

N.H.C.

19 MAR 2026

NORTHGATE

Design and Access Statement

For

Proposed 4-Bed Self-Build House.

at

Land North of

Gosmore End House,

Hitchin Road,

Gosmore,

Hertfordshire.

SG4 7QH

March 2026

Introduction

This Design & Access statement has been prepared to accompany a planning application for a new residential development, consisting of a single 4-bed dwelling to be Self-Built alongside an existing detached double garage.

We will set out the design rationale for the proposal and also the planning context for the application including details of the existing access driveway utilising the hard standing/parking.

The small site is located at the western edge of the village with access off Hitchin Road, Gosmore, SG4 7QH, being part of the existing curtilage of Gosmore End House.

The site is located within the “village envelope” of Gosmore in the recently adopted North Herts Council Local plan 2011 - 2031, as well as within the Gosmore Conservation Area.

The Proposals

Use, Amount and Mix

The proposal use is C3 residential.

A new house is proposed with four upstairs bedrooms.

Because of the configuration of the site, and with the need for all habitable rooms to face predominantly East and West, this design was considered most suitable. There is a marked shortage of available new property of this type in the village.

Furthermore, when writing in support of application 18/03348/FP (erection of 3 new executive detached dwellings at Vine Cottage, Maydencroft Lane) the former occupier of Holly Tree Cottage, High Street, Gosmore had written:- “ *this proposed development is entirely sympathetic to the local area and will complement the village housing as it stands at the moment. There will be a negligible impact on Maydencroft Lane by way of traffic and “once built” the new properties will bring in additional trade for our vibrant local public house(s) as well as other local amenities. The footprint of the proposed development does not have any apparent negative impact environmentally, and bearing in mind recent developments in the immediate area which have been received positively, and indeed other small-scale developments due to start soon, this proposal can only be viewed as an ideal, discreet and appropriate development for the vicinity*”.

Layout

The layout for the scheme is as advised by the architect. The existing accesses off Hitchin Road are to be retained.

Impact on neighbour's amenity

One new 4-bed house has been very carefully arranged so as to ensure no overlooking or loss of privacy for the only adjoining properties.

As can be seen from the accompanying Heritage Statement, the only residential properties which could be affected in any way by the development, is LetterBox Row. The design proposal therefore is for the East elevation to be positioned 24M away from the nearest neighbour. An established hedge remains between the proposed properties. Gosmore End House itself is far enough away, and only the frosted bathroom and secondary bed-1 windows upstairs (facing South towards the Gosmore End House) could affect the neighbour, and even then only very slightly.

The principal living rooms for Birch Cottage and LetterBox Row all face away from the site, East & North. More recently, numbers 1-9 LetterBox Row (all nine) have added second upstairs bedrooms; but all nine new bedrooms face south, again not directly overlooking the application site.

The only other property affected is the new enormous new care home, by Barchester Healthcare. Given that Barchester Healthcare have also designed their new nursing home with a smaller distance (18M) between their new first floor windows of the new care home and the first floor windows of the neighbouring Gosmore End House. The new design has specifically ensured that with no upstairs windows in either North or South elevation, all habitable rooms only face directly West over adjoining countryside; and East to the rear, protected by the existing hedges. This to ensure no overlooking of any adjoining property; thus no harm to any privacy, nor any harm caused to any living conditions of any neighbours.

The new 4-bed dwelling will have shared access for pedestrians to the rear and enjoy their own private rear East facing garden.

Scale, character and appearance

The new 4-bed dwelling is to be formed in a traditional pallet of materials combining York Handmade Multi Facing Bricks (Olde Clamp Blend Mixture) with clay plain roof tiles; squint bricks, and quoins, with plinth bricks to provide interest, along with stone & cill detailing.

Landscape and amenity space.

Simple landscaping is shown indicatively on the site plan. No trees are to be removed and on completion, further yew hedges will be added in between the two properties.

New trees and planting will also be provided around the perimeter in order to improve the green character. The new home is provided with adequate gardens in modern terms with plenty of space for amenity plus garden storage within, & above the parking lofts. A net gain in terms of biodiversity (BNG) will be achieved through soft landscaping, even though as a Self-Build, there is no such specific requirement.

Refuse storage is accommodated along the front and side of the new house in a discreet location. In Accordance with BS5906:2005, a pull distance of less than 15M to the kerb, easy passage width of over 1 metre, and a gradient of less than 1:12 will be achieved. The design has ensured residents will be able to take their waste & recycling to the bin storage area in less than 30 meters, and less than 25 meters to the collection point.

Cycle storage is achieved within the existing store and existing double garage.

Sustainability

The definition of sustainability is set out in paragraph 7 of the NPPF.

Set out below are the three 'dimensions' to sustainable development and how this scheme addresses each one:

- **An economic role** – contributing to building a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right type is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth and innovation; and by identifying and coordinating development requirements, including the provision of infrastructure by creating jobs through the construction process, and new high quality homes once finished. The emerging Local Plan identifies Gosmore as a Category “A” village, suitable for development in the form of infilling spaces within the existing village.
- **A social role** – supporting strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by providing the supply of new housing required to meet the needs of both present and future generations; and by creating a high quality built environment, with accessible local services that reflect the community’s needs and support its health, social and cultural well-being.
- **An environmental role** – contributing to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; and, as part of this, helping to improve biodiversity, better use of natural resources, efficient use of land, minimise waste and pollution, and mitigate and adapt to climate change including moving to a low carbon economy.

The new 4-bed home will be built to exceed current building regulations, which sets minimum standards for the thermal performance of the buildings, water use and other environmental factors.

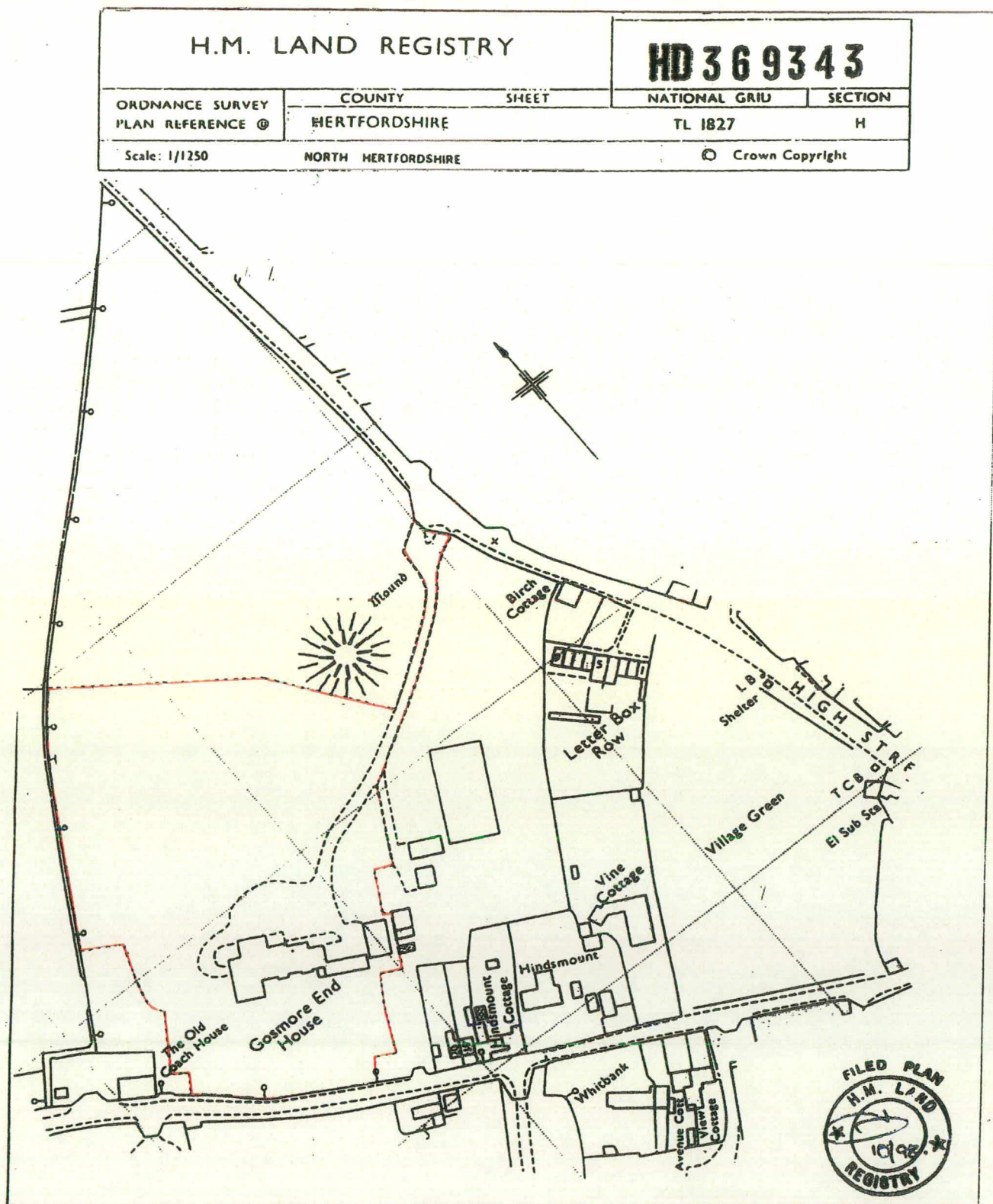
Vehicle Charging.

It is proposed to provide for charging points to each dwelling/garage to enable the charging of electric vehicles. These are already provided within the existing double garage. Furthermore, within these open parking area, electricity provision for charging of e-bikes etc will also be available.

Access and Highways.

The site all with Gosmore End House, is held under H M Land Registry Title Number:- **HD 223325.**

Out of this entire Gosmore End House curtilage, part was transferred on 21 December 1990 with new Title Number:- **HD369343**, having been sold with Gosmore End Nursing Home to Combined Nursing and Care PLC.



This is a print of the view of the title plan obtained through Land Registry Direct showing the state of the title plan on 30 NOV 2004 at 17:06:05. It may not be to the scale shown on the title plan.
This title is dealt with by the Stevenage District I and Registry.

Subsequent owners, (i) Rose Court Nursing Ltd; (ii) Healthcare, Holdings Ltd, followed by (iii) Fourseasons Healthcare Ltd (now in administration); Gosmore End Nursing Home was ultimately acquired by Barchester Propco Hellens Limited, only a few years ago - as advised by Eversheds LLP.

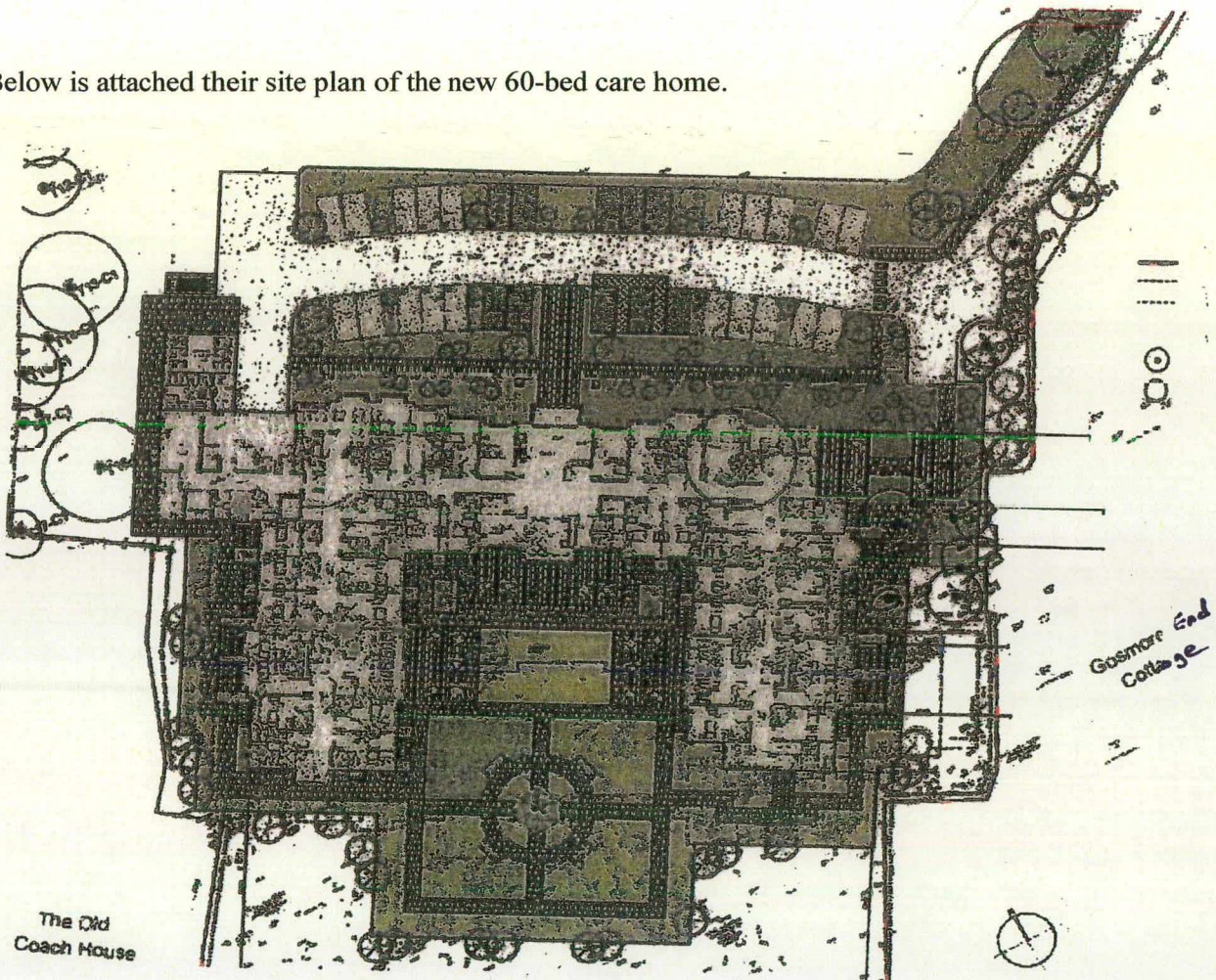
Whilst the original 1990 transfer had included the ownership of most of the access driveway, nevertheless, subject to retained contractual rights as follows:

AND RESERVING to the Transferor and its successors in title the owners and occupiers of the land [Gosmore End House] in the above title [HD223325] retained by the Transferor ("the retained land") for the benefit of the retained land a right of way at all times and for all purposes on foot or with cars and light vans not exceeding Ten Hundredweight or with site vehicles and service vehicles to pass and re-pass over and along the driveway shown coloured purple on plan A for access to and egress from the retained land

Note* These rights are limited only to retained land as at 21 December 1990, but can never be for any additional access to any other land, which would amount to intensification.

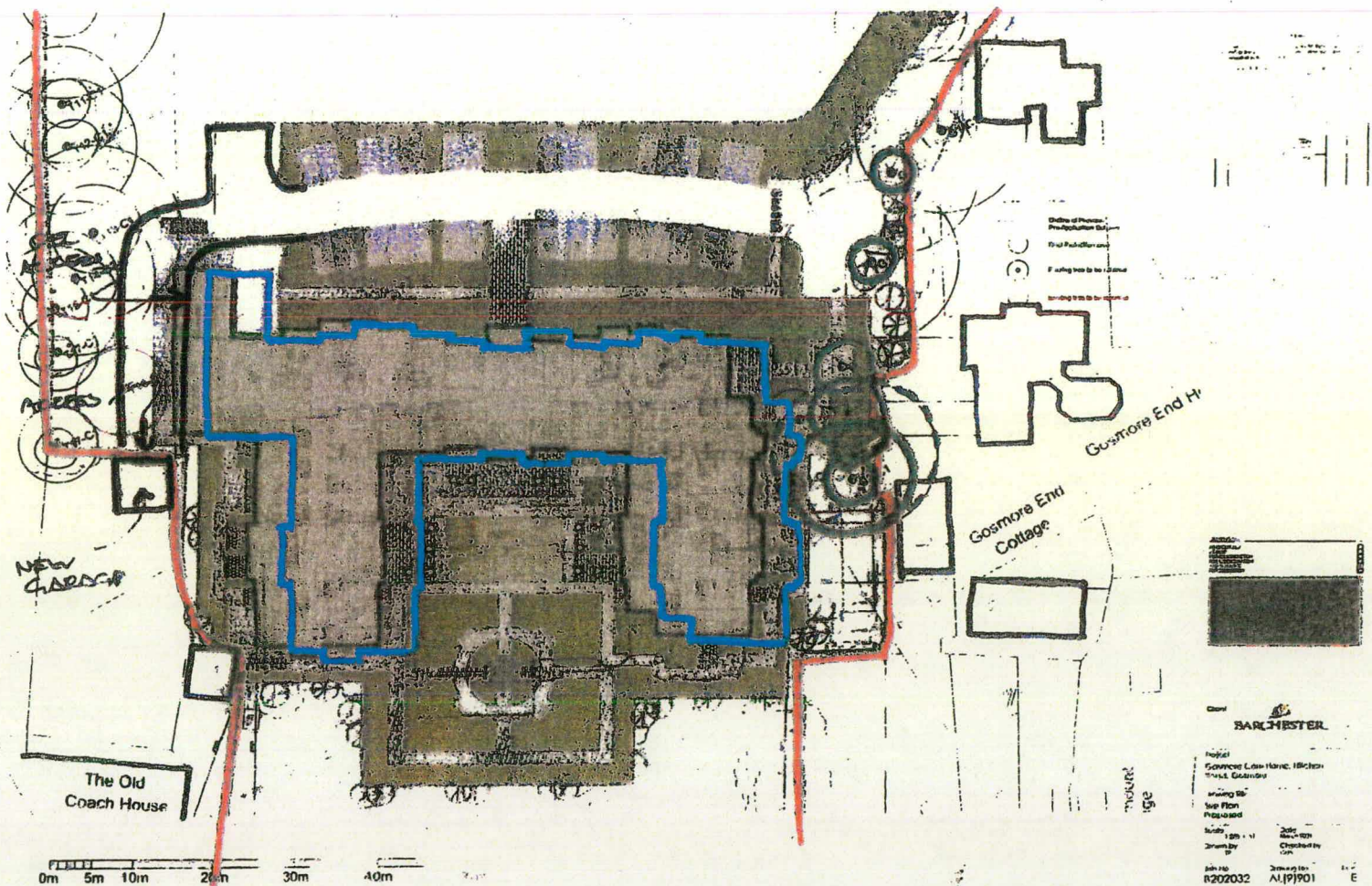
During 2021, Barchester Healthcare informed the owners of Gosmore End House, they were intending to apply for planning permission to demolish Gosmore End Nursing Home and build a brand new 60-bedroom care home, - (Iris Court) in its place.

Below is attached their site plan of the new 60-bed care home.



As is shown, following Barchester's initial design proposal to build the replacement care home right over the main access driveway but with only a new shortened shared driveway to the North; subsequent negotiations had resulted in the improved care home being repositioned, approximately 5M further East, nearer to my Gosmore End House which Barchester's Architects (TDC Architect Design) had redesigned before submitting planning application, reference 21/01734/FP, utilising the shared driveway.

(See also the final approved site plan below on NHC's website).



As the existing vehicular access will remain unaltered, the adequate existing visibility does not raise any concerns.

Parking.

A total of six parking spaces are provided on site, two spaces individually within the existing double garage bays. There is plenty of additional space for cycle parking, and other storage for the new dwelling is available. Space in front of the existing double garage is available for visitors.

Cycles

Cycles will be stored in the existing double garage, which is sized with plenty of space so that two car as well as other storage can be accommodated.

Refuse and recycling. (& see above)

It is proposed that refuse and recycling bins will be stored on the paths outside most of the time. These will then be collected from the roadside, adjacent to the front entrance along Hitchin Road in front of the existing brick planters, for various bins to be left out on collection day. This is located at the kerbside.

Fire and Security.

With Barchester Healthcare having already constructed an additional turning space all along the West side of the new care home, there is sufficient access width in excess of Herts Fire and Rescue Service requirements.

The Design also benefits from informal surveillance with front doors overlooking the main pedestrian access, and with windows overlooking the rear gardens. Furthermore, because the shared access driveway with Iris Court Care Home is staffed 24/7 and will have permanent illumination, it is therefore considered there is more than sufficient distance off Hitchin Road, Gosmore, SG4 7QH as to make it extremely safe, not least because of the frequent movements of staff and visitors.

Furthermore, there are existing gate piers beyond the access off Hitchin Road which could be locked for additional security, if required.

Deliveries.

The turning head provided in front of the existing garages provides plenty of space for a standard delivery vehicle to turn around.

Pedestrian access for the dwelling will be designed in accordance with Part M of the Building Regulations. The new dwelling has been designed to provide clear identification of entrances.

Whilst it is noted that Hitchin Road does not yet have a dedicated footpath, it does have streetlights and is limited to 30MPH all the way into Hitchin. Whilst within the Gosmore village itself there are no dedicated footpaths, as identified in the Conservation Area Character Statement, nevertheless, thankfully, when approving 8 new houses at Glyfada, Hitchin Road, Gosmore, under reference 19/03033/FP, the Area Planning Officer at North Hertfordshire District Council secured some initial funding towards a new scheme to provide a footpath linking Gosmore village directly with Hitchin. This new single footpath Scheme is currently being worked on by both **Mr Dermot Dooher** [Strategy and Programme Manager] and **Mr Paul Patmore** [Operations Manager] at Hertfordshire County Council Highways; further Section 106 contributions are to be sought/collected from other new developments in the Parish for this very worthwhile improvement.

Consequently, even though, as identified in the Conservation Area Character Statement, there are no footpaths within the village at present, as Hitchin Road, Gosmore is getting much busier, pedestrian safety when walking North from the village towards Hitchin, will be enormously improved as a result of the future provision of the completed footpath linking up the village with the nearby market town.

Transport.

The village location, close by to the historic market town of Hitchin means that future residence will continue to be able to choose between walking, private car or cycling. In addition, there are bus stops close by in the centre of the village adjacent to the village green and the Bird in Hand Public House with the 88 Service providing services to Luton and Hitchin throughout the day.

Conclusions.

The proposal to create a new 4-bed home, to be Self-Built and deliverable relatively quickly will contribute towards the housing need of the village and the wider District, as well as enhancing the immediate site.

The site is located within development envelope in the adopted Local Plan, and only presents as a very uncharacteristic part on the edge of the Conservation Area, much more easily recognised as a suitable and sustainable location for new housing.

The new house is sympathetic in scale, density and appearance to the nearby properties, the enormous new care home, and the wider village and Conservation Area, and has been very carefully designed to both minimise the impact on existing neighbours and to ensure there is no overlooking from any habitable rooms.

The site in its current state adds nothing to enhance the Conservation Area, which at present is dwarfed by the enormous new care home, next door.

Very high quality materials are proposed, and the attractive design combined with very high-quality construction methods will ensure fantastic future living standards for future occupants. Furthermore, this attractive new home, in a highly sustainable village location, will help to break up the appearance of the enormous new nursing home next door, when viewed from the surrounding highway.

Revised RCM/MAM/ March 2026.