

Planning Statement

Dated 24 February 2026

Mr and Mrs Bowden

Property formerly known as Wycherley Croft, now changed to Elysian Sky – Luffenhall, Stevenage, SG2 7PU.

This Planning Statement is in respect of a Retrospective Planning Application which we have been requested to make by Mr Thomas Howe of North Herts District Council in respect of the above property.

As background to this Retrospective Planning Application, I would detail the following:

We purchased the above property on 16 October 2025.

The property had been vacant for some time prior to my purchase and had deteriorated as a result of being left empty.

Planning approval was granted in 1981 application 81/00813/1 to extend the property, and these works had commenced. By virtue of this, the planning approval was now extant.

Having purchased the property, I commenced work with a view to completing the side extension and bringing the remainder of the property up to modern standards.

We instructed an Approved Building Inspector, Dunwoody Building Control, to monitor and approve these works as they progressed.

There is a short letter from Dunwoody Building Control confirming their appointment and that the continuation of the extension works, together with the remaining refurbishment works, commenced on this basis.

The extant approved extension progressed; however, upon further inspection of the partial works already undertaken, these were found not to be structurally acceptable or compliant with current Building Regulation standards.

Further exposure and detailed inspection of the original timber-framed house identified very substantial structural defects to the existing timber frame, together with other significant defects.

The existing foundations to the external walls were extremely poor, being a single-skin brick wall with mortar joints that had effectively deteriorated to sand. The damp-proof course at ground level was also non-existent.

The sole plate and the first one metre of the upright timbers to the external walls had deteriorated to such an extent that they were no longer capable of supporting the structure of the house.

Photographs are attached showing the extent of deterioration to the timbers that were removed.

The timber decay did not stop at the sole plate; many of the timber studs to the external walls had also significantly deteriorated for the first one metre or more in height.

The extent of this defect was not immediately apparent, as the existing property was plasterboarded internally and rendered externally.

The new foundations and external walls to the previously approved extension had progressed significantly by the time the extent of the defects to the main house structure had been identified.

As a result of these findings, a decision was made to remove the defective existing external structure and replace it with new foundations and modern external timber and block construction, meeting current Building Regulation standards.

Opening up the remaining existing external walls exposed the true extent of the significant deterioration to the structure, and it became apparent that this was the only viable course of action. It was clear that nothing could be saved, and this view was reinforced by the visiting Approved Building Inspector.

At no time was the whole building removed, and works had already progressed on the new external walls to the extent approved extension when the full extent of the condition of the existing house was identified.

There remain a substantial number of significant outbuildings, primarily used as garaging and storage buildings, it is intended that many of these will be retained, as they are of simple brick construction with mono-pitch roofs.

There will be some remedial works required, including the replacement of doors, windows, and roof coverings — including some roof timbers — but the structures and bases appear serviceable.

It is proposed that some of the adjacent smaller brick-built buildings will be refurbished and used as a plant store and for associated purposes relating to the main house.

The property benefits from an extremely large garden approaching close to one acre, with a paddock space extending to a further 1.4 acres to the rear, beyond the immediate garden.

I would strongly clarify that the buildings pre-existing footprint has remained in the exact same position and we have now added the 1981 approved side / rear extension.

All new works undertaken to date have been inspected and approved by Matthew Wheeler - Dunwoody Building Control Limited.

Site Photos of the pre-existing property.



