 1 such other provisions as may be necessary to protect the archaeological interest of the site.

I believe that these recommendations are both reasonable and necessary to provide properly for the likely archaeological implications of this development proposal. I further believe that these recommendations closely follow para. 141, etc. of the National Planning Policy Framework, relevant guidance contained in the National Planning Practice Guidance, and in the Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 2: Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment (Historic England, 2015).

In this case two appropriately worded conditions on any planning consent would be sufficient to provide for the level of investigation that this proposal warrants. I suggest the following wording:

Condition A

No demolition/development shall take place/commence until a Written Scheme of Investigation has been submitted to and approved by the local planning authority in writing. The scheme shall include assessment of significance and research questions; and:

1. The programme and methodology of site investigation and recording
1. The programme for post investigation assessment
1. Provision to be made for analysis of the site investigation and recording

1. Provision to be made for publication and dissemination of the analysis and records of the site investigation
1. Provision to be made for archive deposition of the analysis and records of the site investigation
1. Nomination of a competent person or persons/organisation to undertake the works set out within the Written Scheme of Investigation.

Condition B

- i) Any demolition/development shall take place in accordance with the Written Scheme of Investigation approved under Condition A.
- i) The development shall not be occupied until the site investigation and post investigation assessment has been completed in accordance with the programme set out in the Written Scheme of Investigation approved under condition (A) and the provision made for analysis, publication and dissemination of results and archive deposition has been secured.

If planning consent is granted, then this office can provide details of the requirements for the investigation and information on archaeological contractors who may be able to carry out the work.

I hope you will be able to accommodate the above recommendations. Please do not hesitate to contact me should you require any further information or clarification.

Comments received from Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust:

Objection: Bat survey required before application can be determined. Once a suitable survey has been submitted and approved, the objection can be withdrawn provided any required actions are conditioned in the planning approval.

The design of the building is extremely suitable for bats (timber cladding), it is situated in close proximity to high value feeding and roosting habitat and there are records of bats from the near vicinity. If present the development would result in breaches of the legislation protecting bats and their roosts. Therefore there is a reasonable likelihood that bats may be present.

ODPM circular 06/05 (para 99) is explicit in stating that where there is a reasonable likelihood of the presence of protected species it is essential that the extent that they are affected by the development is established before planning permission is granted, otherwise all material considerations cannot have been addressed in making the decision.

Saved policy 102 of the Dacorum Local Plan states: 'In considering proposals that would have an effect on a species of acknowledged importance, account will be taken of the level of protection afforded to that species and the sensitivity of the species and its habitat to any potential adverse effects caused by the proposals'.

LPAs have a duty to consider the application of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 in the application of all their functions. If the LPA has not asked for survey where there was a reasonable likelihood of EPS it has not acted lawfully. This may lead to prosecution or the overturning of the planning decision.

Recent case law (R (on the application of Simon Woolley) v Cheshire East Borough Council) clarified that planning authorities are legally obligated to have regard to the requirements of the EC Habitats Directive when deciding whether to grant planning permission where species protected by European Law may be harmed.

Where there is a reasonable likelihood that protected species are affected by development proposals, surveys must be conducted before a decision can be reached (as stated in ODPM circular 06/05). It is not acceptable to condition ecological survey in almost all circumstances.

In this instance a bat survey of the building will be required before a decision can be reached. The survey should be consistent with national survey standards and the information submitted in accordance with BS 42020.

Comments received from the Chilterns Society:

I am surprised that the Chiltern Society did not receive email information of this application in the usual way, and so I have only recently become aware of it.

I note that you have received 11 statements of objection from Aldbury residents, who have explained the historical importance of the site. The site is within the Chilterns AONB and is also an Area of Archaeological Significance.

I have visited the site and observed that the dwellings which originally constituted the Isolation Hospital are certainly a unified and harmonious group of buildings.

Although the applicant states that proposed changes in the road layout will make the site more open, the fact remains that the proposed much larger building will be squeezed in between The Lodge and The Cottage. I can see no justification for replacing a small building with a much larger one, in this position of limited size on the overall site.

The Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty states that 'the prime planning consideration will be the conservation of the beauty of the area' and that any development proposal which would seriously detract from this will be refused. I believe that the current proposal will completely spoil the harmony of the whole site.

Comments received from Hertfordshire 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's CIL Zone 2 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.

Contaminated Land Officer

The application (amended scheme) superseded the original application (4/04075/15/FUL). I have no record of consultation relating to the 2015 application. The application is for the demolition of a building that was formerly part of the Aldbury Isolation Hospital and construction of a new dwelling. Consequently there may be land

contamination issues associated with this site. I recommend that the standard contamination condition be applied to this development should permission be granted. For advice on how to comply with this condition, the applicant should be directed to the Council's website (www.dacorum.gov.uk/default.aspx?page=2247).

Response to Neighbour Notification / Site Notice

Comments received from the residents of Brightwood:

We object most strongly to the application seeking to gain permission to build a four bedroom dwelling on the site indicated. The existing group of dwellings are all vernacular and contemporary to the period when the Isolation Hospital and its support facilities were first constructed.

It cannot be acceptable to gain permission by the "back door" to build a modern property on an AONB.

We sincerely hope that the application will be thrown out. If it is allowed to set a precedent it cannot be too long before large sheds/outbuildings dotted around Aldbury are used by developers as a method of gaining permission to build regardless of the sensitivity of the location.

The following comments were received from the residents of Odd Spring, Stocks Road:

this lovely old building should not be touched. i
it should be left as it is.

you never know when the district might need an isolation hospital and its outbuildings again

This historic site should be respected and retained according to the report of 2003, there is no different reason to change the decision of 2003, when any possible redevelopment of the site in the future was rejected.

The following comments were received from the residents of 18 Malting Lane:

Originally a storeroom on site of historical interest, granted change from commercial to residential use in 2003 only under special circumstances, with importance stressed by Planning Officer at the time that the existing building remains and its character is not destroyed. To agree to developer's plan to demolish said building and build a very much larger house on the site would destroy the integrity of the historical site and in my view would be incongruous and without any merit.

The following comments were received from the residents of Rusthall, Malting Lane:

'The Retreat' is part of the old isolation hospital which is a site of considerable historic interest to the village. It was built at the end of the 1870s by the Rural Sanitary Authority of Berkhamsted, and John Ladds architectural designs were considered so good that they were borrowed by several other sanitary authorities. There are three main large houses on the site: The Lodge, The Cottage and Woodlea, which were originally the nurses lodge, the administrative block and an isolation ward respectively. 'The Retreat' was originally a store-room, one of several out-buildings; others include a wash-house, ambulance shed and mortuary.

Around 1995 it was renovated without planning permission by Chris Joliffe who then lived at The Cottage and he used it as an office/warehouse. When in 2003 he came

to sell it on alongside The Cottage, he sought a change of use from Commercial to Residential and this was granted by Dacorum Borough Council under what it called 'very special circumstances'.

The planning officer's report in 2003 stated:

'It is important that this building, as it has been renovated already, should remain as it forms an historic part of the former hospital which form a unified and harmonious group of buildings. Thus for this very reason this building should remain. It is important that the character of this building is not destroyed; this forms the raison d'etre for this use being supported. This argument will therefore be the basis for refusing any possible redevelopment of the site in the future and thus safeguard the local residents from the threat of a replacement, larger dwelling.'

In no way would the proposed development preserve the character of the original building, and its sheer scale would damage the integrity of this historic site as well as being much more imposing on the view from the village.

I am totally opposed to the proposed development of this site for the reasons I have given.

The following comments were received from the residents of 1 Newground Farm Cottage:

We have been at the above address since 1972 and were intrigued when we were informed that the rather pleasing grouping of obviously all of the same date were originally an isolation hospital. Obviously over the years there have been changes including a very sympathetic extension which now except for the difference in size between imperial & metric bricks is all but indiscernible. There was also the greatly increasing in mass with out planning permission of a wooden outbuilding which is now the subject of the current application which is a carbuncle destroying both the historic & aesthetic unity of the site As to the architectural detailing I believe that this is what is referred to in common parlance

as a "footballer's house" or in estate agent's argot "executive".

The following comments were received from the residents of Laundry Cottage:

Objection to Planning Application 4/01919/16/FUL
Replacement dwelling at The Retreat, Newground Road, Aldbury HP23 5SF

My objection is made on the following grounds.

Size of Replacement Dwelling.

The proposed development has a far greater footprint and height than the existing building.

Policy 23 of the Local Plan only allows replacement dwellings to be no greater than 150% of the floor area of the original.

The proposed building has a far greater footprint and floor area, is substantially taller and wider than the existing building and is sited in a different position on the plot giving a more dominant impact on the whole site.

The height of the proposed building is in fact higher than the proposed building in a

previous application that was withdrawn following objections to its scale and impact.

The Site and Block Plans submitted for the proposed building show it in relation to the neighbouring building known as The Cottage, however the plan is shown with an extension to The Cottage approved planning and due to be completed shortly. This extension has not been built and no current planning permission for this has been granted. The proposal for The Retreat is in fact larger than the existing building known as The Cottage. Including the unapproved extension planned for The Cottage on the Site Plan is clearly intended to mislead.

Heritage Impact.

The Retreat is part of an historic group of buildings known as the Old Isolation Hospital. The significance of these buildings was noted in the planning officers report in 2004 when retrospective planning consent for residential status was granted for The Retreat (The Retreat was in fact illegally developed from an office / storage building by a previous owner).

The consent was only given on the understanding that no future larger development of the site should be permitted. The following statements were given at that time.

It is important that this building, as it has been renovated already, should remain as it forms an historic part of the former hospital which forms a unified and harmonious group of buildings.

...it is up to planning controls to preserve this building as it is, as part of the former hospital, and limit any extension to that which will be approved under this amended scheme.

This argument will therefore be the basis for refusing any possible redevelopment of the site in the future, and thus safeguard the local residents from the threat of a replacement, larger dwelling.

It is clear that when residential consent was given for The Retreat it was with the condition that a future larger dwelling would be unacceptable on this site.

The proposed building is in a sensitive location within the Chiltern Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Policy 97 of the Local Plan states that the prime planning consideration will be the conservation of the beauty of the area and that any development that would seriously detract from this would be refused. Policy CS12 relates to the quality of site design and requires any development to integrate with and respect adjoining properties in terms of site coverage, scale and height.

I feel that the proposed replacement building does not comply with these policies. The proposed two-storey dwelling would be out of character with the existing former hospital buildings and would be of far greater scale than the original building it is intended to replace. The hospital buildings are of historic interest as they form a group of properties including a former washroom, hospital wards, nurses and matrons homes and storage, and as such should be preserved in as close to their original scale, position and character as possible.

The following comments were received from the residents of 28 Malting Lane:

Objection to Planning Application 4/01919/16/FUL
Replacement dwelling at The Retreat, Newground Road, Aldbury HP23 5SF

My objection is made on the following grounds.

Heritage Impact.

The Retreat sits within a group of historically important buildings, which formed what was known as the Old Isolation Hospital. The hospital buildings originally comprised a series of high quality brick built buildings used as the wards, nurses accommodation and administration buildings. These buildings were supported by ancillary buildings such as the laundry and storage buildings, which were smaller and less elaborate in form.

The building known as The Retreat was formerly one of the storage buildings. It is a relatively small timber frame building, clad with weatherboarding.

A previous owner of The Retreat had converted this storage building into a dwelling without either planning or building regulations consent. The owner was forced to apply for retrospective planning permission in 2004.

Retrospective permission was granted, however, the significance of these buildings was noted in the planning officers report when retrospective permission was granted only on the understanding that no future larger development of the site should be permitted.

The following statements were given at that time.

It is important that this building, as it has been renovated already, should remain as it forms an historic part of the former hospital which forms a unified and harmonious group of buildings.

... it is up to planning controls to preserve this building as it is, as part of the former hospital, and limit any extension to that which will be approved under this amended scheme.

This argument will therefore be the basis for refusing any possible redevelopment of the site in the future, and thus safeguard the local residents from the threat of a replacement, larger dwelling.

It is clear that when residential consent was given for The Retreat it was with the condition that a future larger dwelling would be unacceptable on this site.

The proposed building is in a sensitive location within the Chiltern Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, the site is also clearly visible from two public footpaths. Policy 97 of the Local Plan states that the prime planning consideration will be the conservation of the beauty of the area and that any development which would seriously detract from this would be refused. Policy CS12 relates to the quality of site design and requires any development to integrate with and respect adjoining properties in terms of site coverage, scale and height.

The proposed replacement building does not comply with these policies. The proposed two-storey dwelling would be out of character with the existing hospital buildings and would be of far greater scale than the original building.

In 2006 Mr Miller made a planning application 4/02215/06/FHA. Which proposed a detached single garage, porch and conservatory, to then referred to by Mr Miller as The Old Office, and currently known as the Retreat. This was withdrawn on advice from the planning officer who stated that;

The whole scheme is unacceptable in terms of design and location of the proposed extensions. I have advised the applicant / agent, that they should withdraw the application and discuss a more suitable design and location.

It is also my understanding that building regulations approval has never been granted for The Retreat and thus the property should not in fact currently be used as a residence or indeed rental property as it currently is.

Size of Replacement Dwelling.

The proposed development has a far greater footprint than the existing building.

Policy 23 of the Local Plan only allows replacement dwellings to be no greater than 150% of the floor area of the original.

I understand that the calculation for the proportion of a proposed extension of a property should be made based upon the size of its actual, existing site dimensions. This application assumes that the site would be extended into the demise of the adjacent property, known as The Cottage.

I also understand that any calculations should be based only upon the habitable floor area of the existing property. Given that The Retreat has never received building regulations approval for use as a domestic residence, I suggest that the area/s used should certainly not include any of the mezzanine/1st floor area.

The proposed building has a far greater footprint and floor area, is substantially taller and wider than the existing building, and is sited in a different position on the plot giving a more dominant impact on the whole site.

The height of the proposed building is in fact higher than a proposed building in a previous application that was withdrawn following objections to its scale and impact.

The Site and Block Plans submitted for the proposed building show it in relation to the neighbouring building known as The Cottage, however the plan is shown with an extension to The Cottage with planning approved and due to be completed shortly. In fact no such extension has been built or indeed even started.

A previous owner was granted planning application for an extension in 2000. However these works were never started, and no external works have been undertaken to The Cottage by the current owner Mr Miller. It is my understanding that there has been no planning permission granted for a similar extension to the Cottage to replace the permission granted in 2000, which would by now, have expired.

The drawings submitted with the application are misleading as they have greatly enlarged the actual size of The Cottage, in order to make the proposed new Retreat building look smaller in relation to the exaggerated Cottage elevations and plans. The proposal for The Retreat is in fact much larger than the existing building known as The Cottage. Including the unapproved extension planned for The Cottage (which is owned by the same person as The Retreat) on the site plan is clearly meant to mislead.

Ownership.

The ownership and rights of access over the access road are not as straightforward as is claimed by the applicant.

The Land Registry plans show that other parties own sections of the access road and other parties have a right of access.

The application forms are misleading, Mr Phillips is mentioned as the applicant, however both The Cottage and The Retreat are owned by Mr S Miller.

There are numerous County Court Judgements and Charges upon both The Cottage and The Retreat, which would presumably call into question Mr Millers right to make changes to the property/s without the consent of those parties who have Charges granted in their favour.

The following comments were received from the residents of Glebe House:

I am appalled at this application. The Aldbury Isolation Hospital site is one of very few left in such state in the country. The building now known as 'The Retreat' was merely a store for the group of hospital buildings. Any alteration which extends or changes its size or appearance will ensure the entire site loses its integrity. It is a heritage building and should NOT be demolished and replaced. This fact was officially recognised by the Planning Officer concerned when consent was sought for residential use in 2003: indeed it was a condition imposed at that time - and so it should remain.

The following comments were received from the residents of Wychwood, Toms Hill Road:

The 2004 planning permission allowing change of use to residential was clear that no further development should be permitted on this site and the future of the building safeguarded. To allow the current application to proceed with the demolition of this historic building and the ensuing changes to the nature and integrity of the wider site is undesirable would go against the intentions of the 2004 decision.

The following comments were received from the residents of Georgia, Trooper Road:

I am concerned that the proposed development of the Retreat at the old Isolation Hospital should not be allowed to go ahead. As you are aware, in 2003 your predecessor recommended: 'It is important that this building, as it has been renovated already, should remain as it forms an historic part of the former hospital which form a unified and harmonious group of buildings. Thus for this very reason this building

should remain. It is important that the character of this building is not destroyed; this forms the raison d'etre for this use being supported. This argument will therefore be the basis for refusing any possible redevelopment of the site in the future and thus safeguard the local residents from the threat of a replacement, larger dwelling.'

Quite apart from the aesthetic considerations it is important that prior recommendations are upheld. If they are not we cannot rely on any long term consistency of planning decisions, and the Council will be open to accusations of being 'bought off' by developers seeking to overturn prior decisions.

I do hope that you will see fit to recommend against this application.

The following comments were received from the residents of The Lodge, Newground Road:

The objection is made on the following grounds.

2. SIZE OF REPLACEMENT DWELLING

2.1 The Council's policy in respect of the Rural Area is set out in Policy CS7 of the Core Strategy.

It is compliant with the National Planning Policy Framework and, as such, carries significant weight in the determination of planning applications.

2.2 The Core Strategy adopts a 'settlement hierarchy', which identifies areas which will be the focus for development and areas which will be subject to greater development restraint. It notes that although the Rural Area is not within the Green Belt, the pressures it faces are comparable and, in order to retain its open character, the Council seek to control development in a similar way.

2.3 The proposed replacement dwelling is considered to be contrary to Policy CS7 which provides the Council's policy for the Rural Area. The first part of the policy provides a limited range of uses that are considered to be acceptable in the Rural Area. The application is not for such a use, as follows:-

- (a) It is not for agriculture;
- (b) It is not for forestry;
- (c) It is not for mineral extraction;
- (d) It is not for countryside recreation uses;
- (e) It is not for social, community and leisure uses;
- (f) It is not for essential utility services; and
- (g) It is not for uses associated with a farm diversification project, which can be demonstrated to be necessary for the continuing viability of the farm business and consistent with the principles of sustainable development.

2.4 The second part of the Policy CS7 permits a limited range of "Small-scale development" in the Rural Area, including the replacement of existing buildings for the same use. However, it is not considered that the dwelling proposed is appropriate, as it has a far larger footprint, a much greater floor area, is substantially taller, is located in a different position on the plot, and has a much more dominant impact.

Building floor area excessive

2.5 Policy 23 of the Local Plan only allows replacement dwellings that small scale, as per Policy

22, which states that they should be no greater than 150% of the floor area of the original, as follows:-

“within the Rural Area the resulting building (including any earlier extensions and alterations

or replacement) should be less than 150% of the floor area of the original dwelling”

2.6 The Design and Access Statement submitted with the application refers to the footprint of the existing dwelling, as the starting point in determining the size of the replacement dwelling that would be acceptable. However, the footprint of the development is not relevant as the policy refers to the percentage increase in the floor area.

2.7 The application drawing (No. 2817-01a) show the existing dwelling as having a ground floor of 54.2 sqm and a first floor of 47.53 sqm, giving a total area of 101 sqm. However, the actual usable footprint in the loft room is far smaller than stated, due to the sloping roof. It is considered that only usable floor area should be included.

2.8 Notwithstanding the above, the proposed building is calculated as having a floor area of some 171 sqm, which is still too large when assessed against the Council's 150% limit in Policy 23 of the Local Plan. It represents an increase from 101 sqm to 171 sqm which is 169% larger. This is clearly contrary to Local Plan policy and is grounds for refusal of the application.

It is important to note that the 150% policy limit is not an absolute right. The Council is able to refuse consent for smaller replacement dwellings if they cause harm to the character of the area, particularly in respect of sensitive historic sites such as this.

Building height excessive

2.10 The previous application for a replacement dwelling was withdrawn following objections received in respect of its scale and impact. However, it is clear from a comparison of the previous and current schemes that the issue of scale has not been addressed. The current application is for a building with a higher ridge height, higher eaves height, higher chimney and gables that are bulkier than the previously proposed hipped roof. It has a significant impact on the local area.

2.11 The proposed replacement dwelling would still be substantially higher than the original building and would have a harmful impact on the local area due to its size.

Footprint excessive

2.12 The footprint of the proposed dwelling is far larger than the footprint of the existing house.

It should also be noted that the proposed replacement house is so much larger than the existing, it has had to be rotated to fit on the site.

2.13 It is also relevant to note that the site layout plan shows a large extension to 'The Cottage', but it is understood that this was granted planning permission in July 1992

and has, therefore, long since lapsed.

3. DESIGN AND HERITAGE IMPACT

3.1 This application relates to a detached building that was part of the complex of buildings that formed the former Isolation Hospital for Scarlet Fever.

3.2 In February 2004, planning permission was granted for the change of use of the application premises from an office/warehouse to residential. However, it is clear from the officer's delegated report in respect of the planning application, that the issue of preserving the heritage of this site was a key consideration and the application was only granted on the basis that the appearance of the building would remain unchanged. The following paragraphs are particularly relevant:-

"it is important that this building, as it has been renovated already, should remain as it forms an historic part of the former hospital which forms a unified and harmonious group of buildings".

"...it is up to planning controls to preserve this building as it is, as part of the former hospital, and to limit any extensions to that which will be approved under this amended scheme. The originally proposed garage was too close to the building and has therefore been omitted."

"It is important that the character of this building is not destroyed; this forms the *raison d'etre* for this use being supported".

3.3 The officer's report confirms that at the application stage, concern was raised by local residents that allowing a residential use may lead to its replacement with a full two storey dwelling. However, the officer's report confirms in two separate sections that any application for a larger dwelling is unlikely to be granted planning permission, as follows:-

"Any replacement of this building would be subject to planning permission, which, as seen above, is most unlikely to be forthcoming."

"This argument will therefore be the basis for refusing any possible redevelopment of the site in the future and thus safeguard the local residents from the threat of a replacement, larger dwelling."

3.4 It is absolutely clear that when the initial application for change of use to residential was considered, the Council was of the opinion that a larger building would be unacceptable in this location.

3.5 The adoption of the Council's Core Strategy in 2013 and publication of the National Planning Policy Framework in 2012 have strengthened the protection of heritage assets. It is a requirement in planning policy that heritage assets such as this are conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance. The proposed replacement dwelling would not achieve this objective.

3.6 The dwelling is in a sensitive location within the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Policy 97 of the Local Plan states that "the prime planning consideration will be the conservation of the beauty of the area" and that any development proposal which would seriously detract from this will be refused. Policy CS12 also relates to the quality of site design and requires development to integrate with and respect adjoining properties in terms of matters such as site coverage, scale

and height etc.

8

3.7 It is not considered that the proposal would comply with these policies. The development would result in a two storey dwelling which would not relate well to the character of the existing hospital buildings. It would be of a far greater scale than the original building and would even be of a greater width than 'The Lodge' building itself.

4. OTHER ISSUES

Highway Safety

4.1 The Design and Access Statement submitted with the application seeks to justify the proposal on the basis that it would improve highway safety. However, we do not consider that these works can be used to justify such a large dwelling. If there is a genuine highway safety issue then this could be addressed without the replacement dwelling proposed.

Openness

4.2 The Design and Access Statement submitted with the application seeks to justify the proposal on the basis that it would improve openness. However, this is far from the case.

The construction of a substantially larger dwelling on the site would have a detrimental impact on the openness of the area.

Orientation of Dwelling

4.3 The Design and Access Statement submitted with the application states that the replacement dwelling has been orientated so as to relate well to the plot. However, such a change in orientation would not be required if the replacement dwelling was smaller and situated on the exact position of the original building.

Timber Clad

4.4 The Design and Access Statement submitted with the application states that the existing building is out of character due to being timber clad. However, this was not the view of the

Council at the time the building was originally converted to a dwelling. The Council considered the building to be of heritage importance and the officer's report states "It is important that the character of this building is not destroyed".

Increase in Hardstanding

4.5 The proposal would also result in the provision of large areas of hardstanding, with the parking and turning area occupying almost all of the front garden. This has a detrimental impact on the character of the local area. A large area of hardstanding is also proposed to the rear of the dwelling.

5. CONCLUSION

5.1 In conclusion, for the reasons summarised in this Statement, it is considered that the proposed replacement dwelling is unacceptable. It would exceed the floor area limit specified in the Local Plan and is contrary to the Core Strategy

5.2 The dwelling is in a sensitive location within the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural

Beauty and the development would result in a two storey dwelling which would harm the historic interest of this former hospital building.

5.3 We strongly recommend that planning permission be refused.

Further comments were made by the residents of The Lodge following the submission of further information:

1. INTRODUCTION

This report has been prepared to respond to the Supplementary Planning Statement, dated August 2016, which was submitted in support of an application for a replacement dwelling at The Retreat, Newground Road (4/01919/16/FUL).

2. HERITAGE ISSUES

2.1 The Supplementary Planning Statement seeks to demonstrate that the existing building is not of historic interest, and that there should be no objection to its redevelopment.

However, the applicant's Supplementary Planning Statement is not the same as a formal Heritage Statement prepared by a suitably qualified conservation specialist.

2.2 The Supplementary Planning Statement contains various historic maps which are put forward as evidence to show the building did not exist at the time the isolation hospital was in use. However, relying on historic maps is not definitive proof as to when the building was constructed. It should be noted that the building is also not shown on the 1996 OS map and 1980-1996 OS map of the area as confirmed below.

1980-1996 OS map
1996 OS map

2.3 The Supplementary Planning Statement also refers to comments about the hospital in an article published in the magazine "Hertfordshire's Past" in 1994. However, as this article makes no mention of the building that is the subject of this application, it is of little use in assessing the buildings importance.

2.4 The fact that the application building is not included in the article in Hertfordshire's Past does not mean it is not an important building. The article also omits to mention other

buildings that are clearly original, for instance, the very pretty small building on the south side of the access road, which can be seen at the left of the photograph in section 3 of this report. The Supplementary Planning Statement also appears to confuse it with the modern pumping station, which is indeed owned by Thames Water, but is set further back.

2.5 The Hertfordshire's Past article indicates that different hospital buildings were built in stages and over a wide period of time. For instance, the gap between the first stage (the first ward pavilion and administration block) and the second stage (the second ward pavilion and the porter's lodge) was over twenty years. From the evidence of the available OS maps it seems that the building on the site of The Retreat appeared sometime between 1924 and 1950, therefore within the functional lifetime of the

hospital.

2.6 The Supplementary Planning Statement states that the case officer in 2004 'refers to the building as having been clad in asbestos and with a green Onduline roof' and that the Onduline dates it post 1944. What she actually states is 'The roof is covered in green Onduline material. The door and window frames are wooden. Internally it has been lined with insulation and thermalite blocks.' (our emphasis underlined). It is clear from this that she is referring to the renovated building, not the original, and so nothing useful can be inferred.

2.7 The case officer's report was quite clear that the building is of historic interest, as demonstrated by the following extracts:-

- "it is important that this building, as it has been renovated already, should remain as it forms an historic part of the former hospital which forms a unified and harmonious group of buildings".
- "...it is up to planning controls to preserve this building as it is, as part of the former hospital, and to limit any extensions to that which will be approved under this amended scheme"
- "It is important that the character of this building is not destroyed; this forms the raison d'etre for this use being supported".

2.8 The applicant has not submitted a formal Heritage Statement prepared by a suitably qualified conservation specialist. The new evidence put forward in respect of the age and importance of the building is not conclusive. As such, we do not consider that there is any basis for the Council to now change its position in respect of the importance of the original building.

3. PRINCIPLE OF REDEVELOPMENT

3.1 The Supplementary Planning Statement states that subject to an acceptable design solution being proposed, there is no reason why the building should not be demolished and rebuilt. However, we do not consider that the proposal represents an 'acceptable design solution'.

3.2 The change of use from commercial to residential was granted in 2004 described by the officer as 'very special circumstances'. Arguments were presented 'for refusing any possible redevelopment of the site in the future and thus safeguard the local residents from the threat of a replacement, larger dwelling.'

3.3 The photograph below shows the building as it was at the time of the above planning application for conversion to a dwelling. What is now proposed is a much larger two storey building on an historic site and Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), and is in marked contrast to the character and appearance of the existing building.

The premises in November 2003

4. DESIGN

4.1 The Supplementary Planning Statement refers to recent pre-application discussions, in which a new case officer considered that the existing building "is not of any architectural merit and does not reflect the character of this historic site" However,

this is in stark contrast to that of the former case officer (Jackie Ambrose, Assistant Team Leader), that the building “should remain as it forms an historic part of the former hospital which forms a unified and harmonious group of buildings”.

4.2 The officer’s report in respect of the original application confirms that at the application stage, concern was raised by local residents that allowing a residential use may lead to its replacement with a full two storey dwelling. However, the officer’s report confirms that any application for a larger dwelling is unlikely to be granted planning permission, and states:-

- “Any replacement of this building would be subject to planning permission, which, as seen above, is most unlikely to be forthcoming.”
- “This argument will therefore be the basis for refusing any possible redevelopment of the site in the future and thus safeguard the local residents from the threat of a replacement, larger dwelling.” (our emphasis underlined).

4.3 It is clear when the initial application for change of use to residential was considered, the Council was of the opinion that a larger building would be unacceptable in this location. We do not see any basis for the Council to now change its position.

4.4 Furthermore, the application proposes to reroute the access road to 'restore the sense of unity to the site'. This is a spurious argument. The real reason for changing the access road is to reallocate land from The Cottage to The Retreat so that a much larger building can be fitted in. If more openness is needed, it would be quite simple to replace the existing close boarded timber fencing with post-and-rail at no great expense.

5. POLICY

5.1 The Supplementary Planning Statement states that the existing building has an internal floor area of 101.7 sqm. However, the first floor of the existing building is a loft room and due to the steep roof some of the floor space is not usable (it is too low for someone to stand up, or to put a wardrobe etc). We do not consider that this floor space should be included in the floor area calculation.

5.2 Excluding the part of the loft room where the floor to ceiling height is very low would reduce the floor area of the existing building to significantly under 101.7 sqm. This would result in the proposed dwelling being more than 150% larger than the existing.

5.3 The applicant has submitted drawing No. 2817-01a which includes a plan of the existing first floor of the property. However, this does not include the boxed area under the eaves which is shown in the photo below. It is requested that the drawing be amended to properly reflect what has actually been built. It is also requested that CAD drawings of the existing building and proposed replacement dwelling are provided so that my client is able to see which parts of the buildings have been included in the applicant’s calculations.

First floor as built (From website Lets Unlimited)

Extract of drawing No. 2817-01a - boxed area under eaves not shown

5.4 Notwithstanding the above, Policy 22 of the Dacorum Local Plan does not give an automatic right to build a replacement dwelling at 150% of the floor area of the original. The supporting text makes clear that: -

- “Judgements about the appropriateness of a proposal will have regard to other aspects of size, i.e. building footprint and volume, in relation to the characteristics of the site and its surroundings”.

5.5 We consider that the proposed building has an excessive height and footprint. The footprint of the proposed dwelling is far larger than the footprint of the existing house, and the volume also significantly more. The dwelling has also had to be rotated to properly fit on the site.

Footprint of the proposed dwelling is far greater than existing and requires the dwelling to be rotated

5.6 The replacement dwelling would be of a far greater scale than the original building and would have a greater width than its neighbour, The Cottage.

6. CONCLUSION

6.1 In conclusion, for the reasons summarised above, it is considered that the proposed replacement dwelling is unacceptable. The dwelling is in a sensitive location within the

Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and the development would result in a two storey dwelling which would harm the setting of the historic hospital buildings.

6.2 The proposal amounts to overdevelopment that would harm the historic fabric of the area. On behalf of my client we respectfully request that planning permission be refused.

Comments received from the residents of The Cottage:

I write on behalf of myself and my neighbour to support the above planning application for the following reasons.

The applicant took the trouble to seek the planning departments opinion on his proposals by submitting a pre planning application and it is clear from their report that the planning departments advice is in favour of the proposal providing they followed the planning guide lines, I list below their positive comments from their report.

1. The applicant wishes to replace the existing timber clad dwelling with a larger chalet bungalow of materials and design, more sympathetic to the other dwellings within the complex, creating a more conventional site layout.
2. The existing building is not contemporary with the existing brick built buildings.
3. The amenity of adjoining occupiers would also be considered but the existence of neighbouring dwellings would not necessarily preclude the construction of a taller dwelling.
4. Notwithstanding its unclear history, the building is not of any architectural merit and does not reflect the character of this historic site, although significant weight was placed on the character and historic significance of the building when the conversion was granted, the single storey building was and still is, at odds in its appearance with

the brick build Victorian former hospital buildings, which are of fine architectural quality. The principal of replacing the building with a more sympathetic dwelling, is in accordance with the development plan.

5. A replacement dwelling of superior design and materials, more compatible with the surrounding development, may justify an increase in size.

6. The submitted plans indicate that the replacement dwelling, would aim to respect the building style of the rest of the complex and this is welcomed.

7. The simple gable form of the proposed dwelling is acceptable.

8. The proposed layout positions, the dwelling perpendicular to the adjoining dwellings which would be unlikely to give rise to overlooking to either property from first floor windows, the rear garden provision would be unharmed compared with the current situation and would be improved by the relocation of the vehicle access and parking to the opposite side of the site.

CONCLUSION

A replacement dwelling on the site is acceptable in principal, subject to the considerations outlined, there is scope to redevelop the site with a larger dwelling.

You will appreciate that this pre application advice, was given to us on the 4th September 2015 and since that date, we have been working with the planning department in an attempt to expand on their advice, ensuring that the size and design of our proposals is as good as it could possibly be. Our latest drawings which have been submitted as a formal application, we believe successfully deals with any prior concerns and I sincerely hope you can review the drawings and confirm that you will have no objections to our proposals.

There is one point that I wish to make clear, the increased size of the new dwelling is within the guide lines laid down by planning policy, we have not attempted to go beyond those guide lines.

The new home will be in keeping with the other properties and the new driveway will be safer and more pleasing to the eye.

I trust planning will be approved for this high quality home which will enhance the other homes in this location.

Comments received from the residents of Woodlea:

I am writing to support the replacement of what was originally an asbestos hut. This was replaced illegally by my then next door neighbour with a breeze block construction. I have lived here in the original hospital building for almost 39 years and I pass the existing building on a daily basis & it is not a pretty sight. Mr Miller's proposed building is very close to the appearance of his own house, he lives next door to me in an original building & I think the proposed new build would fit the look of this little complex very well.. I am very happy to support the building of this new house. People need somewhere to live & we have a great shortage of homes.

Considerations

Policy and Principle

The site is located within the Rural Area in which small scale development such the replacement of existing buildings for the same use and the redevelopment of previously development sites (excluding temporary buildings) will be permitted in accordance with adopted Core Strategy Policy CS7 provided it has no significant impact on the character and appearance of the countryside; and it supports the rural economy and maintenance of the wider countryside. Saved Local Plan Policy 23 permits replacement substantial permanent buildings in the rural area providing they are: compact and well-related and retain sufficient space around the building to provide an attractive setting and to protect the character of the countryside; not visually intrusive on the skyline or open character of the countryside; and are no larger than the dwelling it replaces or less than 150% of the floor area of the original dwelling.

Concerns have been raised that the existing floor area of The Retreat has not been accurately shown, as storage space under the eaves has been shown as habitable. The applicant has subsequently amended the existing floor plans showing the existing floor area as approximately 88m² and the proposed floor area of the dwelling as approximately 153m² which would amount to an increase of approximately 174 percent of the original dwelling. Whilst this provides an indication of the extent of the increase in size of the replacement dwelling, the key consideration is whether or not the proposals would have a significant impact on the character and appearance of the countryside and on the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) in accordance with the recently adopted Core Strategy Policies CS7 and CS24.

Recently adopted Core Strategy Policy CS7 is the most up to date policy and significant weight should therefore be given to this in the consideration of any proposed development in the rural area. Saved Policy 23 is less up to date and less weight should therefore be afforded to the specific increases in floor levels which are referred to.

The replacement dwelling has been designed to broadly reflect The Cottage with reference to the Chilterns Buildings Design Guide. It is considered to be sympathetic to the immediate setting and group of existing hospital buildings. The dwelling is positioned at a lower level below Newground Road and located centrally within the former hospital grounds which are well screened from public viewpoints. As such it would have minimal impact on the character and appearance of the surrounding countryside and AONB. The proposed development therefore accords with adopted Core Strategy Policies CS7 and CS24.

The principle of the redevelopment of the existing building has been questioned by residents particularly given the comments made in the officer's report in relation to the 2004 planning permission for a change of use of the building to a self contained building. The principle of this conversion was not supported by relevant policy, but the Council found at that time that there were exceptional circumstances in favour of the development. As part of this permission, all householder permitted development rights were removed to control all future development within the site, including alterations to or enlargement of the building or boundary treatment, and the construction of outbuildings.

Whilst comments were made by the officer in their report about the character and historic value of the building within the group of hospital buildings a number of factors should be noted. The officer at the time was assessing a change of use of the building and not its redevelopment which would have been speculative at that time. Had they been considering the replacement of the building with a detailed scheme they would have sought further information and guidance about the historic and architectural merit of the existing building. Further information has since been submitted which does not confirm the significance discussed by the officer at that time; as such its significance remains inconclusive. The policy context has changed since this application was determined. Furthermore the permission for residential use was granted in 2004 and has now become well established. These factors all reiterate the material change in circumstances since this permission was granted and the need to consider this case on its merits.

Notwithstanding its unclear history, the building is not of any architectural merit and does not reflect the character of this historic site. The building is not contemporary with the original brick-built buildings. The timber-clad single storey building was, and still is, at odds in its appearance with the brick-built Victorian former hospital buildings, which are of fine architectural quality. The principle of replacing the building with a more sympathetic dwelling which would not be detrimental to the character and appearance of the area or the AONB is in accordance with the Development Plan Policies CS7 and CS24.

Impact on the Rural Area, AONB and Setting of Heritage Assets

The proposed dwelling would be positioned centrally within the wide northern half of the plot angled slightly to the north, replicating the orientation of The Lodge. The group of dwellings are well spaced and form a general line from Newground Road to the northwest. The positioning and space around the proposed dwelling is broadly consistent with this group. A long rear garden is proposed with a depth of approximately 19.0m; as a result the overall plot size is relative to that of The Cottage.

An improved standard of accommodation would be provided for future occupants of the dwelling. At present the dwelling is positioned close to the access drive with predominantly hard surfacing for parking to the side and rear of the site. The proposed dwelling would be positioned away from the access drive with uninterrupted private garden to the rear and landscaped space around the dwelling.

The replacement dwelling broadly reflects the design of The Cottage, with low eaves height, gable features and similar fenestration with ratio of solid wall to window. Consideration has been given to reducing the bulk and scale of the dwelling, particularly at roof level through the use of small low dormers and low gable features. The resulting proposal is considerably higher than the existing building, albeit similar in height to The Cottage.

The proposed dwelling is considered to represent an overall improvement to the existing timber clad building in terms of its character and appearance and relationship with the other existing buildings.

The additional height and bulk at roof level is not considered to detract from the character and appearance of the surrounding area. The building would be positioned well within the existing group of buildings and would be similar in height and scale to the adjoining Cottage and Woodlea. By contrast The Lodge is much taller and more prominent at the corner of the access drive on Newground Road. The remaining dwellings however sit at a lower level; the proposed dwelling would be positioned below The Lodge and adjoining The Cottage where the ground levels out. As with the other dwellings at this level it would be well set back from the boundary of the former hospital buildings which is well defined by mature vegetation that screens the site from wider views. On this basis the proposed dwelling would not be visually intrusive on the skyline; wider views or immediate former hospital grounds setting.

Conservation and Design have assessed the impact of the proposals on the setting of the former hospital buildings and the wider AONB and concluded with the following:

In summary the existing building known as The Retreat is not considered to be of any historic or architectural merit, however it is located on the site of the former Aldbury Isolation Hospital (a historically interesting site) and the surrounding 19th and early 20th century properties are of historic and architectural merit and should be considered non-designated heritage assets. Overall the proposed replacement dwelling, whilst larger than the existing structure is of an acceptable design and is not considered to harm the setting of the nearby 19th century former hospital buildings. The new dwelling will need to be constructed of good quality construction materials and carefully detailed, to sit comfortably in this sensitive location and preserve the beauty of the Chilterns AONB.

Conditions will be imposed should the committee be minded to grant permission requiring details of materials and fenestration to ensure that the new dwelling would be of quality construction consistent with the existing hospital buildings. Permitted development rights for further extensions, dormer windows, porch extensions and outbuildings would be removed to restrict further increases in scale and protect the character and appearance of the rural area and AONB, particularly in relation to the design, form and setting of the former hospital buildings. This is consistent with the policy requirements of Policy CS7, CS12, CS24 and the NPPF.

Impact on Trees and Landscaping

Whilst there are trees of significant size and amenity value within the site, the proposals do not result in any tree removal. A condition will however be imposed to ensure that demolition and construction commences with tree protection measures in place as recommended by Trees and Woodlands.

Impact on Highway Safety

No changes are proposed to the vehicular or pedestrian access to the site which is via a private road. As such Highways have raised no objection to the proposals.

Impact on Neighbours

The nearest neighbouring properties are The Cottage and The Lodge. Appendix 3 of the Local Plan requires a minimum distance of 23 metres between principle elevations

of adjoining houses. The proposed layout positions the dwelling slightly angled so that the first floor windows to the flank elevation would not directly overlook the front elevation of The Cottage which is approximately 27.5m from this elevation. The proposed first floor windows to both flank elevations serve bathrooms and therefore a condition will be attached to ensure that these windows are obscure glazed.

The front and rear building lines of the proposed dwelling are generally aligned with The Cottage and The Lodge; as such there would be no overlooking of these neighbouring properties from the front and rear elevations.

Both The Cottage and The Lodge are located a considerable distance away (approximately 27m and 44m respectively) and therefore there would be no impact on these properties in terms of loss of light or creating a sense of enclosure.

Bats

Hertfordshire Ecology has confirmed that Bats are likely to be present in the area. Following the submission of further information they have confirmed that they consider that the construction and nature of the building is a relatively modern renovation and in good condition affording little or no opportunities for bats. A bat assessment would therefore not be required. However it is recommended that the barge boards are removed during the winter months to avoid the chance of bats being affected by the proposals as a precautionary measure. Informatives to this effect and based on the recommendations of Hertfordshire Ecology will be attached.

Sustainability

Information has not been submitted demonstrating that regard has been given to the objectives of Policy CS29 of the Core Strategy. A condition shall be attached requiring further details to satisfy this requirement.

Archaeology

The site lies within an area of archaeological significance and therefore is likely to have an impact on significant heritage assets with archaeological interest. The Historic Advisor has recommended standard conditions requiring a Written Scheme of Investigation to be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority to mitigate any potential adverse impacts.

Contamination

The proposals are for demolition of a building on the grounds of the former Isolation Hospital. As such there may be standard land contamination issues associated with this site. The standard contamination condition will be imposed requiring a Phase 1 Study.

Other Material Planning Considerations

The proposal accords with Appendix 5 of the Local Plan with respect to car parking provision. Three spaces are proposed which is in accordance with the maximum car parking standards for a four bed dwelling.

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

- 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 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 shall have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.**

Reason: To safeguard the character and appearance of area and the setting of the undesignated heritage assets and the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty in accordance with adopted Core Strategy Policies CS7, CS24 and CS27.

- 3 No works shall be carried out on the site until details of the windows have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, and the work shall then be carried out in accordance with the details so approved.**

Reason: To safeguard the character and appearance of the area and the setting of the undesignated heritage assets and to accord with adopted Core Strategy Policy CS27.

- 4 No development 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:**

- **hard surfacing materials;**
- **means of enclosure;**
- **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, plant sizes and proposed numbers/densities where appropriate;**
- **trees to be retained and measures for their protection in accordance with BS5837:2012 during construction works;**
- **proposed finished levels or contours;**
- **car parking layouts and other vehicle and pedestrian access and circulation areas;**

- **minor artefacts and structures (e.g. furniture, play equipment, refuse or other storage units, signs, lighting etc);**

The approved landscape works shall be carried out prior to the first occupation of the development hereby permitted.

Reason: To ensure a satisfactory appearance to the development and to safeguard the visual character of the immediate area in accordance with adopted Core Strategy Policies CS12 and CS24.

- 5 **In this condition "retained tree" means an existing tree which is to be retained in accordance with the approved plans and particulars; and paragraphs (a) and (b) below shall have effect until the expiration of 1 year from the date of the occupation of the building for its permitted use.**

(a) No retained tree shall be cut down, uprooted or destroyed, nor shall any retained tree be topped or lopped other than in accordance with the approved plans and particulars, without the written approval of the local planning authority. Any topping or lopping approved shall be carried out in accordance with British Standard 3998: 1989 Recommendations for Tree Work.

(b) If any retained tree is removed, uprooted or destroyed or dies, another tree shall be planted at the same place and that tree shall be of such size and species, and shall be planted at such time, as may be specified in writing by the local planning authority.

(c) The erection of fencing for the protection of any retained tree shall be undertaken in accordance with the approved plans and particulars before any equipment, machinery or materials are brought on to the site for the purposes of the development, and shall be maintained until all equipment, machinery and surplus materials have been removed from the site. Nothing shall be stored or placed in any area fenced in accordance with this condition and the ground levels within those areas shall not be altered, nor shall any excavation be made, without the written consent of the local planning authority.

Reason: To ensure a satisfactory appearance to the development and to safeguard the visual character of the immediate area in accordance with adopted Core Strategy Policy CS12.

- 6 **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.**

For the purposes of this condition:

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.

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.

A Remediation Statement details actions to be carried out and timescales so that contamination no longer presents a risk to site users, property, the environment or ecological systems.

Reason: To ensure that the issue of contamination is adequately addressed and to ensure a satisfactory development.

- 7 All remediation or protection measures identified in the Remediation Statement referred to in Condition 6 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.**

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.

Reason: To ensure that the issue of contamination is adequately addressed and to ensure a satisfactory development.

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.'

Contaminated Land Planning Guidance can be obtained from Regulatory Services or via the Council's website www.dacorum.gov.uk

- 8 **The windows at first floor level in the east and west elevations of the dwelling hereby permitted shall be permanently fitted with obscured glass unless otherwise agreed in writing by the local planning authority.**

Reason: In the interests of the residential amenities of the occupants of the adjacent dwellings and to accord with adopted Core Strategy Policy CS12.

- 9 **Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) 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:**

Schedule 2 Part 1 Classes A, B, C, D, E.

Reason: 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.

- 10 **No demolition/development shall take place/commence until a Written Scheme of Investigation has been submitted to and approved by the local planning authority in writing. The scheme shall include assessment of significance and research questions; and:**

1. **The programme and methodology of site investigation and recording**
2. **The programme for post investigation assessment**
3. **Provision to be made for analysis of the site investigation and recording**
4. **Provision to be made for publication and dissemination of the analysis and records of the site investigation**
5. **Provision to be made for archive deposition of the analysis and records of the site investigation**
6. **Nomination of a competent person or persons/organisation to undertake the works set out within the Written Scheme of Investigation.**

Reason: To ensure that reasonable facilities are made available to record archaeological evidence and to accord with adopted Core Strategy Policy CS27.

- 11 **1. Any demolition/development shall take place in accordance with the Written Scheme of Investigation approved under Condition 10.**
- 2. The development shall not be occupied until the site investigation and post investigation assessment has been completed in accordance with the programme set out in the Written Scheme of Investigation approved under condition 10 and the provision made for analysis, publication and dissemination of results and archive deposition has been secured.**

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt

- 12 **Notwithstanding any details submitted as part of the planning application, prior to the commencement of the development hereby permitted, plans and details showing how the development will provide for renewable energy and conservation measures, and sustainable drainage and water conservation shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The approved measures shall be provided before any part of the development is first brought into use and they shall thereafter be permanently retained.**

Reason: To ensure the sustainable development of the site in accordance with the aims of adopted Core Strategy Policy CS27.

- 13 **The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans/documents:**

**Site Location Plan;
2817-02A;
2817- 03D.**

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

Article 35 Statement

Planning permission has been granted for this proposal. The Council acted pro-actively through positive engagement with the applicant at the pre-application stage and 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 (paragraphs 186 and 187) and in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) (Amendment No. 2) Order 2015.

HIGHWAYS INFORMATIVES:

1. All materials and equipment to be used during the construction shall be stored within the curtilage of the site.

Reason: In the interest of highway safety and free and safe flow of traffic. 1

2. Obstruction of public highway land: It is an offence under section 137 of the Highways Act 1980 for any person, without lawful authority or excuse, in any way to wilfully obstruct the free passage along a highway or public right of way. If this development is likely to result in the public highway or public right of way network becoming routinely blocked (fully or partly) the applicant must contact the Highway Authority to obtain their permission and requirements before construction works commence. Further information is available via the website:

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

3. Road Deposits: It is an offence under section 148 of the Highways Act 1980 to deposit mud or other debris on the public highway, and section 149 of the same Act gives the Highway Authority powers to remove such material at the expense of the party responsible. Therefore, best practical means shall be taken at all times to ensure that all vehicles leaving the site during construction of the development are in a condition such as not to emit dust or deposit mud, slurry or other debris on the highway. Further information is available via the website <http://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/transtreets/highways/> or by telephoning 0300 1234047

BAT INFORMATIVES:

Given the limited possibility of the space behind the barge boards being used, you are advised that as a precautionary measure, the barge boards are removed during the winter months to avoid the chance of bats being affected by any proposals. This is solely a precaution to avoid the low risk of bats using this space during the active season and being disturbed if demolition takes place during the summer.

Bats and their roosts remain protected at all times under National and European law. If bats or evidence for them is discovered during the course of works, work must stop immediately and advice sought on how to proceed lawfully from Natural England (Tel: 0300 060 3900) or a licensed bat consultant.