

DELEGATED FILE NOTE

CASE OFFICER: ...William Thompson.....

APPLICATION REFERENCE	BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT	APPLICATION SITE
25/02526/FP	Erection of one dwelling following demolition of existing outbuilding including cycle storage, parking and creation of vehicular access off Ryder Avenue.	17 Bedford Road Ickleford Hitchin Hertfordshire SG5 3XH

Submitted Plan Nos

RSD-24-18-PO1 RSD-24-18-PO2 RSD-24-18-PO3

D1	Sustainable design
D3	Protecting living conditions
T1	Assessment of transport matters
T2	Parking
SP9	Design and Sustainability
SECN12	Achieving well-designed places
SECN14	Meeting climate change,coastal,flooding
SP2	Settlement Hierarchy and Spatial Distrib
NE4	Biodiversity and geological sites

2.0 **Site History**

2.1 None relevant

3.0 **Representations**

3.1 **Neighbour consultations** – None received.

3.2 **Ickleford Parish Council** – None received

3.3 **NHC Ecology** – None received

3.4 **HCC Highways** – Objection

The Highway Authority is currently unable to support the application due to insufficient information. While the principle of a single residential dwelling accessed from Ryder Avenue may be acceptable, the following concerns must be addressed before a recommendation can be made:

1. Visibility Concerns

- No visibility splays have been provided at the proposed access point.*
- An existing tree near the access appears to obstruct visibility to the east, raising safety concerns for both vehicles and pedestrians.*

2. Access Design

- The type of access (e.g., vehicle crossover) has not been specified in the submitted drawings.*
- Detailed design of the proposed access off Ryder Avenue is required.*

3. Proximity to Existing Tree

- The proposed access is located too close to an existing tree, which is believed to be within the highway boundary.*
- There is a risk of damage to tree roots during construction.*
- The applicant is advised to consult with Hertfordshire County Council's Tree Officer and Dropped Kerb Team regarding the feasibility and impact of the proposed access.*

In the absence of the above information, the Highway Authority recommends refusal due to unresolved concerns over highway safety and convenience.

3.5 **NHC Environmental Health (Land Contamination/Noise/Air Quality)** – No objection to land contamination, noise, or air quality.

3.6 **HCC Waste & Recycling** – None received

4.0 **Planning Considerations**

4.1 **Site and Surroundings**

- 4.1.1 The site is within the settlement boundary of Ickleford and is located to the north of Ryder Avenue. The land presently forms the residential curtilage of the donor dwelling, 17 Bedford Road, and accommodates an outbuilding.
- 4.1.2 1no. vehicular access serves the donor dwelling. As the site is presently residential curtilage, there are no additional access points for the site from Ryder Avenue. The site is currently screened from the street view by close boarded timber fencing of approx. 2m in height.

4.2 **Proposal**

- 4.2.1 This application seeks full planning permission for the 'erection of one dwelling following demolition of existing outbuilding'. The proposal would include on-site cycle storage and parking provision, as well as the creation of vehicular access off Ryder Avenue.

4.3 **Key Issues**

- 4.3.1 The key issues for consideration are as follows:
- The acceptability of a new dwelling within the settlement boundary of Ickleford;
 - The acceptability of the design of the proposed development and its impact on the character and appearance of the area.
 - The impact of the proposed development on the living conditions of the donor dwelling and neighbouring properties;
 - Access and parking matters;
 - The impact of the proposed development on the environment, including Biodiversity Net Gain.

Principle for Development

- 4.3.2 The site is located within the settlement boundary of Ickleford. The NHLP outlines that Ickleford is a village under Policy SP2, wherein housing will be delivered within the settlement boundary, where approx. 13% of new housing will be located.
- 4.3.3 The provision of 1no. dwelling is therefore acceptable in principle, providing the proposal meets the requirements of Policy SD1 ('Development within the Settlement Boundary') of the Ickleford Neighbourhood Plan (INP).

Sustainability

- 4.3.4 Given the location's proximity to the amenities present in Ickleford, I consider the site to be a sustainable location that is unlikely to be solely reliant upon the use of a private vehicle for access to shops and other amenities. Public transport links are found a short walk from the site and provide links to the wider area. Social benefits would arise owing to the proposal introducing 1 no. dwelling within this windfall site, I consider that favourable weight should be assigned to this. Local contractors and businesses are likely to experience an uplift during construction and occupation, providing some economic benefits when occupied and in use. I consider that these benefits would be modest.

Design

- 4.3.5 Policies SP9 and D1 of the NHLP state the importance of sustainable development, and that new proposals should respond positively to local character. Policy SD3 of the INP contextualises these principles for Ickleford, requiring that proposals relate to the existing built form in density, scale, design and use of materials, with reference to the Ickleford Design Codes. These policies are supported by section 12 of the NPPF.
- 4.3.6 The proposal is for a single-storey, two-bedroom dwelling with a dual-pitched roof and a front (south) gable projection. The dwelling would be constructed of brick with a rough cast render finish, roof tiles to match local dwellings, black half round PVC rainwater goods, with uPVC windows and doors.
- 4.3.7 Ryder Avenue and Bedford Road are characterised by a consistent character of double-storey, semi-detached dwellings with gable projections. Dwellings are sited on plots with generous rear gardens. In turn, this creates a natural separation distance between dwellings.
- 4.3.8 While the scheme presented under this application is for a singular dwelling, the plot coverage would appear to be over-intensive and would result in overdevelopment of the site. The single-storey design of the dwelling would be incongruous with the existing built

form, given that the prevailing character is semi-detached, two-storey dwellings and would therefore erode the consistent character of Ryder Avenue and Bedford Road.

4.3.9 Policies D1 and NE8 of the NHLP, as well as Policy SD3 of the INP, require new development to provide sustainable drainage solutions which accord with the drainage hierarchy. Drainage details have not been provided as part of the application. Therefore, it cannot be demonstrated that sustainable drainage cannot be achieved on site.

4.3.10 Therefore, by reason of the proposed, layout, density, scale and design, the proposal is considered to be contrary to Policy D1 of the NHLP, Policy SD3 of the INP and paragraph 139 of the NPPF (2024).

Impact on Neighbours

4.3.11 A core planning principle set out in the NPPF is to always seek to secure a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings. This principle is reflected in the provisions of Policy D3 of the NHLP. Policy SD1 of the INP states that new residential development will be supported where the proposal does not adversely impact existing residential uses.

4.3.12 The main considerations in relation to neighbour amenity would be the impact of the proposed dwelling upon no.2 Ryder Avenue to the west, and no.17 Bedford Road (donor dwelling) to the east.

4.3.13 The proposal would be single-storey in nature. Therefore, it would be difficult to suggest that the proposed dwelling would overlook, or have any significant material overshadowing or overbearing impacts upon, neighbouring properties to the west and east. No neighbour representations in objection were received.

4.3.14 This development is therefore considered to be in accordance with Policy D3 of the NHLP.

Standard of Amenity for Future Occupiers

4.3.15 The proposed development would deliver approximately 62.45sqm of internal floorspace. According to nationally described space standards, this would be sufficient for a dwelling of this size for up to 3 persons. However, insufficient built in storage is shown on the floor plans. The dwelling would benefit from amenity space and is not considered to be harmed by the presence of neighbouring dwellings. Therefore, the internal standard of amenity for future occupiers is considered to be acceptable.

4.3.16 While the Council does not have policies or guidance setting minimum distances a dwelling should be from a rear garden boundary. Many newer developments have such distances of 10m or more, which is considered reasonable. Due to the shape of the plot, the rear elevation would be distanced a minimum of 4.3m, and a maximum of 6.2m, from the rear boundary. In comparison with neighbouring dwellings and the 10m precedent outlined above, this separation distance is considered to be unacceptable. Therefore, this proposal would be contrary to the provisions within Policy D1 of the NHLP.

Highways and Parking:

4.3.17 Policy T2 requires new residential development proposals to accord with the parking standards outlined by Appendix 4 of the NHLP: 2no. spaces are required for 2no. bedroom dwelling, including 1no. covered cycle space (where garage coverage is not provided). Policy MTT2 of the INP outlines support for off-road car parking provision.

4.3.18 The new dwelling proposes a parking area north of the proposed access, measuring approx. 5m in width and 5.8m in depth. The dimensions of the parking area may be sufficient to accommodate 2no. vehicles, but would not provide on-site turning area to allow vehicles to enter and exit in a forward gear.

4.3.19 Cycle parking is proposed to the north of the parking area, which accords with Policy T2 of the NHLP. Existing parking provision and access for no. 17 Bedford Road would not be affected.

4.3.20 The Local Highways Authority have raised concerns regarding the proposed access in relation to visibility, design, and proximity to an existing tree which is within the highway boundary. Further information on these issues has been requested from the agent but has not been provided. Therefore, safe access cannot be demonstrated for the proposal, which is contrary to Policies T1 and T2 of the NHLP.

Environmental Implications

4.3.21 The site is not known to have any historic contamination and is currently garden land. The Council's Environmental Health officer raises no objections in terms of contamination, noise, or air quality issues.

4.3.22 The application proposes to fulfil the 10% BNG requirement largely via off-site gains. It should be noted that off-site gains should be secured by a legal agreement.

Other Material Considerations

- 4.3.23 Bin storage and collection arrangements for the new dwellings have not been shown, however it's considered these could be satisfactorily integrated into the site and development.

4.4 **Conclusion and Planning Balance**

- 4.4.1 It is acknowledged that, at present, NHDC cannot demonstrate a 5 year housing land supply, so the provisions of paragraph 11(d) of the NPPF engage the tilted balance. Weighing favourably in the balance of considerations is the provision of a single dwelling on a windfall site. This is afforded moderate weight. It is concluded that the design, standard of amenity and the safety of the highway access point are not acceptable and would cause harm, to the local street scene, the amenity of future occupiers and the safe operation of the public highway. This is afforded significant weight.
- 4.4.2 These identified harms would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits of the delivery of housing on this site.
- 4.4.3 In the absence of material planning reasons to the contrary it is my view that planning permission is **REFUSED**.

4.5 **Alternative Options**

- 4.5.1 None.

4.6 **Pre-Commencement Conditions**

- 4.6.1 None.

5.0 **Recommendation**

5.1 That planning permission be **REFUSED** for the following reasons:

1. The plot coverage would appear to be over-intensive and would result in overdevelopment of the site. The single-storey design of the dwelling would be incongruous with the existing built form, given that the prevailing character is semi-detached, two-storey dwellings and would therefore erode the consistent character of Ryder Avenue and Bedford Road. Therefore, by reason of the proposed, layout, density, scale and design, the proposal is considered to be contrary to Policy D1 of the NHLP, Policy SD3 of the INP and paragraph 139 of the NPPF (2024).
2. The separation distance between the rear elevation of the dwelling and the rear boundary line is considered to be unacceptable, given precedent on the road. Therefore, this proposal would be contrary to the provisions within Policy D1 of the NHLP.
3. The Local Highways Authority have raised concerns regarding the proposed access in relation to visibility, design, and proximity to an existing tree which is within the highway boundary. Therefore, safe access cannot be demonstrated for the proposal, which is contrary to Policies T1 and T2 of the NHLP.

Proactive Statement:

Planning permission has been refused for this proposal for the clear reasons set out in this decision notice. The Council acted proactively through early engagement with the applicant at the pre-application stage. This positive advice has however been ignored and therefore the Council remains of the view that the proposal is unacceptable. Since the Council attempted to find solutions, the requirements of the Framework (paragraph 38) have been met and in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015.

Signed  Anne McDonald Determining Officer	Development Management North Hertfordshire District Council Council Offices Gernon Road Letchworth Herts SG6 3JF
Date: 10 December 2025	