



North Herts Council
Development and Conservation
North Hertfordshire District Council
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Our ref: 13840
Date: 06 February 2026

For the attention of: Peter Bull

Application ref: 25/03084/RM
Location: Land To The East Of Talbot Way And Kristiansand Way And Flint Road Allotments Flint Road Letchworth Garden City Hertfordshire SG6 1TY
Proposal/Description: Reserved matters application for approval of layout, scale and appearance of buildings and landscaping pursuant of outline permission 21/00504/OP granted 03.04.2025 for residential development comprising of up to 120 dwellings with vehicular access via Flint Road

Thank you for consulting with Place Services on the above application This letter sets out our consultation response on the landscape impact of the application and how the proposal relates and responds to the landscape setting and context of the site.

We previously provided Pre-Application comments dated 21st July 2025.

1.0. Site Context

- 1.1. The Site is located to the north-east corner of North, Letchworth Garden City. Norton Road allotments form the south-west boundary of the site, separating residential properties from the site. An employment area is located south-east of the site, separated by a wide vegetated buffer. Arable fields are located to the north-east of the site, and the A1(M) is located close to the east. Footpath 26 (LGC) runs along the north-west boundary, separating the site from Norton Conservation Area.
- 1.2. The site is allocated within the North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011-2031 under Policy LG3 'Land east of Kristiansand Way and Talbot Way'. Site LG3 has Outline Planning Permission under 21/00504/OP, for 'residential development comprising of up to 120 dwellings with vehicular access via Flint Road (all matters reserved except means of access)'.

2.0. Planning Policy Context

2.1. North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011-2031

2.2. Policy LG3 'Land east of Kristiansand Way and Talbot Way' estimates 120 homes, and requires the following to be included:

- *“Structural planting to reinforce Green Belt boundary along north-eastern perimeter of site;*
- *Appropriate mitigation measures for noise associated with motorway and / or adjoining employment are to potentially include insulation and orientation of living spaces;*
- *Ensure appropriate residential amenity for any properties adjoining employment area, especially if access to the site is via Flint Road;*
- *Re-provision of allotments if access to the site is from the west. Re-provision prior to commencement of development, within the vicinity of the site and the same or better quality;*
- *Proposals to be informed by a site-specific landscape assessment;*
- *Retention of Public Right of Way Letchworth Garden City 026 and diversion if necessary;*
- *Sensitive design and / or lower density housing where the site affects setting of the Norton Conservation Area and nearby Grade II Listed Buildings on Church Lane and Norton Road; and*
- *Archaeological survey to be completed prior to development.”*

2.3. Policies to be considered that are relevant to landscape include Policy ENV3, ENV4, NE1, NE7, NE8, SP9 and SP12. Appendix 5: 'Letchworth Garden City Design Principles' are also considered relevant to this application.

3.0. Masterplan Compliance:

3.1. Requirements of the scheme are outlined within the Letchworth Garden City LG3 Framework (Strategic Masterplan Document, February 2022). The following reviews the scheme against the requirements and the Approved Framework Plan and Principles.

3.2. Para 6.1 (Table 2A) of the Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment: Design Stage (November 2025) states that the proposed development has a +13.58% net effect. We advise that a qualified Ecological Consultant reviews the BNG document.

3.3. On Page 52 of the LG3 Framework, *“Table: Open Space Standards (Fields in Trust) and Proposed Open Space Provision”* is included to demonstrate the provision quantities. This should be updated within the current submission to demonstrate the current quantities.

3.4. Further comments on compliance with the Masterplan are included throughout the following response.

4.0. Reserved Matters:

- 4.1. The pedestrian pavement along the main access road is setback from the roadway, with a landscaped buffer providing separation, particularly to the east. As per Principle 2 of the Letchworth Garden City Design Principles (LGCDP), we welcome this addition and its contribution to pedestrian connectivity and the enhancement of green infrastructure and soft landscaping.
- 4.2. The setback from the main access road has also informed the formation of small pockets of landscaping surrounding the junctions, where swales, feature trees and other landscaping features are proposed. This is welcomed.
- 4.3. We have the below recommendations on the design of the scheme.

Gateway Green and entrance

- 4.4. As per our Pre-App advice, mirroring the Gateway Green on both sides of the access would be an enhancement to the scheme entrance. The dwellings to the west should be setback further from the access road at the entrance point, as per Principle 2 of the LGCDP, to allow for some tree planting.
- 4.5. A quadrant of feature trees should be located around the first cross-roads at entrance to the scheme, by setting the apartment block back and providing some POS in front of the building. This will allow the Green Gateway to be on both sides of the main access route in accordance with Principle 2 of the LGCDP. The four trees should be the same species.
- 4.6. The substation is located to the west of the main entrance. Whilst located in a vegetated area which is fairly well-screened, there are opportunities to enhance the design quality of the main access point by setting the substation back away from the access and using soft landscaping (existing or proposed) to reduce the visual impact of this built feature within an undeveloped area of the site.
- 4.7. The curved path within the south of the Gateway Green does not follow any desire lines or routes which pedestrians and residents are likely to use. A route is likely to form across to the south-east corner of the Gateway Green space. This route should be reconsidered.
- 4.8. A focal feature should be placed within the southern extent of the Gateway Green POS, as such as an art feature or play feature. This will contribute to the visual amenity of the scheme.
- 4.9. Additional benches should be proposed within the Gateway Green POS to create a more multi-functional space.

- 4.10. The proposed *Prunus padus* is located in very close proximity to Underground Tanks. Some of the trees situated in tight spaces between the tank and the hard surface will need to be in tree pits. Details can be conditioned.

Primary Street

- 4.11. The Letchworth Garden City LG3 Framework (February 2022) describes the Primary Street as the 'main avenue' with verges and structural planting to create a softer street scape.
- 4.12. Visitor Parking is located along both sides of the Primary Street, breaking up the areas of landscaping which are designed to soften this streetscape. Visitor Parking should be predominantly located on the eastern edge of the Primary Street, to allow stronger landscaping interventions to the narrower landscaped strip.
- 4.13. Visitor Parking bays should be surfaced with a softer treatment, such as Grasscrete.
- 4.14. The tree species proposed are largely welcomed, with feature trees proposed as large sizes than other trees throughout the scheme.

Secondary Streets

- 4.15. The Letchworth Garden City LG3 Framework (February 2022) describes the Secondary Street as 'garden streets' with integrated SuDS and multi-layered landscaping for continuous biodiversity corridors.
- 4.16. We welcome the landscaped areas proposed at the junctions of the Secondary Streets as they meet the central Primary Street. These interventions are a positive contribution to the enhancement of the Primary Street and biodiversity connections east-west across the scheme.
- 4.17. As the Secondary Streets meet the western site boundary, small parcels of enclosed grassland areas are proposed, containing some Natural Play Features. We judge that this is not the best place for these pocket play spaces to be proposed:
- There is very limited passive surveillance of these spaces from surrounding properties, located in an enclosed space on the ends of dwellings.
 - As the boundary vegetation grows to act as enhanced screening, the hedgerow may encroach on this space.
 - A very limited number of houses will benefit from these spaces, where it could be expected that most of the development may not know of their existence.
- 4.18. Therefore, we judge that these western edge spaces should be located centrally within the Secondary Streets, so that they are well-overlooked, are visible from the Primary Street

and therefore will be better utilised, and would also be easier to maintain. This would allow the green infrastructure and trees along the Secondary Streets to be more integrated and break up the hard landscaping, as opposed to being isolated to the furthest edge.

Furthermore, as per the Design Principles within the LG3 Framework Plan, this approach would also allow further provision for continuous biodiversity corridors (Page 56).

- 4.19. The parking arrangements on the east-west Secondary Streets on the eastern edge of the scheme appear poorly designed and have resulted in additional areas of hard landscaping within these garden streets. An option could be to relocate a few visitor parking spaces to the Rural Edge and allow for more soft landscaping, trees and play along these streets.
- 4.20. Trees on both sides of the Secondary Streets are required to ensure garden streets create habitat continuity as required by the framework. Some can be located within the rear gardens if required.
- 4.21. Proposing trees on either side of the junctions on to Secondary Streets would contribute to providing landscape structure, framing views, and also provide wayfinding around the scheme. Placement of a tree on either side of the Secondary Street access would be a positive intervention. A feature tree should consistently be located to terminate the view along the secondary street as it meets the Primary Street.
- 4.22. The western site boundary to the allotments should be enhanced with hedgerow planting to retain separation and provide some screening. This would also contribute to an enhancement of the 'Green View' indicated within the Urban Design Framework (Figure 34) of the LG3 Framework Document.
- 4.23. Also on the western edge of the scheme, proposing a feature tree to terminate the view to the west would contribute to the 'garden street' aim and provide a focal point along these side roads, similarly to the tree proposed at the end of the street between Plots 20 and 21.

Rural Edge

- 4.24. The Letchworth Garden City LG3 Framework (February 2022) describes the edge lane or 'Rural Edge' as narrower than other streets prioritising non-vehicular use, with a looser building alignment, dense tree planting, and rural surface materiality.
- 4.25. A cross section of the Rural Edge should be submitted within the Design Code. This will demonstrate the relationship between the built frontage, surfacing, kerbing, the green edge and the footpath.
- 4.26. The rural edge should have an identifiably different character to the other streets within the scheme. We advise that the road width should differ from the other streets on the scheme

to prioritise non-vehicular use.

- 4.27. The surface treatment for the Rural Edge is block paving. This is an appropriate surface treatment for the edge of the scheme, however the colours of the pavers should be considered to differentiate the Rural Edge from other streets on the scheme.
- 4.28. It is anticipated that a desire line would form at the end of the Rural Edge road, between Plot 79 and the pedestrian pathway. Boundary treatments, access provision or planting should be reconsidered in this location.
- 4.29. Some oaks within the tree buffer planting would be beneficial.

Northern POS

- 4.30. A large area of the POS is taken up by a SuDS basin. We question the choice to include a SuDS basin on the highest elevation ground. The basin also occupies a large area of the available POS to the northern corner of the scheme. In the case that its retained, it should deliver on the detail multi-functional purposes and gradients which allow public access.
- 4.31. Similarly to suggestions regarding the access cross-roads, a quadrant of feature trees should be proposed as the Primary Street meets the northern POS. This would contribute to frame views at the end of the Primary Street.
- 4.32. Further to the above, a focal feature should be located within the northern POS in line with the view along the Primary Street.
- 4.33. Any fencing around the play area should be softened with a maintained hedgerow alongside, and will also soften views along the Primary Street.
- 4.34. Functionally, proposed Feature Seats should be arranged alongside the crescent self-binding gravel path to overlook the play area, as this would be well-utilised by parents.

Other Recommendations

- 4.35. The existing PRoWs should be indicated on the submitted plans to show the access points and connections.
- 4.36. The SuDS feature to the south-east should be accompanied by cross-sections to demonstrate the access and use of this space. The basin should be multi-functional and should not exceed 1:3 gradients, with natural features proposed within and around the inlets/outlets. Natural play features would also be beneficial. A seating area should be

located on the east of the basin.

- 4.37. There are limited benches proposed on the outer pedestrian route which is located within the vegetated area. The scheme would benefit from some additional seating located at intervals around the scheme, designed for enjoyment of the nature and also around the south-eastern basin.
- 4.38. There are several instances where hedgerows are proposed up against the houses. To provide residents with some front-garden space would be preferable, by setting the building back and providing a small front garden space where the hedgerow defines the outer garden boundary.
- 4.39. The Framework Plan demonstrated the dwellings in the north-western corner as orientated to face the north-east, which provides better passive surveillance and better fronts on to PRoW 026 which runs along the northern boundary and enters the site at the north-west corner. The layout within this framework plan is preferred.
- 4.40. An additional informal access should be provided between the Secondary Street and the woodland path connection, adjacent to Plots 92 and 103.
- 4.41. Common elder (*L. Sambucus nigra*) should not be specified as part of the shrub mix. The shrub is very vigorous and will suppress the growth of the other species' specified. Instead, it would be recommended that Field Maple (*Acer campestre*) is specified as an alternative.
- 4.42. We recommend that *Viburnum tinus* spp. is removed from the planting palette. The species can be severely damaged by Viburnum beetle and often produces an unpleasant smell particularly when the foliage is wet. Instead, an alternative species could be proposed such as *Prunus lusitanica*.
- 4.43. The Damp Tolerant Planting in the specification should also be proposed around the headwalls of the SuDS basins to soften these hard features within the POS.
- 4.44. Sections should be submitted to demonstrate the levels changed across the scheme and indicate if any retaining walls are required between back-to-back gardens. This is to ensure that the retaining walls are not too tall between gardens which would result in overbearing surrounding close-board fences.
- 4.45. Parking courts should be softened with additional tree planting. For example, a feature tree could be proposed opposite the entrance to the parking court, within parking bays 58-66.

- 4.46. Back garden tree planting should be provided within the rear gardens of Plots 1-4, 5-8 and 39-44 in accordance with the Masterplan Framework Design Principles.
- 4.47. The species proposed within the Native Shrub Planting Mix should also not be proposed at equal quantities.

5.0. Conditions

5.1. Conditions to secure details of the tree pits should be included.

5.2. We also advise the following condition is included:

5.3. ACTION REQUIRED PRIOR TO COMMENCEMENT OF DEVELOPMENT: LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT PLAN (LMP)

No development shall take place until there has been submitted to and approved, in writing, by the Local Planning Authority a landscape management plan for a minimum of 5 years. This should include:

- a) Drawing/s showing the extent of the LMP i.e. only showing the areas to which the LMP applies, areas of private ownership should be excluded
- b) Written Specification detailing:
 - All operation and procedures for soft landscape areas; inspection, watering, pruning, cutting, mowing, clearance and removal of arisings and litter, removal of temporary items (fencing, guards and stakes) and replacement of failed planting.
 - All operations and procedures for hard landscape areas; inspection, sweeping, clearing of accumulated vegetative material and litter, maintaining edges, and painted or finished surfaces.
 - Furniture (Bins, Benches and Signage) and Play Equipment
 - All operations and procedures for soft landscaping to SuDS features; inspection of linear drains, basins and swales, removal of unwanted vegetative material and litter, including inlets and outlets.
- c) Maintenance task table which explains the maintenance duties across the site in both chronological and systematic order.
- d) Mechanism for monitoring and review of the management plan and operations.

Reason - To support plant establishment and ensure appropriate management is carried out and to maintain functionality and visual aesthetic.

Please contact us if you have any queries in relation to this advice.

Place Services – Landscape Team

Email: landscape@essex.gov.uk



Place Services provide landscape advice on behalf of North Herts Council

Please note:

This letter is advisory and should only be considered as the opinion formed by specialist staff in relation to this particular matter.

We are unable to respond directly to applicants/agents or other interested parties. Any additional information, queries or comments on this advice that the applicant/agent or other interested parties may have, must be directed to the Planning Officer at the relevant LPA, who will seek further advice from us where appropriate.

