

# North Hertfordshire District Council

## Building Conservation comments

**File Ref:** 24/01371/FP

**Date:** 21/11/2024

**Planning Officer:** AHD

**Address:** Hillcrest and land at Tussocks, The Causeway, Therfield SG8 9PP

**Subject:** Erection of seven dwellings (4 x 3-bed and 3 x 4-bed) including creation of vehicular access off The Causeway, footpath, carport, parking, landscaping, and associated works following demolition of existing dwelling and outbuildings (as amended by plans and information received 22nd October 2024 and 18th November 2024).

### 1.0 Recommendation

- 1.1 The development would consolidate and to an extent urbanise this part of Therfield Conservation Area ['TCA'] and it is noted that the applicant's heritage consultant has confirmed at 5.20 of the Heritage Impact Assessment ['HIA'] that: *"the less than substantial harm identified must be balanced against public benefits in line with the requirements of paragraph 202 of the NPPF. The proposals do not offer overt heritage benefits, but public benefits are identified within the Planning Statement accompanying the application and readers are directed there for a full summary."*
- 1.2 It is considered that the proposal will occasion some harm to the character and appearance of the Therfield Conservation Area, but this harm is towards the low end of the range and further positive design changes have been sought and agreed. Whilst I cannot say that the character and appearance of the TCA would be preserved or enhanced, thus, would not fully meet the provisions of Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, I consider that the development would function well and add to the overall quality of the area, is visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping and is generally sympathetic to local character (para 135, NPPF).
- 1.3 Furthermore, the site has not been identified as possessing any specific significance so there is no significance to preserve as such under Policy HE1a) of the Local Plan. The development will hopefully via condition, ensure that the palette of materials will make a positive contribution to local character or distinctiveness under HE1b) and I leave HE1c) with the case officer and whether the low level of harm I have identified is outweighed by the public benefits of the development. Conservation should be involved in the decision process on conditions listed at 3.0 below.
- 1.4 Consequently, I raise **NO OBJECTION**, taking the position that the development would on balance satisfy the aims of paragraph 135 and Section 16 of the NPPF together with Policy HE1 of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011 - 2031.

### 2.0 The Proposal

- 2.1 I previously commented on 6<sup>th</sup> September 2024, and I respond to amended plans received on 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2024 and 18<sup>th</sup> November 2024.

2.2 I previously stated that the rear elevation of plots 1-3 are underwhelming when compared with Units 6 and 7. I also said that whilst the distribution of dwelling size based on number of bedrooms is not itself a conservation matter, what is significant is the depth of the rear projections to units 1-3 (incl.) and that what was expected was a two-storey rear projection depth broadly similar to Plot 4 with each unit being a 3-bed. Furthermore, I said that the window treatment for plots 1 – 4 is disappointing.

2.3 The following is an extract of an email received with the 22 October submission:

*Carports*

*Each increased in size to 6m wide by 7m deep internally.*

*Open rafter feet shown.*

*Curved knee braces shown.*

*Use Black cedar.*

*Plot 4*

*Windows amended to have glazing bars. These houses are more like the adjacent terraces so have retained the casement windows.*

*Plot 1 to 3*

*Windows amended to include glazing bars (retained as casements).*

*Additional brickwork detailing added. Arches to above windows, vertical brickwork detailing to rear elevation.*

*Rear ground floor windows have been altered to french doors and sidelights.*

*Rainwater pipes added to rear elevation between brickwork detailing.*

*Dividing boundary fences added to rear elevation with shadowing.*

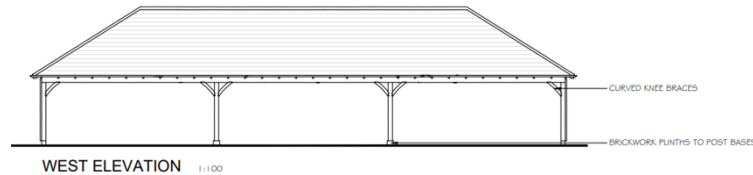


2.4 As noted below, the front and rear elevation treatment for Plots 1-3 has been improved and the window design also changed for Plot 4. The only disappointing matter is the depth of the rear projections to Plots 1-3 which has not been reduced.



### **Carport serving Plots 1, 2 and 3**

- 2.5 I am satisfied that the proposed Cedral black boarding will not harm the appearance of the TCA, and I welcome the fact that rafter feet are to be left exposed, and that curved knee braces and brickwork plinths are introduced.



### **3.0 Suggested conditions**

1. Standard time condition.
2. Details of all roof materials shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to the commencement of the development hereby approved. Thereafter the roof coverings shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To ensure that special regard is paid to protecting the special character of the Therfield Conservation Area under Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and Policy HE1 of the Local Plan.

3. Details and/or sample of the proposed brick type(s) shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to the commencement of the development hereby approved. Thereafter the development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details/sample.

Reason: To ensure that special regard is paid to protecting the special character of the Therfield Conservation Area under Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and Policy HE1 of the Local Plan.

4. Details (including material, sections, method of opening and external finish) of all windows shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to the commencement of that part of the development hereby approved. Thereafter the windows shall be manufactured and installed in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To ensure that special regard is paid to protecting the special character of the Therfield Conservation Area under Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and Policy HE1 of the Local Plan.

5. As noted on approved drawing no. 478.19 Rev B, the car port serving Plots 1, 2 and 3 shall be constructed with an open eaves (exposed rafter feet), curved knee braces and brickwork plinths, unless otherwise agreed and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure that special regard is paid to protecting the special character of the Therfield Conservation Area under Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and Policy HE1 of the Local Plan.

**Mark Simmons**  
**Senior Conservation Officer**