

Planning, Design and Access Statement

Demolition of existing buildings and erection of five 4 bedroom detached dwellings with associated landscaping and access.

At

Land at
57 South Park Gardens
Berkhamsted
Herts
HP4 1HZ

For

Farris Associates Ltd

Feb. 2020



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1. Introduction

- 1.1 The following planning statement has been prepared by KRL Planning Ltd on behalf of Farris Associates Ltd. The report has been prepared to support a full planning application for the demolition of existing property and erection of five 4 bedroom detached dwellings with associated garages, landscaping and access on land at 57 South Park Gardens Berkhamsted. The original planning statement has been amended following the Planning Committee meeting on 25th July 2019 to address the provision of design solutions in respect to the impact of railway noise on the development. details of which are provided in the supporting application documents summarized in section 6 of this report.
- 1.2 The supporting information for the application consists of:
- Completed application form;
 - Drawing HP4/1432/P/001A Site Survey
 - Drawing HP4/1432/P/01K Site Layout
 - Drawings HP4/1432/P/02H through to 08H House Types and Site Sections
 - Planning, Design and Access Statement by KRL Planning ;
 - Ecology Survey prepared by AAE;
 - Vibration and Noise Survey by AIRO ref. DLW/7167, dated 25 July 18;
 - Digital Noise Model by AIRO ref. DLW/7167/L4, dated 5 Feb 20;
 - CIL form
- 1.3 The accompanying reports together with the following statement provides a full and comprehensive assessment of the proposals.
- 1.4 The statement will describe the proposals in detail, undertaking a full assessment in light of the history of the site, the characteristics of the surrounding area and the relevant planning policies appertaining to the development proposals. It will be concluded that the proposals comply with both National and Local Policies and it is recommended that planning permission is granted.
- 1.5 The application proposal has been the subject of pre-application negotiations with Dacorum Borough Council in November 2017 and Berkhamsted Town Council.

2. The Site and Surroundings

- 2.1 The application site is a roughly triangular shaped piece of land, with a site area of some 0.26ha located on the west side of South Park Gardens Berkhamsted. The site comprises the two storey property at 57 South Park Gardens and its curtilage. The site is in a residential area and falls within the Castle Hill character area.
- 2.2 The site has a relatively narrow road frontage of some 6m on to South Park gardens and the site widens to some 65m on its rear boundary. The site backs on to a railway line embankment and there are detached dwellings to the north and south of the site. An extensive tree screen is situated on the rear boundary with the railway line.
- 2.3 The site slopes down from east to west and from north to south. The fall between the front of the site and the rear boundary is approximately 5m. The fall from north to south is up to approximately 4m.

3. Planning History

- 3.1 The relevant entries in the planning register are summarised below:
- 4/01025/92/4 Single Storey rear extension, first floor extension and formation of dormers. Approved 8/10/1992

4. Development Proposals

- 4.1 The development proposal consists of the demolition of the existing dwelling and garage on the site and the erection of 6 two storey detached 4 bedroom houses on the application site. The house on Plot 1 will replace the existing dwelling and a 4.1m wide access road will run between the house on Plot 1 and 59 South Park Gardens. The access drive will serve the 4 further dwellings which will be located to the rear of the site.
- 4.2 The proposed 4 new dwellings at the rear of the site will be sited in a crescent shaped formation on the southern and eastern side of the access drive. The houses on plots 2-4 will be some 20m away from the boundary with 59 South Park Gardens. The separation distances between the primary windows in the proposed dwellings and

those at 59 South Park Gardens will vary between 30 and 35m. Whilst the distance between the flank wall of Plot 2 and 55 South Park Gardens will be approximately 23m.

- 4.3 Plots 2-5 will have long front gardens some 10m deep. All plots have garages. The proposal provides sufficient car parking for 3 off street parking spaces for Plot 1 and 4 off street parking spaces for Plots 2 – 5 with 2 additional visitors parking spaces..
- 4.4 The proposed dwellings will have rear garden depths of between 11.5m and 20.4m. The plots 2-5 are oriented so that views from the rear of Plot 2 are over the rear portion of the garden at 55 South Park Gardens and plots 3-5 overlook the boundary trees along the railway line. The proposed dwellings are sited to maximise the separation distances between the new dwellings and the neighbouring properties to protect privacy and minimise overlooking. The drop in levels and proposed additional planting on the boundary with 59 South Park gardens will further reduce any potential overlooking.
- 4.5 A dedicated bin storage area for bin collection day is provided adjoining the site entrance

5. Planning Policy

- 5.1 Relevant Planning Policy appertaining to the development proposals are contained in National Guidance, in the form of the National Policy Planning Framework, the saved policies of the Dacorum Local Plan 1991-2011, and Core Strategy 2013

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

- 5.2 At the heart of the NPPF is a *“Presumption in favour of sustainable development, which should be seen as a golden thread running through both plan making and decision making”*. In respect of decision taking this means inter alia approving development proposals that accord with the Development Plan without delay.
- 5.3 Twelve core planning principles are identified which should underpin both plan making and decision taking. A number of these core principles are relevant to the current proposals being:-

- Always seek to secure a quality design and a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings
- To encourage the effective use of land by reusing land that has been previously developed (brown field land), provided that it is not of high environmental value

5.4 At paragraph 49 in respect of delivering a wide choice of high quality homes it states that housing applications should be considered in the context of the presumption in favour of sustainable development, and relevant policies for the supply of housing should not be considered up to date if the local planning authority cannot demonstrate a five year supply of deliverable housing.

5.5 Paragraph 50 also encourages Local Authorities to plan and deliver a wide choice of high quality homes, widen opportunities for home ownership and create sustainable, inclusive and mixed communities.

5.6 In respect of good design Paragraph 56 states that the Government attaches great importance to the design of the built environment, and that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, is indivisible from good planning, and should contribute positively to making places better for people. Design policies in Local Plans should be based on stated objectives for the area, in response to an understanding and evaluation of its defining characteristics.

5.7 Paragraph 58 goes on to identify the aim of planning policies and decisions is to ensure that developments:-

- Function well and add to the overall quality of the area
- Establish a strong sense of space
- Optimise the potential of the site to accommodate development
- Create safe and accessible environments
- Respond to local character
- Are visually attractive as a result of good architecture and appropriate landscape.

Development Plan Policies

- 5.8 Below are the main policies considered to be relevant to these proposals with a short summary of the thrust of each policy.

Core Strategy September 2013

- 5.9 Under Policy NP1: Supporting Development the Council will take a positive approach to the consideration of development proposals, reflecting the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the National Planning Policy Framework. The Council will work proactively with applicants to find solutions for development proposals that help to improve the economic, social and environmental conditions in Dacorum. Proposals which accord with the development plan will be brought forward and approved unless material considerations indicate otherwise. If the development plan contains no policy relevant to the consideration of a planning application or policies are out of date, the Council will grant permission unless
- 5.10 Under Policy CS1: Distribution of Development, requires decisions on the scale and location of development to be made in accordance with the Council's settlement hierarchy, with Hemel Hempstead being the focus for homes, jobs and strategic services. The market towns such as Berkhamsted and large villages will accommodate new development for housing, employment and other uses, provided that it:
- a) is of a scale commensurate with the size of the settlement and the range of local services and facilities;
 - b) helps maintain the vitality and viability of the settlement and the surrounding countryside;
 - c) causes no damage to the existing character of the settlement or its adjoining countryside; and
 - d) is compatible with policies protecting the Green Belt and Rural Area.

5.11 Policy CS2: Selection of Development Sites aims to ensure that development sites are chosen in accordance with a sequence of criteria as set out below:

1. Previously developed land and buildings;
2. Areas of high accessibility; and
3. Other land in all cases where this does not conflict with other policies, and then;

5.12 Policy CS4: The Towns and Large Villages aims to ensure that development is guided to the appropriate areas within settlements. This means that in residential areas appropriate residential development is encouraged

5.13 Policy CS10: Quality of Settlement Design sets out a number of criteria that the design of new development are expected to follow, which includes the promotion of higher densities in and around town centres and local centres.

5.14 Policy CS11: Quality of Neighbourhood Design states:

Within settlements and neighbourhoods, development should:

- (a) respect the typical density intended in an area and enhance spaces between buildings and general character;*
- (b) preserve attractive streetscapes and enhance any positive linkages between character areas;*
- (c) co-ordinate streetscape design between character areas; (d) protect or enhance significant views within character areas; (e) incorporate natural surveillance to deter crime and the fear of crime; and*
- (f) avoid large areas dominated by car parking.*

5.15 Policy CS12: Quality of Site Design states

On each site, development should:

- a) provide a safe and satisfactory means of access for all users;*
- b) provide sufficient parking and sufficient space for servicing;*
- c) avoid visual intrusion, loss of sunlight and daylight, loss of privacy and disturbance to the surrounding properties;*
- d) retain important trees or replace them with suitable species if their loss is justified;*
- e) plant trees and shrubs to help assimilate development and softly screen settlement edges;*
- f) integrate with the streetscape character; and*
- g) respect adjoining properties in terms of:*
 - i. layout;*
 - ii. security;*
 - iii site coverage;*
 - iv. scale;*
 - v. height;*
 - vi. bulk;*
 - vii. materials; and*
 - viii landscaping and amenity space.*

5.16 Policy CS17: New Housing seeks to ensure that the council provides a minimum of 430 net additional dwellings every year over the plan period up to 2031 year. New housing will be phased over the plan period and a five year supply of housing maintained.

5.17 Policy CS18 Mix of Housing aims to ensure that new housing development provide a choice of home in terms of a range of housing types, sizes and tenure.

5.18 Under Policy CS25 Landscape Character all development proposals are expected to help conserve and enhance Dacorum's natural and historic landscape. Proposals will be assessed for their impact on landscape features to ensure that they conserve or

improve the prevailing landscape quality, character and condition and take full account of the Dacorum Landscape Character Assessment.

- 5.19 Policy CS29 Sustainable Design and Construction requires new development to comply with the highest standards of sustainable design and construction possible.

Dacorum Borough Local Plan 1991-2011 adopted 2004

- 5.20 Under Policy 10 Optimising the Use of Urban Land, proposals for new development are to be considered against a number of principles to secure optimum use of land in the long term including:

- development to be planned and implemented in a coordinated way, taking a comprehensive view of potential development opportunities in the immediate area wherever possible.
- General building development should be designed to achieve the maximum density compatible with the character of the area, surrounding land uses and other environmental policies in the plan.
- The design and layout of new development should not inhibit positive management of land and buildings. Arrangements for future management should be put in place in appropriate schemes.
- Development should be accessible by a range of transport options, including passenger transport.
- Development makes optimum use of the land available, whether in terms of site coverage or height;
- contributes towards or provides for the reasonable sharing of facilities, such as off street car parking; or
- does not prevent other land coming forward for development in the future.

- 5.21 Policy 18 The Size of New Dwellings encourages a range of dwellings in terms size and type in new developments
- 5.22 Under Policy 21 Density of Residential Development, consideration is given to the density of all new housing proposals to ensure that they make the most efficient use of the land available. Densities will generally be expected to be in the range of 30 to 50 dwellings per hectare with higher densities encouraged in urban areas especially town and local centres.
- 5.23 Policy 51 Development and Transport Impacts requires development proposals to be compatible in locational and general highway planning, design and capacity terms with the current and future operation of the defined road hierarchy and road improvement strategy. The acceptability of all development proposals will be assessed specifically in highway and traffic terms and should have no significant impact upon:
- the nature, capacity and use of the highway network and its ability to accommodate the traffic generated by the development;
 - the provision of routes and facilities for pedestrians, cyclists and passenger transport users, including links to existing networks;
 - the design and effectiveness of existing and proposed traffic management measures;
 - the design and capacity of parking areas and the implications for on-street parking;
 - the environmental and safety implications of the traffic generated by the development.
- 5.24 Policy 54 Highway Design requires new development proposals to meet current national and local standards for highway design, access and servicing arrangements and circulation space. However, at the discretion of the planning authority, normal standards may be relaxed in order to meet wider environmental, transport, safety, design and conservation objectives.

5.25 Policy 57 Provision and Management of Parking sets out the principles for the management and provision of on street and off-street parking spaces which includes:

- parking provision and management to be used as a tool to encourage reduced car ownership and usage. This approach is applied for general environmental reasons, and also to limit traffic problems and environmental impacts (e.g. pollution,
- the minimum level of car parking provision will be sought in developments by adopting maximum demand-based standards of provision. Provision will be reduced below this level in locations accessible by other travel modes or which can be made more accessible through planned improvements or as part of the development.

5.26 Under Policy 58 Private Parking Provision the provision and management of private parking will be made in accordance with the principles set out in Policy 57. New development with a significant parking requirement will only be permitted where parking provision is minimised and the level of parking provision to be provided in new development will be assessed using the demand based parking guidelines and approach to parking set out in Appendix 5 of the Plan.

5.27 Policy 99 Preservation of Trees, Hedgerows and Woodlands, encourages the preservation of trees, hedgerows and woodlands throughout the Borough. Where new development is proposed, a high priority will be given to their retention and to their protection during development. Regard will also be paid to future management intentions

5.28 The following appendices of Local Plan are also relevant:

- Appendix 1 Sustainability Check List
- Appendix3 Layout and Design of Residential Areas
- Appendix5 Parking Provision

Supplementary planning documents

Environmental Guidelines May 2004

- 5.31 The Environmental Guidelines provide advice to help those designing development proposals to achieve high standards. The guidelines cover matters of general strategy setting out more detailed guidance on the way in which policies in the plan should be applied in particular circumstances. They focus on the preservation of the natural environment and resources, such as landscape, nature conservation and the water environment, and they deal with more generalised design matters.

Area based policies 2004 Development in Residential Areas

- 5.32 Development in residential areas is part of the Area based policies SPG This policy statement is intended to provide a comprehensive base of policies for controlling new development in the established residential areas of Dacorum's towns: Hemel Hempstead, Berkhamsted (including the urban area of Northchurch) and Tring. The policies complement and amplify the provisions of Part 3 of the Local Plan relating to development in residential areas.
- 5.33 There is separate section dedicated to development in Berkhamsted. The document sets out design objectives for Berkhamsted as:
1. Conserve the historic core and linear nature of the town as a 'through route';
 2. Preserve the character of development appropriate to a small to medium sized country town;
 3. Small scale massing in new development is most appropriate;
 4. Maintain and improve the high standard of landscaping;
 5. Maintain the existing pattern of densities throughout the town;
 6. Maintain the low rise characteristic of the town, and
 7. Maintain attractive cross-valley view's given the steeply sloping valley side topography of town.

- 5.34 The site falls within Character Area BCA13 Castle Hill as set out in the area based policies SPG. The character appraisal provides a character assessment for the Castle Hill area and provides development principles.

6. Planning Assessment

- 6.1 The application proposal has been the subject of pre-application discussions with both Dacorum Council's Planning Officers and Berkhamsted Town Council. Officers and the Town Council confirmed that a redevelopment of the site would be acceptable in principle and made the following comments to the layout:
- a) Garden lengths are to be min 11.5m
 - b) Plot 1 garden length was discussed and requested to be greater than 11.5m
 - c) Could garages be added to the scheme?
 - d) Landscaping to the railway line should be maintained
 - e) Could more than 2 parking spaces per dwelling be considered?
 - f) Parking restrictions exist in South Park Gardens and should extend into this development.
 - g) Some houses in South Park Gardens are chalet style, why is the proposal showing two storey? *Answer:* The new dwelling designs are based upon the existing two storey housing that exists at the site entrance.
 - h) The scheme was commended for maintaining privacy between all dwellings
- 6.2 The application proposal differs from the proposal that was the subject of pre-application discussions, in that the pre-application scheme was for 6 larger dwellings rather than the proposed 5 smaller four bedroom houses. The change in the scheme was influenced by: comments made by the Town Council, who wanted to see more off street parking, with the use of garages (if possible), and to ensure that the proposed dwellings had minimum garden depths of 11.5m; and a re-assessment of the original six unit scheme to maximise separation distances with 59 South Park gardens and to optimise the use of the site. Reducing the size of the proposed dwellings has allowed for greater flexibility in the layout of the proposed development and an increase in the number of the dwellings with additional on plot parking spaces.

- 6.3 The local area includes a great variety of different house designs, layout and age (primarily from the late 20th century) of development within it. Houses have a variety of roof forms and pitches, including gabled and hipped roofs. Properties tend to be detached, mainly full 2 storey properties with some examples of the second storey being within the roof space such as the existing property at 57 South Park Garden. The properties in South Park Gardens tend to have a mixture of brick and render finishes and they have relatively open front gardens with only planting being used as boundary features rather than walls and fencing.
- 6.4 The existing two storey dwelling does not make best use of the site. It sits on a substantial plot but due to the narrowness of the front of the plot on to South Park Gardens, the size of the plot is not apparent from public views. The proposed replacement of the existing dwelling with 5 dwellings, four of which would be located to the rear of the site, would optimise the use of the land without harming the general character of the area. The mixture of different styled 4-bedroom dwellings, for occupation by families, with open front gardens would maintain the character of the area, in which medium sized houses are present.
- 6.5 The existing house is located to one side of the plot with an access drive on the other side. The proposal, even though it would result in the replacement of the existing house, to facilitate the development, will maintain the existing configuration of an access drive to one side of the house to provide the access to the other proposed dwellings.
- 6.6 The site slopes from the front to the rear by some 4m-5m. Due to: the drop in levels; the proposed siting of the dwellings due to the depth of the site; and their height, at approximately 8.5m-9m, the proposed dwellings at the rear of the site will not be easily visible from public views from the front of the site. Any views from the rear would primarily be across the railway line. Therefore the proposal will not have a significant impact on the overall character of the area.
- 6.7 The impact on the character of the area is a material consideration. The site falls within the Castle Hill (BCA13) Character Area as set out in the Area Based Policies SPG4. The character area assessment only has the status of guidance rather than policy, but it does provide broad principles for development. According to the Character Assessment's principles for the scope for residential development the

opportunities for development are limited, as redevelopment and plot amalgamation would not normally be permitted, and there is some limited scope for in filling.

- 6.8 However, each application must be judged on its own merits, in accordance with the presumption in favour of sustainable development and in accordance with the development plan. It should be stressed that character assessment does not prevent any form of redevelopment just that normally it would not be permitted. The proposal meets the design principles of Castle Hill area in that; the proposal is for detached housing, which is encouraged; the proposed dwellings are medium sized two storey houses; the existing building line is retained with the erection of the replacement dwelling on plot 1; and the proposal retains the minimum spacing between buildings of 2m.
- 6.9 The proposal will result in a density of 19 dwellings per hectare (dph) on the application site, which is greater than the preferred density of up to 15dph as suggested in the character appraisal. However, the site density is still below the 30dph advocated under saved Policy 21 of the Dacorum Local Plan. Furthermore, taken as a whole the dwelling density on South Park Gardens with the proposed development would still be below 15dph.
- 6.10 The application site's characteristics, which includes its: size; shape (especially that its frontage is so narrow compared to the main bulk of the site); its location (in particular its position within the street scene); and the change in levels provides the opportunity to bring forward this small scale housing development, which will have no material detrimental impact on the overall character of the Castle Hill area and it will provide much needed medium sized family detached housing which is encouraged within the Character Assessment .
- 6.11 It is considered that the key policy relevant to this proposal is Policy CS12: Quality of Site Design. The proposal provides a safe and satisfactory means of access with the creation of a 4.1m wide shared surface access drive, which is appropriate for a development of 5 dwellings and which will not harm the appearance of the area. The proposal will provide sufficient space for off street parking to accommodate 3 cars per plot plus garages. The layout of the proposal maximises the separation distances between the proposed dwellings and the neighbouring dwellings at 59 and 55 South Park Gardens. The houses on plots 2-4 will be some 20m away from the boundary with 59 South Park Gardens. The separation distances between the primary windows

in the proposed dwellings and those at 59 South Park Gardens will vary between 30 and 35m. These separation distances exceed the council's minimum requirement for back to back separation distances of 23m.

- 6.12 The distance between the flank wall of Plot 2 and 55 South Park Gardens will be approximately 23m. However, the house on plot 2 is sited so that views from this house are towards the rear of the garden at 55 South Park Gardens, not towards No 55. Therefore, the proposed development will not be harmful to the amenities of the neighbouring property with regards loss of privacy, visual intrusion and overshadowing.
- 6.13 The proposed dwellings will have rear garden depths of between 11.5m and 20.4m, which accord with or exceed the council's minimum requirements. They will all have deep open front gardens approximately 10m deep, which is a characteristic feature of the area which provides space for significant landscaping. Furthermore the spacing between the houses will be some 2m to accord with the development principles of the character assessment.
- 6.14 The proposed development will retain the significant trees on the site which are primarily located on the rear boundary with the railway line. Additional tree planting is proposed throughout the development to further assimilate the proposed development. The details of additional tree planting and landscaping can be controlled by condition.
- 6.15 It is considered that the proposal will integrate well with the existing street scene to the extent that the plots 2-5 will have no impact on the existing street scape.
- 6.16 It is considered that the proposal in terms of its layout, security, site coverage, scale, height, bulk, materials and landscaping and amenity space will respect adjoining properties and the character of the area.
- 6.17 In order to meet the sustainability objectives of the Core Strategy the proposal will meet the requirements of Approved Document L1A of the current Building Regulations (2013). In addition, the scheme will incorporate Mechanical Heat Recovery Ventilation units (MHRV) and air source heat pumps which will be installed in each dwelling.

- 6.18 Due to the proximity of the site to the railway line a railway noise and vibration assessment report has been prepared by AIRO. A further supplemental digital noise model has also been prepared following Members concerns at the Development Control Planning Committee meeting on 25th July 2019 where it was decided to defer determination of the application to allow specific noise protection details and separation distances to be provided. These supplemental details are included in this application and are supported by the Council's Lead Environmental Health Officer. The reports conclude that to meet guidance for internal noise levels, additional sound insulation would be required to the upper habitable rooms (bedrooms) to ensure noise reductions of 33dB and 44 dB. The proposed dwellings in this application will all include this additional insulation at every dwelling's rear and side wall constructions which will not only cover both upper habitable rooms (bedrooms) but also lower habitable rooms (lounge, kitchens etc.). Each dwelling will also have secondary glazing systems and a mechanical heat recovery ventilation (MHRV) to ensure that the reduction in internal noise levels can be achieved and maintained as well as providing an appropriate control of temperature and ventilation. The original noise report and supplemental digital noise model provide details as to how this noise reduction can be achieved. These combined measures have been agreed between the Lead Planning Officer and Lead Environmental Health Officer and are proposed to be controlled by a Pre Commencement Condition for this application.
- 6.19 The external noise levels in the garden areas are higher than the desirable upper guidance levels. Further detailed consultation with the Lead Environmental Health Officer has concluded an agreeable solution of a 2.5m high acoustic barrier parallel to the railway boundary, the integration of 1.8m high fences to the North and South boundaries and each plot to have a screened garden area consisting of a 3m high screen consisting of a 1m high brick wall with a 2m glass / polycarbonate panel above. Again, this plot specific solution is supported by the Lead Planning Officer and the Lead Environmental Health Officer and will be controlled by a Prior to Occupation Condition. It should be noted that the external noise levels are an existing situation which affect the existing garden and the gardens of neighbouring properties. The digital mapping report by AIRO also shows an additional benefit of noise reduction to the gardens of neighbouring private amenity spaces and dwellings in addition to the application site.
- 6.20 The measured levels of ground vibration do not suggest that any specific mitigation is required. The report advises that light weight forms of construction such as light weight steel or frame construction, especially on the upper floors should be avoided.

The proposed details therefore also include for concrete first floor construction to be utilised with a traditional brick construction with either pile or strip foundations would provide reasonable attenuation of vibration from the ground.

- 6.21 The site has been the subject of an ecology survey which concludes that there are no protected species on the site and as a result it is considered there are no over-riding ecological constraints to the proposals. A series of generic mitigation measures could be implemented to reduce any impact of the development proposals on local wildlife. There is also an opportunity to implement some enhancement measures to increase the nature conservation value of the site in the long term, which can be dealt with by condition.
- 6.22 The site falls within an area designated in the Local plan as an Area of Archaeological Significance. However, as the site is; located in an residential area, which has been primarily developed in the latter half of the 20th century; and it is located some distance from the identified Ancient Monuments and historical core of Berkhamsted; plus its location close to the railway line, it is considered that is highly unlikely that the site will be of archaeological importance. However, a condition can be attached to ensure that the development proposal could be the subject of an archaeological watching brief.
- 6.23 In pre-application discussions it was raised that It may be necessary to undertake land contamination surveys in advance of site development due to the former land use. There is no evidence that the former land use was a potential contaminated land use. Nevertheless, any requirements to undertake contamination surveys prior to development can be dealt with by condition.
- 6.24 The Council needs to provide 430 dwellings per year in accordance with policy CS1. The last published annual monitoring report (February 2018) states that the council has a 9 year housing supply, however since 2007 the council has only been able to meet or exceed this annual target in 2011, 2012, 2016 and 2017. The Council is starting to relying in some of its strategic allocations coming forward, hence the 9 year housing supply figure, but the Council is also reliant on small windfall sites such as the application site to come forward to help meet its housing need. The need to provide more housing is re-enforced in the South West Hertfordshire Strategic Housing Assessment published in January 2016, which calculated the

Objectively Assessed Need for Housing for Dacorum for the period 2013-2036 as 756 dwellings per year. It will be some time before the final housing requirement will be adopted as part of the forthcoming Local Plan, but it is evident that there will not be a reduction in housing need in the foreseeable future.

7. Conclusions

- 7.1 It is considered that the proposal accords with the policies of the Development Plan and the NPPF.
- 7.2 The proposal has been the subject of pre-application negotiations with the Council and Berkhamsted Town Council which established that the principle of development was acceptable. The proposal has been amended to take account of issues raised in the pre-application negotiations.
- 7.3 The proposal has been the subject of detailed discussions with the Council regarding the existing railway noise and its mitigation. The design solution has been agreed in principle between the Council's Lead Environmental Health Officer, the Agent, the Noise Consultant AIRO and the Lead Planning Officer. The concluding noise mitigation measures are to be controlled by condition.
- 7.4 The proposal is a sustainable form of development, which provides additional new dwellings to meet the council's housing requirement. It makes the best use of the land.
- 7.5 The proposal is of a high quality design which is compatible with the area. It ensures that it is not harmful to the amenities of adjoining neighbours or future occupants, in terms of overlooking, loss of privacy, overshadowing or loss of light. It maintains the character of the area.
- 7.6 The proposal accords with the provisions of the NPPF taken as a whole and as result the presumption in favour of sustainable development applies and the application should be approved.