

Application No: 24/5227/FUL
Application Type: Full Planning
Location: Bevan House And John Snow House Barony Court, Nantwich,
Cheshire East, CW5 5RD
Proposal: Conversion of offices to residential apartments, consequent internal
alterations, cycle and bin storage provision, parking, amenity and
access arrangements.
Applicant: Andy Mines Greenhouse Property Management Ltd,
Expiry Date: 26-June 2025

Summary

The site lies within the settlement boundary for Nantwich and the principle of residential development on the site is acceptable. The development complies with Policies PG2 of the CELPS and PG9 of the SADPD.

The proposal would result in the loss of the existing employment use; however the existing premises has not appeared to have generated any market interest for re-use for employment. However, the vacant building has been the subject of recent vandalism/anti-social behaviour.

The Councils Built Heritage Officer is of the view that the proposal would result in less than substantial harm, at the moderate end of the spectrum, due to the removal of internal features/fabric of the Grade II Listed Bevan House. Whilst the Georgian Group have advised that they have no objection following the submission of amended plans.

The proposal would result in the creation of 31 net additional dwelling which would go some way to help the Council achieve its 5-year housing land supply target.

The proposed development will have indirect economic benefits including additional trade for local shops and businesses, jobs in construction and economic benefits to the construction industry supply chain.

The proposal would result in the re-use of previously developed land and existing heritage asset in a locationally sustainable location and complies with Policies SD1 and SD2 of the CELPS.

There would be a neutral impact upon trees, residential amenity, ecology, flood risk/drainage and highways.

The public benefits are considered to outweigh the less than substantial harm and there are no material considerations in this case that indicate that planning permission should be refused.

Recommendation

APPROVE with conditions

1. REASON FOR REFERRAL

- 1.1. The application is referred to Southern Planning Committee as the number of dwellings proposed exceeds 20 units.

2. DESCRIPTION OF SITE AND CONTEXT

- 2.1. The application site extends to approximately 0.5 hectares, and located off Barony Court, Nantwich. The site houses two buildings, known as Bevan House and John Snow House, both of which are currently vacant and were last used by the NHS as administrative offices.
- 2.2. The application site is located within a mixed use, primarily comprising of residential units (including care home) to the north, west and south. Commercial units including offices and day nursery are located to the east and southeast.
- 2.3. The site is bound to the north by the Crewe and Nantwich Borough Council (Barony Meadows, Nantwich) Tree Preservation Order 1995. In addition, the central courtyard is covered by the Crewe and Nantwich Borough Council (Barony Hospital and All Saints Cemetery, Nantwich) Tree Preservation Order 1974.
- 2.4. The larger three storey buildings known as Bevan House is a Grade II listed building (Nantwich Institution, The Barony).

Official List Entry

1. 1425 Nantwich Institution, The Barony SJ 65 SE 2/70

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2. The old Workhouse building erected 1780 and now surrounded by many other C19 and C20 buildings. Symmetrical front, 3 storeys, brick with tiled roof, hipped at ends. 7 casement windows, generally restored and without glazing bars. Slight central projection with pediment containing clock-face; central entrance to ground storey with glazed porch. Dentilled brick eaves; modern stacks. Interior much altered.

- 2.5. The smaller two-storey building known as John Snow House is not listed in its own right but is considered to be within the curtilage of Bevan House.
- 2.6. The site is located within the Settlement Boundary of Nantwich as per the Local Plan.

3. DESCRIPTION OF PROPSAL

- 3.1. The application proposes the conversion of offices to residential apartments, consequential internal alterations, cycle and bin storage provision, parking, amenity and access arrangements.
- 3.2. The application proposes a total of 31 one-bedroom residential apartments.
- 3.3. It is noted that amended plans for Bevan House were received during to the course of the application, which included internal alterations and clarification regarding the proposed internal works to the listed building fabric following feedback from Consultees.
- 3.4. The planning application is accompanied by a separate Listed Building Consent application ref: 25/0303/LBC.

4. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

25/0303/LBC - Listed Building consent for the Conversion of offices to residential apartments, consequent internal alterations, cycle and bin storage provision, parking, amenity and access arrangements.

Not decided at the time of writing

17/5640N - Listed Building Consent for proposed internal remodelling works and external refurbishments works to property.

Approved With Conditions / 10-01-2018

16/1061N - Listed building consent for Bevan House - new external ramp and handrail to rear car park

Approved With Conditions / 25-04-2016

15/5209N - Listed building consent for existing window to later flat roof extension removed and replaced with fire exit door to satisfy Building Regulations requirement for outward opening exit. Associated new steps, ramp and handrail to allow accessible egress. Additional work to application 15/1121N

Approved With Conditions / 07-01-2016

15/4762N - Non Material Amendment to Approval 15/1121N - Existing window to later flat roof extension removed and replaced with fire exit door. Associated new steps, ramp and handrail to allow accessible egress.

Refused / 10-11-2015

15/1121N - Listed Building Consent for proposed flat roof renewal, alterations to existing courtyard infill and associated works

Approved With Conditions / 04-06-2015

14/1775N - The refurbishment of the existing flat roof, which is a later 20th century extension to the existing building.

Approved With Conditions / 20-05-2014

13/5240N - Replacement of 29No. windows and 7No. external doors and door frames

Approved With Conditions / 06-02-2014

13/5125N - Listed Building Consent to replace 12 no roof lights with conservation roof lights

Approved With Conditions / 10-01-2014

13/0750N - Listed Building Consent for internal installation of a demountable pre-fabricated platform lift to provide access for ambulant and wheelchair users to the upper floors of the building.

Approved With Conditions / 15-04-2013

13/0244N - To refurbish and replace external roof finishes.

Approved With Conditions / 15-03-2013

P93/1036 - LBC for roofing over store. "Block B".

Approved / 31-01-1994

P91/0291 - LBC for erection of plant room and demolition for curtilage buildings.

Approved With Conditions / 11-02-1992

P91/0290 - Formation of car parking areas and erection of plant room.

7/12264 - Development & consultation by Gov. Department Circ/8/84. Renovations to windows and roof at 'B' Block (L.B.C.).

Approved / 02-08-1985

5. NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY

5.1. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was first published by the Government in March 2012 and has since been through several revisions. It sets out the planning policies for England and how these should be applied in the determination of planning applications and the preparation of development plans. At the heart of the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. The NPPF is a material consideration which should be taken into account for the purposes of decision making.

6. DEVELOPMENT PLAN POLICY

6.1. Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires decisions on planning applications to be made in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The Cheshire East Local Plan Strategy (2010 – 2030) was adopted in July 2017. The Site Allocations and Development Policies Documents was adopted in December 2022. The policies of the Development Plan relevant to this application are set out below, including relevant Neighbourhood Plan policies where applicable to the application site.

6.2. Relevant policies of the Cheshire East Local Plan Strategy (CELPS) and Cheshire East Site Allocations and Development Plan Policies Document (SADPD)

- 1.SADPD Policy PG 8: Development at local service centres
- 2.SADPD Policy PG 9: Settlement boundaries
- 3.SADPD Policy GEN 1: Design principles
- 4.SADPD Policy ENV 1: Ecological network
- 5.SADPD Policy ENV 15: New development and existing uses
- 6.SADPD Policy ENV 2: Ecological implementation
- 7.SADPD Policy ENV 3: Landscape character
- 8.SADPD Policy ENV 5: Landscaping
- 9.SADPD Policy ENV 6: Trees, hedgerows and woodland implementation
- 10.SADPD Policy ENV 7: Climate change
- 11.SADPD Policy HER 1: Heritage assets
- 12.SADPD Policy HER 4: Listed buildings
- 13.SADPD Policy HOU 1: Housing mix
- 14.SADPD Policy HOU 12: Amenity
- 15.SADPD Policy HOU 13: Residential standards
- 16.SADPD Policy HOU 14: Housing density
- 17.SADPD Policy HOU 16: Small and medium-sized sites
- 18.SADPD Policy HOU 8: Space, accessibility and wheelchair housing standards
- 19.SADPD Policy INF 1: Cycleways, bridleways and footpaths
- 20.SADPD Policy INF 3: Highway safety and access
- 21.SADPD Policy INF 9: Utilities
- 22.SADPD Policy REC 2: Indoor sport and recreation implementation
- 23.SADPD Policy REC 3: Open space implementation
- 24.CELPS Policy MP 1: Presumption in favour of sustainable development
- 25.CELPS Policy PG 1: Overall development strategy
- 26.CELPS Policy PG 2: Settlement hierarchy
- 27.CELPS Policy PG 7: Spatial distribution of development

- 28.CELPS Policy SD 1: Sustainable development in Cheshire East
- 29.CELPS Policy SD 2: Sustainable development principles
- 30.CELPS Policy IN 1: Infrastructure
- 31.CELPS Policy IN 2: Developer contributions
- 32.CELPS Policy EG 1: Economic prosperity
- 33.CELPS Policy EG 3: Existing and allocated employment sites
- 34.CELPS Policy SC 2: Indoor and outdoor sports facilities
- 35.CELPS Policy SC 4: Residential mix
- 36.CELPS Policy SC 5: Affordable homes
- 37.CELPS Policy SE 1: Design
- 38.CELPS Policy SE 12: Pollution, land contamination and land instability
- 39.CELPS Policy SE 13: Flood risk and water management
- 40.CELPS Policy SE 2: Efficient use of land
- 41.CELPS Policy SE 3: Biodiversity and geodiversity
- 42.CELPS Policy SE 4: The landscape
- 43.CELPS Policy SE 5: Trees, hedgerows and woodland
- 44.CELPS Policy SE 6: Green infrastructure
- 45.CELPS Policy SE 7: The historic environment
- 46.CELPS Policy SE 9: Energy efficient development
- 47.CELPS Policy CO 1: Sustainable travel and transport
- 48.CELPS Policy CO 4: Travel plans and transport assessments

6.3. Neighbourhood Plan

There is no Neighbourhood Plan for Nantwich.

7. Relevant supplementary planning documents or guidance

7.1. Supplementary Planning Documents and Guidance do not form part of the Development Plan but may be a material consideration in decision making. The following documents are considered relevant to this application:

- SPG Provision of Private Open Space in New Residential Developments
- Biodiversity Net Gain SPD
- Environmental Protection SPD
- SPD Cheshire East Council Design Guide

8. **CONSULTATIONS (External to Planning)**

8.1. **Cadent Gas Ltd:** No comments received at the time of writing.

8.2. **United Utilities:** No comments received at the time of writing.

8.3. **Flood Risk Manager (LLFA):** No objection, subject to condition.

8.4. **Strategic Housing:** Due to acceptance of the Vacant Building Credit, the affordable housing requirement is nil. As such Housing do not have an objection to the proposal.

8.5. **Enviromental Health:** No objection, subject to conditions and informative.

8.6. **Cheshire East Highways:** No objection.

8.7. **Public Open Space:** No objection subject to contributions to off-site enhancements.

8.8. **Education:** No objection and Children's Services require no Education contribution.

8.9. **NHS (Cheshire CCG):** No comment

8.10. **Historic Buildings & Places:** No comments received at the time of writing.

8.11. **The Georgian Group:** Following the submission of amended plans The Georgian Group have no objection. (Comments submitted under the accompanying Listed Building application 25/0303/LBC)

9. TOWN/PARISH COUNCIL

9.1. **Nantwich Town Council:** No objection.

10. REPRESENTATIONS

10.1. One letter of objection has been received which raise the following issues;

- Effectively create a large HMO
- Object due to social cohesion

11. OFFICER APPRAISAL

Principle of the development

11.1. The site is located within the Settlement Boundary for Nantwich, as such Policy PG9 of the SADPD identifies that within the Settlement Boundary proposals *'will be supported where they are in keeping with the scale, role and function of that settlement and do not conflict with any other relevant policy in the local plan'*.

11.2. The principle of development within the settlement boundary is accepted provided that it accords with CELPS Policies SD1, SD2 and SE1 and SADPD Policies GEN1. These policies seek to ensure, amongst other things, that proposals are not detrimental to neighbouring residential amenity and are appropriate in design and highway terms.

Housing Land Supply

11.3. The Cheshire East Local Plan Strategy was adopted on the 27th July 2017 and forms part of the statutory development plan. The plan sets out the overall strategy for the pattern, scale and quality of development, and makes sufficient provision for housing (36,000 new dwellings over the plan period, equating to 1,800 dwellings per annum) in order to meet the objectively assessed needs of the area.

11.4. As the plan is more than five years old, deliverable housing land supply is measured using the local housing need figure (plus 5% buffer), which is currently 2,603 dwellings per year rather than the LPS figure of 1,800 dwellings per year.

11.5. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) identifies the circumstances in which relevant development plan policies should be considered out-of-date. These include:#

- Where a local planning authority cannot demonstrate a five year supply of deliverable housing sites (with appropriate buffer) or:
- Where the Housing Delivery Test Measurement indicates that the delivery of housing was substantially below (less than 75% of) the housing required over the previous three years

- 11.6. In accordance with the NPPF, the council produces an annual update of housing delivery and housing land supply. The council's most recent Housing Monitoring Update (base date 31 March 2024) was published in April 2025. The published report identifies a deliverable five year housing land supply of 10,011 dwellings which equates to a 3.8 year supply measured against the five year local housing need figure of 13,015 dwellings.
- 11.7. The 2023 Housing Delivery Test Result was published by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities on the 12 December 2024 and this confirms a Housing Delivery Test Result of 262%. Housing delivery over the past three years (7,392 dwellings) has exceeded the number of homes required (2,820). The publication of the HDT result affirms that the appropriate buffer to be applied to the calculation of housing land supply in Cheshire East is 5%.
- 11.8. In the context of five-year housing land supply, relevant policies concerning the supply of housing should be considered out-of-date and consequently the 'tilted balance' at paragraph 11 of the NPPF is engaged.
- 11.9. Please note that paragraph 11d) has been revised, particularly 11d) ii. which highlights the need have particular regard to key policies for directing development to sustainable locations, making effective use of land, securing well-designed places and providing affordable homes, individually or in combination.

Loss of Employment Use

- 11.10. The proposal whilst not an allocated employment site, would result in the loss of an existing employment use. Therefore, application needs to be assessed against Policy EG3 (Existing and Allocated Employment Sites) which advises:
1. *Existing employment sites will be protected for employment use unless:*
 - i. *Premises are causing significant nuisance or environmental problems that could not be mitigated; or*
 - ii. *The site is no longer suitable or viable for employment use; and*
 - a. *There is no potential for modernisation or alternate employment uses; and*
 - b. *No other occupiers can be found (need evidence of being marketed at a realistic price reflecting its employment status for a period of not less than 2 years)*
 2. *Where it can be demonstrated that there is a case for alternative development on existing employment sites, these will be expected to meet sustainable development objectives as set out in Policies MP 1, SD 1 and SD 2 of the Local Plan Strategy. All opportunities must be explored to incorporate an element of employment development as part of a mixed-use scheme.*
- 11.11. In terms of criterion 1, the supporting statement advises that the premises were widely marketed by Fisher German for a period of approximately twelve months. The statement further advises that during this time that there were no enquiries in relation to the premises for an employment re-use.
- 11.12. The statement acknowledges that Policy EG3 requires a marketing period of no less than 2 years; however, it sets out the difficulties in keeping the vacant premises safe and secure.

11.13. During the course of the application the case officer was able to visit the site on two separate occasions, an external site visit and a further accompanied viewing of Bevan House. Between visits it was apparent that the vacant listed building was being subject to vandalism, with recent activity being viewed during the second site visit and further reports following the visit.

11.14. Given the premises are being subjected to vandalism, Bevan House's Grade II status and no reasonable prospect for re-use coming forward in a 12-month period, it is considered that the current premises situation is not ideal and suggest that the site is no longer suitable for employment use.

Affordable Housing

11.15. Policy SC5 advises in developments of 15 or more dwellings (or 0.4 hectares) in the Principal Towns and Key Service Centres at least 30% of all units are to be affordable.

11.16. Ordinarily to comply with Policy SC5 the proposal would require 9 affordable units.

11.17. However, Para 65 of the NPPF advises that to support the re-use of brownfield land, where vacant buildings are being reused or redeveloped, any affordable housing contribution due should be reduced by a proportionate amount. Proportionate amount is defined in footnote 30 as equivalent to the existing gross floorspace of the existing buildings. This does not apply to vacant buildings which have been abandoned.

11.18. The Councils Housing Supplementary Planning Document follows the NPPF approach and advises that one way of calculating Vacant Building Credit (VBC), could be to use the following formula:

– (net change in floorspace / proposed floorspace) x affordable housing policy requirement

11.19. In this case no external extension or alterations are proposed, as such there would be no net change in floorspace. Therefore, based on the VBC, there is no requirement for affordable housing provision on this site.

Education

11.20. In this instance the proposal is for 31 one-bedroom dwellings, as such Children's Services would not require any contribution.

Health

11.21. The South Cheshire Commissioning Group (SCCG) has devolved powers to act on behalf of the NHS. Following consultation, the SCCG have no comments and have not requested any contributions.

Open Space

11.22. Policy SE6 requires major developments (10 or more) to provide open space in line with Table 13.1 and SC2 including but not limited to amenity open space, active recreation and play. Where possible, POS will have a multifunctional role, providing places for all types of activity including active pursuits, relaxation, community events, formal and informal play, food growth and dog-off leash areas. It should be accessible, flexible and be capable of changing to accommodate the communities needs as it settles and matures.

- 11.23. The supporting planning statement advises that *“there is a generous level of communal open space within the application grounds to serve the apartments and within walking distance the open space and sports facilities of the Barony Park are available for resident to enjoy”*.
- 11.24. Whilst the existing scenario is noted the Council's Open Space Officer has advised that communal open space is not a requirement under Policy SE6. Instead, SE6 mandates that all major developments (10 or more dwellings) must contribute to public open space that benefits both new and existing communities, thereby supporting the wider green infrastructure network.
- 11.25. Offsite contributions for POS are £2,422.18 per bed space in apartment. Offsite contributions for GI Connectivity are £302.77 per bed space in apartments. Finally offsite contributions for Food Growth are £151.39 per bed space in apartments.
- 11.26. As a result, the Councils Public Open Space Officers raises no objection to the proposal, subject to the securing of offsite contributions; however, the viability of delivering the requested contributions is addressed below.

Viability

- 11.27. A viability report was provided with the application suggesting that the scheme was unable to deliver any of the policy required contributions (affordable housing or other financial contributions).
- 11.28. This was independently reviewed by Keppie Massey who concluded that the scheme was not sufficiently viable to support the required planning obligations.
- 11.29. The application proposals were tested from a market rented and private rented perspective.
- 11.30. In terms of a market rented perspective, the appraisal concluded that the proposals appeared to be more viable than suggested than that of the applicants Financial Viability Assessment. Notwithstanding the independent appraisal demonstrated that with the S106 contributions included the application proposals are not sufficiently viable to support the required planning obligations.
- 11.31. From a private rented perspective, the same methodology as the Market Sale appraisal was utilised. The independent appraisal indicated that a private rented scheme is not as viable as a market sale development. As such it is also unable to support the planning contributions
- 11.32. As such the given the re-use of the buildings, including that of the Grade II listed Bevan House due to the total developer costs it would not be viable if the applicant was required to pay the contribution.

Housing Mix

- 11.33. Policy SC4 advises that new residential development should maintain, provide or contribute to a mix of housing tenures, types and sizes to help support the creation of mixed, balanced and inclusive communities.
- 11.34. Policy HOU1 In line with LPS Policy SC 4 'Residential mix', housing developments should deliver a range and mix of house types, sizes and tenures, which are spread

throughout the site and that reflect and respond to identified housing needs and demand. In particular it suggests a recommended mix below as a starting point.

	Market housing	Intermediate housing	Affordable housing for rent
1 bedroom	5%	14%	26%
2 bedroom	23%	53%	42%
3 bedroom	53%	28%	20%
4 bedroom	15%	4%	10%
5+ bedroom	3%	1%	3%

11.35. The proposal seeks the following mix:

- 31 x one-bedroom apartments

11.36. As can be seen from the table above the mix would not be provided as per the recommendation in Policy HOU1. However, the text makes it clear that this is to be used as a starting point only and is not a ridged standard.

11.37. The aim of this policy appears to provide a mix of all housing tenure and bedroom units to suit the needs of all and not to be dominated by larger 4 plus bedroom properties. Whilst it would only provide 1-bedroom properties, it would go towards helping the Council achieve its 5 year housing land supply target and a type of housing that is needed.

11.38. As such this mix of housing would provide opportunity for all and thus is deemed to be acceptable.

Space Standards

11.39. In terms of dwelling sizes, it is noted that HOU8 of the SADPD requires that new housing developments comply with the Nationally Described Space Standards (NDSS).

Table 1. Minimum gross internal floor areas and storage (m²)

Number of bedrooms (b)	Number of bed spaces (persons)	1 storey dwellings	2 storey dwellings	3 storey dwellings	Built-in storage
1b	1p	39 (37) *			1.0
1b	2p	50	58		1.5

*Please note that where a 1b1p has a shower room instead of a bathroom, the floor area may be reduced from 39sqm to 37sqm, as shown bracketed.

11.40. The proposal provides:

- 17 one-bedroom apartments with 2 bedspaces
- 14 one-bedroom apartments with 1 bedspace

11.41. As such the one-bedroom apartments with 2 bedspaces requires 50sqm, whilst the one-bedroom apartments with 1 bedspace required 39sqm (37sqm)*.

11.42. The smallest unit with 2 bed spaces provides 54.20sqm, while the smallest unit with 1 bed unit with a shower provides 37.00sqm*. As such the proposals would meet the Nationally Described Space Standards (NDSS).

11.43. Policy HOU8 also requires for major developments that at least:

- a. 30% of dwellings in housing developments should comply with requirement M4 (2) Category 2 of the Building Regulations regarding accessible and adaptable dwellings; and
- b. at least 6% of dwellings in housing developments should comply with requirement M4 (3)(2)(a) Category 3 of the Building Regulations regarding wheelchair adaptable dwellings.

11.44. Criterion 2 of Policy HOU 8 advises that *'the standards set out in Criterion 1 will apply unless site specific factors indicate that step-free access cannot be achieved or is not viable.'*

11.45. Furthermore, the explanatory text outlines that *'the implementation of accessibility and wheelchair standards will take account of site-specific factors such as vulnerability to flooding, site topography and other factors. Where it is clearly demonstrated that step-free access cannot be achieved or is not viable, neither of the optional requirements in the policy will apply.'*

11.46. As noted above Bevan House is a Grade II listed building, with John Snow House within the existing curtilage of Bevan House. Given the specific historical nature of the buildings and existing limitations to the alter the buildings historic fabric it is considered that the imposing of an optional condition would be impractical.

11.47. Notwithstanding the above, the proposals put forward would create 16 units at a ground floor level to aid in accessibility.

Location of the Site

11.48. Policy SD1 states that wherever possible development should be accessible by public transport, walking and cycling (point 6) and that development should prioritise the most accessible and sustainable locations (point 17). The justification to Policy SD2 then provides suggested distances to services and amenities.

11.49. In this case the site is located within the settlement boundary for Nantwich and is served by a range local facilities within walking distance of the site, including shops and bus services located approx. 200m away to the north east and east. As such the site is considered to comply with sustainability Policies SD1 and SD2.

Residential Amenity

11.50. With regards to neighbouring amenity, Policy HOU12 advises development proposals must not cause unacceptable harm to the amenities of adjoining or nearby occupiers of

residential properties, sensitive uses, or future occupiers of the proposed development due to:

1. loss of privacy;
2. loss of sunlight and daylight;
3. the overbearing and dominating effect of new buildings;
4. environmental disturbance or pollution; or
5. traffic generation, access and parking.

11.51. Policy HOU13 sets standards for spacing between windows of 18m between front elevations, 21m between rear elevations or 14m between habitable to non-habitable rooms for 1 or 2 storeys. For 3 storeys the standard is increased to 20m between front elevations, 24m between rear elevations or 16.5m between habitable to non-habitable rooms. For differences in land levels, it suggests an additional 2.5m for levels exceed 2m.

11.52. The main residential properties affected by this development are off Meadowvale Close to the north and Barony Court to the south and west.

11.53. Regarding the residential properties along Meadowvale Close an existing separation distance in excess of 30 meters would be maintained.

11.54. In terms of the dwellings to the south an existing separation distance of 18 meters would remain between John Snow House and the dwellings which front Barony Court.

11.55. St Catherine's Nursing Home is located to the west of the site, in addition to an existing block of residential units. Due to the relationship between the existing buildings, it is not considered there would be any significant impact to the existing block of residential units.

11.56. Returning to St Catherine's Nursing Home, a separation distance of approx. 22 meters would be maintained between the residential care home and Bevan House. It is not considered that the retained separation distance would prevent any significant harm to living conditions from overbearing, overshadowing or loss of privacy. In addition, there is also an existing level of screening.

11.57. Concerning the relationship between Bevan House and John Snow House a separation distance of 24 meters would be maintained. This distance would achieve the required interface distances between properties which would prevent any significant harm to living conditions.

11.58. Some noise disturbance may occur from use of the site and from the coming and going of cars, however given the existing use of the site as a NHS administration site, which would also have resulted in noise and disturbance from the use and deliveries, staff movements etc it is not considered that the proposal would result in any significant noise intensification over and above that from the existing use.

Future Amenity

11.59. Policy HOU13 does not set an expected size of garden area but advises proposals for dwellings houses shall include an appropriate quantity and quality of outdoor private amenity space, having regard to the type and size of the proposed development.

11.60. The apartments do not have private gardens, but all have access to a shared area of open space within the site. Therefore, future residents could use these areas for outdoor activities and it is considered that a suitable private amenity area has been provided.

Contaminated Land

- 11.61. As the application is for new residential properties which are a sensitive end use and could be affected by any unforeseen contamination present, as such a contaminated land condition will be attached to the decision notice of any approval.

Highways

- 11.62. The site is within the settlement boundary of Nantwich with established pedestrian links to the wider area including to the nearby retail shops and bus stops, both of which are only a few minutes' walk from the site.
- 11.63. Currently the main access to the site is taken from Barony Court and it is proposed that the site would continue to utilise the established access serving the vacant NHS premises.
- 11.64. Due to the existing nature of the site, which was recently used for NHS administration there is an existing provision of off-street parking provided within the site, which provides vehicle movement.
- 11.65. The proposed off-street parking provision within the site would comprise of 46 spaces, in addition to 32 cycle parking. The proposed car and cycle parking would exceed the minimum requirements of 31 car parking and cycle bays per 1 bedroom unit proposals for 31 one-bedroom units.
- 11.66. Following consultation with the Head of Strategic Transport given the existing level of parking, access and fallback use the proposed change of use will have a negligible highways impact. As such no objection is raised.
- 11.67. The proposal is therefore considered to comply with Policy SD1 & CO2 of the CELPS, INF3 of the SADPD.

Trees

- 11.68. Policy SE5 advises that proposals should look to retain existing trees/hedgerows that provide a significant contribution to the area and where lost replacements shall be provided. Policy ENV 6 advises that development proposals should seek to retain and protect trees, woodlands and hedgerows.
- 11.69. As noted previously trees along the northwest boundary of the site and within the grassed area between Bevan House and John Snow House are protected by the Crewe and Nantwich Borough Council (Barony Meadows, Nantwich) Tree Preservation Order 1995 and (Barony Hospital and All Saints Cemetery, Nantwich) Tree Preservation Order 1974.
- 11.70. Following consultation with the Council's Arboriculture/Forestry Officer it is advised that due to the internal nature of the proposed works, location of the proposed cycle shelters and surface water soak away within an existing area of hardstanding, it is not considered the proposals would have a have a significant impact on adjacent trees.
- 11.71. Initial concerns; however, were raised in relation to the storage of materials. Following comments a proposed tree protection scheme was submitted and accepted by the Council's Arboriculture/Forestry Officer. As such the tree protection scheme could be conditioned if planning permission was granted.

- 11.72. Therefore, it is not considered to be significantly harmful to the character/appearance of the area, and the proposal complies with Policy SE5 of the CELPS and ENV 6 of the SADPD.

Design

- 11.73. Policy SE1 advises that development proposals should make a positive contribution to their surroundings in terms of the creating a sense of place, managing design quality, sustainable urban, architectural and landscape design, live and workability and designing in safety. The Cheshire East Design Guide Volumes 1 and 2 give more specific design guidance.
- 11.74. Policy GEN1 of the SADPD relates to Design principles. Criterion 1 requires that development proposals should create high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places avoiding the imposition of standardised and/or generic designs. Whilst criterion 9 details that developments should be accessible and inclusive for all.
- 11.75. The proposals comprise of the conversion of the existing offices to residential apartments, in addition to the provision of cycle storage, bin storage.

External Alterations

- 11.76. In terms of the existing buildings no external alterations to either building is proposed, the works to the buildings would be limited to internal alterations to form the apartments.

Cycle and Bin Storage

- 11.77. The existing site contains an area for the storage of bins. The proposals seek to retain the bin storage area for use of the apartments.
- 11.78. The three proposed cycle shelters would be of a lightweight timber framed design with metal supports and a toast rack cycle stand. The proposed stands would be located within the existing hardstanding serving as off-street parking.
- 11.79. The proposed cycle stand raise no issues from a design perspective.
- 11.80. As such, subject to conditions, the proposal is considered to comply with Policies SD1, SD2 and SE1 of the CELPS, GEN1 of the SADPD

Heritage

- 11.81. The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 states at Section 16(2) that *'in considering whether to grant listed building consent for any works the local planning authority or the Secretary of State shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses'*.
- 11.82. CELPS policy SE7 states that all new development should seek to avoid harm to heritage assets. It states that where development would cause harm to, or loss of, a designated heritage asset and its significance, including its setting, clear and convincing justification will be required as to why that harm is considered acceptable. Where that case cannot be demonstrated, it states that proposals will not be supported. It also requires a consideration of the level of harm in relation to the public benefits that may be gained by the proposal.

- 11.83. SADPD Policy HER4 states that where a proposal would lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a listed building, the harm will be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including securing its optimum viable alternative use. The council will normally support proposals for the change of use or conversion of a listed building where the use secured is consistent with the preservation of its heritage significance.
- 11.84. The proposals include a number of internal works to the existing Grade II listed Bevan House, however as noted there would be no external alterations to John Snow House as to impact the setting of the adjacent Grade II listed building.
- 11.85. The Council's Heritage officer has been consulted in addition to the Georgian Group. In response to concerns raised during the course of the application amended plans were received. The amended plans sought to retain more of the internal plan form and to preserve the majority of the identified historic features.
- 11.86. Following the submission of amended plans initial concerns from the Georgian Group were withdrawn.
- 11.87. The Council's Heritage officer initially identified a high level of significance associated with the building's internal layout and features. However, following a site visit, additional assessment of the historical features by the applicant and consulting with the Georgian Group this position was revised. It is now considered that much of the internal fabric (walls, fixtures, and fittings) is of a more modern character than previously understood.
- 11.88. The Council's Heritage officer notes that the amended plans provide an improvement to the original submission; however, it is considered that the scheme still involves a significant level of internal alteration, including the removal of potentially historic fabric.
- 11.89. The concerns relating to historic fabric involve the level of retention and removal of sections of door and window architraves, ceiling beams, cornice's dado rails, and doors as indicated on the proposed plans.
- 11.90. The Council's Heritage officer considered the proposals to constitute less than substantial harm at the moderate end of the spectrum. In accordance with paragraph 215 where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.
- 11.91. In this instance it is considered that a number of public benefits exists in the form of new open market housing and securing a long-term viable use for a vacant listed building at risk.
- 11.92. With regard to the economic role, the proposed development will help to provide new housing with indirect economic benefits including additional trade for local shops and businesses, jobs in construction and economic benefits to the construction industry supply chain.
- 11.93. Taking the above into account, it is considered that the public benefits outweigh the less than substantial harm (moderate) caused to Bevan House. As such the proposal complies with Policies SE7, HER3, HER4 and the NPPF.

Ecology

Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)

- 11.94. Following consultation with the Council's Ecologist, they have advised that the works meet the de-minimis BNG exemption. Therefore, the deemed biodiversity gain condition does not apply, and a biodiversity metric is not considered necessary in this instance.

Breeding Birds

- 11.95. The existing buildings and boundary vegetation including mature trees and dense shrubs have the potential to support nesting birds, which are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.
- 11.96. No external building works to Bevan House or John Snow House are proposed, additionally no tree or hedgerow clearance is proposed. It is therefore advised that it is unlikely that works will damage or destroy the nest of any wild birds.

Bats

- 11.97. The application is supported by a Bat Scoping Survey Report. The report concludes that Bevan House and John Snow House have negligible potential to support roosting bats. As such bats should not present a constraint on the proposed development and no further surveys regarding bats are considered necessary.

Ecological Enhancements

- 11.98. The site falls within Cheshire East Council's ecological network core and restoration areas, which forms part of the SADPD. Therefore, ecological enhancements condition is recommended by the Council's Ecologist, in line with ENV 1 and the NPPF.
- 11.99. The above suggested conditions are considered reasonable and necessary and as such can be added to any decision notice.
- 11.100. Therefore, the proposal complies with Policy SE3 of the CELPS, ENV1, ENV2 of the SADPD.

Flood Risk

- 11.101. The application site is located within Flood Zone 1 according to the Environment Agency Flood Maps and the site area is not over 1 hectare so does not require a Flood Risk Assessment.
- 11.102. The Council's Flood Risk Team were initially consulted and raised no objection subject to conditions. During the course of the application additional information in the form of a drainage design/ strategy was provided.
- 11.103. The additional information provided was reviewed by the LLFA and no objection was raised, subject to compliance with the drainage strategy, which could be secured via condition.
- 11.104. Therefore, it would appear that any flood risk/drainage issues, could be suitably addressed via a planning condition and as such the proposal complies with Policy SE13 of the CELPS & ENV 16 of the SADPD.

Landscaping

- 11.105. Given the limited area of development within the existing landscaped site, with no alterations proposed between the existing and proposed site layout in regards to landscaping, it would not be reasonable in this instance to request further landscaping details.

12. PLANNING BALANCE/CONCLUSION

- 12.1. The site lies within the settlement boundary for Nantwich and the principle of residential development on the site is acceptable. The development complies with Policies PG2 of the CELPS and PG9 of the SADPD.
- 12.2. The proposal would result in the loss of the existing employment use; however the existing premises has not appeared to have generated any market interest for re-use for employment. However, the vacant building has been the subject of recent vandalism/anti-social behaviour.
- 12.3. The Councils Built Heritage Officer is of the view that the proposal would result in less than substantial harm, at the moderate end of the spectrum, due to the removal of internal features/fabric of the Grade II Listed Bevan House. Whilst the Georgian Group have advised that they have no objection following the submission of amended plans.
- 12.4. The proposal would result in the creation of 31 net additional dwelling which would go some way to help the Council achieve its 5-year housing land supply target.
- 12.5. The proposed development will have indirect economic benefits including additional trade for local shops and businesses, jobs in construction and economic benefits to the construction industry supply chain.
- 12.6. The proposal would result in the re-use of previously developed land and existing heritage asset in a locationally sustainable location and complies with Policies SD1 and SD2 of the CELPS.
- 12.7. There would be a neutral impact upon trees, residential amenity, ecology, flood risk/drainage and highways.
- 12.8. The public benefits are considered to outweigh the less than substantial harm and there are no material considerations in this case that indicate that planning permission should be refused.

13. RECOMMENDATION

APPROVE subject to the following conditions:

- 1. 3 year time limit**
- 2. Development in accordance with the approved plans**
- 3. Materials as Submitted**
- 4. Compliance with Drainage Strategy Plan**
- 5. Contaminated land – no exportation of soils**
- 6. Contaminated land – unexpected contamination**
- 7. Compliance with the tree protection measures**
- 8. Ecological Enhancements**
- 9. Cycle parking provision prior to first occupation**

In the event of any changes being needed to the wording of the Committee's decision (such as to delete, vary or add conditions / informatives / planning obligations or reasons for approval/refusal) prior to the decision being issued, the Head of Planning has delegated authority to do so in consultation with the Chair of the Southern Planning Committee, provided that the changes do not exceed the substantive nature of the Committee's decision.

