

## DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE – 20 MARCH 2019

<b>Application Number</b>	3/18/1960/FUL
<b>Proposal</b>	Proposed three storey extension and internal extension of first floor level within the existing building, together with change of use from former police station, fire station and citizens advice office (Sui Generis) to form new D1 Medical Centre with B1 Office Space and A1 Retail Pharmacy. Enlarged, altered and new ground floor and first floor window openings. Creation of cycle parking shelter.
<b>Location</b>	Meade House, 85 High Street, Ware, SG12 9AD
<b>Parish</b>	Ware Town Council
<b>Ward</b>	Ware Christchurch

<b>Date of Registration of Application</b>	31 August 2018
<b>Target Determination Date</b>	21 March 2019
<b>Reason for Committee Report</b>	The proposal relates to a site in which EHDC has a landowning interest, to which an objection has been made.
<b>Case Officer</b>	David Snell

### **RECOMMENDATION**

That planning permission be **GRANTED**, subject to the conditions set out at the end of this report.

#### **1.0 Summary of Proposal and Main Issues**

- 1.1 The application proposes a three storey extension and internal extension of first floor level within the existing building, together with change of use from former police station, fire station and citizens advice office (Sui Generis) to form new D1 Medical Centre with B1 Office Space and A1 Retail Pharmacy. The proposal is to replace the existing Dolphin House surgery. The floorspace would comprise:

A1 Pharmacy	117sqm
B1 Office	218sqm
Medical Centre	991sqm
Total	1,326sqm

The main issues for consideration are:

- The principle of the development;
- The quality of the layout and design;
- Heritage impact;
- Highway impact;
- Flood risk management;

1.2 Members will need to consider the overall planning balance and whether the proposal will result in a sustainable form of development having regard to the above considerations.

## **2.0 Site Description**

2.1 The site comprises land and buildings situated within Ware Town Centre to the rear of the Public Library and adjoining the existing public car park. Access is off Burgage Lane. The former maltings site was previously used as a fire station and citizens advice office. The site includes part of the existing public car park.

2.2 The site lies within the Ware Conservation Area, an area of Archaeological Significance covering the core of Ware and it is adjacent to Ware Priory a Scheduled Monument.

## **3.0 Planning History**

3.1 There is no relevant planning history relating to the site.

## **4.0 Main Policy Issues**

4.1 These relate to the relevant policies in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the East Herts District Plan 2018 (DP). There is no neighbourhood plan for Ware.

<b>Main Issue</b>	<b>NPPF</b>	<b>DP policy</b>
Principle, including the provision of community facilities in sustainable locations and the health and wellbeing of the community	Section 5 and 8	CFL7 CFL9
Design and heritage impact	Section 12	DES3 DES4 HA1 HA2 HA3 HA4
Highways and parking	Section 9	TRA1 TRA2 TRA3
Flood risk management	Section 14	WAT1 WAT2 WAT5 CC1 CC2

Other relevant issues are referred to in the 'Consideration of Relevant Issues' section below.

## **5.0 Summary of Consultee Responses**

- 5.1 HCC Highway Authority does not wish to restrict the grant of permission, subject to conditions.
- 5.2 Lead Local Flood Authority does not object, subject to conditions.
- 5.3 Environment Agency does not object, subject to conditions.
- 5.4 Thames Water does not object, subject to an informative regarding the proximity of their infrastructure.
- 5.5 EHDC Conservation and Urban Design Advisor have been involved in the pre-application design process and welcome the retention and refurbishment of the existing buildings and the design of the

proposed extension. The conversion of the former Priory Maltings/Fire Station building retains its remaining character, and retains the positive contribution it makes to Ware Conservation Area. The scheme is well designed and sympathetic to the Conservation Area location. Subject to the use of quality materials the proposals are supported as they retain the historic building in sustainable long-term use, and which would enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

- 5.6 HCC Historic Environment Unit comment that following the submission of a Ground Investigation Report they are now able to recommend that no objections are raised, subject to the imposition of a pre-commencement archaeological investigation condition.
- 5.7 Herts Ecology advise that there are no ecological constraints to the grant of permission, subject to an informative regarding bat roosts.

(Note: EHDC, East Herts District Council; HCC, Hertfordshire County Council)

## **6.0 Town/Parish Council Representations**

- 6.1 Ware Town Council Ware Town Council objects to the proposal on the grounds that the shape and form of the design are out of keeping with the Conservation Area and are detrimental to the riverside environs. The Town Council does not understand why the application includes provision of a retail pharmacy when there are 3 pharmacies within 2 minutes' walk.

## **7.0 Summary of Other Representations**

- 7.1 3 responses have been received, including a response from the Ware Society.

7.2 2 responses object to the proposals on the grounds summarised as:

- Building too imposing and out of character with the Conservation Area;
- Loss of parking;
- The development will exacerbate existing road safety issues in Burgage Lane.

7.3 The Ware Society make comments summarised as:

- Applaud the decision to provide new GP facilities in this
- Location subject to compliance with District Plan policy;
- Question the need for a pharmacy as this will result in closures elsewhere in Ware;
- Object to a 3 storey extension and consider that a two storey extension would be more appropriate;
- Consider loss of parking short sighted.

## **8.0 Consideration of Issues**

### Principle

8.1 The site lies within the built up area of Ware wherein development is acceptable in principle, subject to compliance with the District Plan.

8.2 Policies CFLR7 and CFLR9 support proposals for new and enhanced uses of land and buildings for public and community uses and development that promotes healthy communities. Such proposals should be in sustainable locations, served by a choice of sustainable travel options.

8.3 The proposed building is sited within Ware Town Centre within Accessibility Zone 2 close to public transport facilities. The site is therefore a sustainable location for the proposed use.

8.3 The building would accommodate a range of medical facilities including consultation rooms, treatment rooms and multi-purpose rooms (20 rooms in total). Other accommodation includes

supporting office accommodation, staff room, telephone operators' room, IT room, meeting room, associated plant rooms and a retail pharmacy (17.1sqm). The proposal would clearly promote healthy communities.

- 8.4 The proposal is clearly supportive of the health and wellbeing of the community and this is regarded as positive aspect of the proposed development.

#### Design and heritage impact

- 8.5 The design of the proposed development has been developed through pre-application discussions involving substantive input from the Conservation and Urban Design Team. The conversion of the former Priory Maltings/Fire Station building retains its remaining character, and retains the positive contribution it makes to Ware Conservation Area. The Team consider that the scheme is well designed and sympathetic to the Conservation Area location. Subject to the use of quality materials the proposals are supported as they retain the historic building in sustainable long-term use, and which would enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.
- 8.6 The views of Ware Town Council and the Ware Society in respect of the height of the proposed extension being out of keeping with the Conservation Area are noted. However, Officers do not consider this to be the case. It should be noted that there are a number of 3 storey buildings in Ware High Street, including the library building and The Brewery Tap building at the junction of High Street and Burgage Lane.
- 8.7 The proposal is considered to be well designed and sympathetic to its Conservation Area setting. The retention and refurbishment of the historic building and its viable re-use is regarded as a positive aspect of the proposal in that it would serve to enhance the character and appearance of the building and Conservation Area. It is considered that the proposal not adversely impact on the setting of the Scheduled Monument Ware Priory.

## Highways and parking

- 8.8 The Highway Authority has assessed the Access and Transport Statements submitted in support of the application. The Authority advises that the proposal will not result in a material impact on the highway network. The Authority also advises that the Town Centre location is within walking distance of a wide range of shops for linked trips, public transport and footway connections to surrounding residential areas. The proposal is therefore consistent with the provisions of Hertfordshire's Local Transport Plan 4 and the NPPF.
- 8.9 The new built part of the proposed development is located within the existing Burgage Lane public car park accommodating approximately 106 pay and display spaces. Approximately 41 public parking spaces and 6 library staff parking spaces will be lost as a result of the development. The Highway Authority considers that this represents a relatively small number of spaces in the context of the overall public car parking provision in Ware Town Centre. Approximately 320 public parking spaces are available within 500 metres of the proposed development.
- 8.10 12 parking spaces are proposed for the Medical Centre use and 18 cycle spaces are also provided. The adopted car parking standard would require 3 spaces per consulting room and 1 space per employee other than doctors. The consulting rooms would require 60 spaces. The level of staffing is currently unknown.
- 8.11 The site is restricted and further car parking provision cannot be achieved. Whilst this is a negative aspect of the proposal it should be balanced against the highly assessable and sustainable location of the site. The negative weight should therefore be limited.

## Flood risk management

- 8.12 The site is situated within Flood Zone 2.
- 8.13 Initially an objection was received from the Environment Agency (EA) due to the proximity of the development to the Bourne culvert.

Following the submission of additional information the objection has been withdrawn, subject to a condition.

- 8.14 The LLFA also initially objected to the proposal on the grounds that the agreement of the EA should be obtained prior to the grant of permission. Concern is also raised that the existing drainage network on site has not been designed to cope with the additional flows. Additional information was provided by the applicant and the objection of the LLFA has been withdrawn, subject to conditions.

#### Other matters

- 8.15 The site lies within an Area of Archaeological Significance. HCC Historic Environment Unit advises that this matter may be addressed by the imposition of a pre-commencement archaeological investigation condition.
- 8.16 The comments of the Town Council and the Ware Society regarding the provision of a pharmacy in proximity to existing pharmacies are noted. However, competition with other outlets is not a material planning consideration in this respect. Facilities will remain so overall, this would not result in any substantive harm.

#### **Planning Balance and Conclusion**

- 8.17 The proposal is clearly supportive of the health and wellbeing of the community and this is regarded as positive aspect of the proposed development having regard to Policies CFLR7 and CFLR9.
- 8.18 The scheme is considered to be well designed and sympathetic to its Conservation Area setting. The retention and refurbishment of the historic building and its viable re-use is regarded as a positive aspect of the proposal in that it serves to enhance the appearance of the building and Conservation Area.
- 8.19 The Highway Authority considers that the proposal will not result in a material impact on the highway network. The Authority advise that the Town Centre location is within walking distance of a wide range of shops for linked trips, public transport and footway connections



to surrounding residential areas. The proposal is therefore consistent with the provisions of Hertfordshire's Local Transport Plan 4 and the NPPF. Whilst, the loss of public parking carries some limited negative weight this is not considered to be significant within the context of the overall public parking provision in Ware Town Centre.

- 8.20 Similarly, whilst the lack of parking provision for the Medical Centre use carries some limited negative weight. The siting of the use within the town centre and Accessibility Zone 2 should be regarded as highly sustainable.
- 8.21 Having regard to the above considerations, and in particular, the positive community and health benefits of the proposal, it is considered that the scheme amounts to a sustainable form of development and the application is recommended for approval.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

That planning permission be **GRANTED**, subject to the conditions/ reasons set out below:

### **Conditions**

1. Three year time limit (1T12)
2. Approved plans (2E10)
3. Prior to installation details of the materials to be used for the surfacing of hard surfaced areas of the site shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.
4. Programme of archaeological work (2E02)
5. Samples of materials (2E12) – Prior to above ground development
6. Refuse disposal facilities (2E24) – Prior to first occupation

7. Prior to the commencement of the development hereby approved a Construction Management Plan (CMP) shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The CMP shall include:
- Details of vehicle, type numbers and routing;
  - Details of construction storage, compounds, offices and car parking;
  - Details of construction vehicle wheel washing facilities;
  - Details for maintaining the safe operation of the public car park during construction.

The development shall thereafter be constructed in accordance with the approved CMP.

Reason: To ensure that the impact of construction the highway network is minimised.

8. The development hereby permitted shall not encroach within 1 metre of the Bourne culvert, and shall not be commenced until such time as a foundation design scheme including loading calculations to ensure the culverted Bourne is protected from structural compromise has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the local planning authority. The scheme shall be fully implemented and subsequently maintained, in accordance with the timing / phasing arrangements embodied within the scheme or within any other period as may subsequently be agreed, in writing, by the local planning authority.

Reason: To ensure the structural integrity of the Bourne culvert thereby reducing the risk of flooding.

9. The development permitted by this planning permission shall be carried out in accordance with the approved surface water drainage assessment carried out by Richard Jackson Ltd, project number 48607, issue B, dated 8 November 2018 and the following mitigation measures detailed within the Flood Risk Assessment:

- Limiting the surface water run-off from the extension area generated by the critical storm events so that it will not exceed the surface water run-off rate of 1 l/s during the 1 in 100 year event plus 20% of climate change event.
- Providing storage to ensure no increase in surface water run-off volumes for all rainfall events up to and including the 1 in 100 year + climate change event providing a minimum of 50 m<sup>2</sup>, 0.6 m deep (or such storage volume agreed with the LLFA) of total storage volume in permeable paved with a sub-base area.
- Discharge of surface water from the private drain into the culverted main river crossing the development site.

The mitigation measures shall be fully implemented prior to occupation and subsequently in accordance with the timing / phasing arrangements embodied within the scheme, or within any other period as may subsequently be agreed, in writing, by the local planning authority.

Reason: To prevent risk of flooding in accordance with Policy WAT1 of the East Herts District Plan 2018.

10. No development shall take place until a detailed surface water drainage scheme for the site based on the approved drainage strategy and sustainable drainage principles, has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The scheme shall subsequently be implemented in accordance with the approved details before the development is completed. The scheme shall include:
  - The detailed drainage layout to include the existing drainage network on site and the proposed surface water drainage network. This should include all surface water discharge points from the site with indicated discharge rates.
  - Final, detailed modelling for the entire drainage network within the site for up to and including the 1 in 100 year including plus 20% for climate change allowance. The modelling should include the existing surface water network on the site and the

new, proposed drainage network. The final surface water discharge rate from the entire site should be calculated.

- Detailed engineered drawings of the proposed SuDS features including cross section drawings, their size, volume, depth and any inlet and outlet features including any connecting pipe runs.
- Final detailed management plan to include arrangements for adoption and any other arrangements to secure the operation of the scheme throughout its lifetime.

Reason: To prevent risk of flooding in accordance with Policy WAT1 of the East Herts District Plan 2018.

### **Informatives**

1. Other legislation (01OL)
2. Bats (32BA)

### **Summary of Reasons for Decision**

East Herts Council has considered the applicant's proposal in a positive and proactive manner with regard to the policies of the Development Plan and any relevant material considerations. The balance of the considerations is that permission should be granted.

**KEY DATA****Non-residential Vehicle Parking Provision**

Use type	Standard	Spaces required	Proposed
Surgeries/clinics	3 spaces per consulting room plus 1 space per employee other than consulting staff	For consulting rooms 60 spaces Staffing unknown at present	12 spaces