

Pentangle Design Group

Statement to Accompany a Full Plans Application Involving

The Erection of 9 Dwellings and Associated Access at
Glebe Road Industrial Estate, Letchworth Garden City



Job no. 3879
Date June 2025
Revision A

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1. Introduction

This full plans planning submission enquiry relates to the development of a disused industrial site on the southern side of Glebe Road in Letchworth Garden City, currently housing an old warehouse building. The area of land concerned lies in a largely residential area, close to the intersection with Norton Way, with a few other warehouse and industrial buildings on adjacent roads. The application site is very linear in nature running roughly in an east to west orientation

Access into the existing site is via an access road located to the west of the site, close to the junction of Glebe Road with Norton Way. The access extends past the existing warehouse building and to the rear of the site which is currently all hardstanding, current car park and delivery access to the building.



Existing Access to the Site

At the front of the site, the existing warehouse building is separated from the street by a sizeable area of planting comprising various trees and shrubs, outlined by a hedge.

The south side of the street is characterised by semi-detached, arts and crafts period houses finished in white render, some with brick on the lower level.

It is worth noting that the site slopes down from Glebe Road, then steps down by approximately a metre just in front of the existing warehouse. A retaining wall is in place to support this drop in level and separate the green area from the rest of the site.



View of the site from Glebe Road

2. Local / Letchworth Garden City Characteristics

The immediate street scene is characterised as a suburban, residential street comprised of early 20th century arts and crafts style semi-detached houses, mostly with light-coloured render and occasionally brick on the lower levels; the stylings are typical of Letchworth.

The street is of medium building density with some separation between sets of houses. On the south side the houses are set relatively close to the street with small driveways or front gardens, whereas on the north

side most houses are set back far from the street with considerably longer driveways or front gardens.

Roofs are typically traditional clay tile, pitched roofs with gables at the front and in some instance's dormers on the uppermost floor level. In the immediate surroundings of the site, buildings are 2 and 3 storeys. Many of the nearby houses host small ground floor or 2 storey extensions at the rear of the properties. Outbuildings such as sheds and detached garages are also common locally.



3. Pre Application Advice Comments

Prior to this full plans planning submission, a PreApp was submitted to gauge the feasibility of the development on this site and understand what was required for a full planning application. The response was largely positive and supportive of residential development of this scale on the site, with some minor amendments to the design which have been taken on board, while also liaising with the client and heritage foundation to accommodate their requirements.

The most notable changes to the design include better management of dormers on the second floor. The size of dormers was reduced by changing the window casement sizes, which was applied to all windows to suit, and their layout has been made more symmetrical through the removal of the side dormer on unit 4. The reduction of window casement sizes and a more regular arrangement has allowed for a more suitable elevation pattern and a continuous 5-light

arrangement on the first floor level which is locally recognisable and appropriate.

Second floor Juliette balconies have been removed as advised, with simple, generously sized windows to the primary bedrooms in their place.

The roofscape has been redesigned to provide a more subtle solution, with the removal of the central gable on each set of units, and an appropriately dimensioned dormer in its place to maintain a similar internal layout.

Further amendments to the elevation include front door design and general ornamentation i.e.: removal of stone heads above windows for a render drip detail and enhanced canopied above front doors with surrounds around the doors, all of which amounts to a simplified and coherent elevation.

4. The Proposals

The proposal will involve the demolition of the existing warehouse building in order to erect 9, 3 storey dwellings, with vehicular access and parking in front and gardens with small sheds at the rear, allocated to have cycle storage.

It is proposed that the new dwellings all be parallel to the Glebe Road, in line with the rest of the street scene, in three sets of three. Units 1 and 9 have been designed to be brought forward to create visual 'bookends'.

Plans of the proposed dwellings will be predominantly the same. At second floor level plans have been altered to suit roof geometry.

At ground floor level all units will comprise a kitchen and WC at the front of the property, and separate open plan dining/living space at the rear, facing the garden. It is proposed that the ground floors will extend beyond the upper floors to maximise the useable living space.

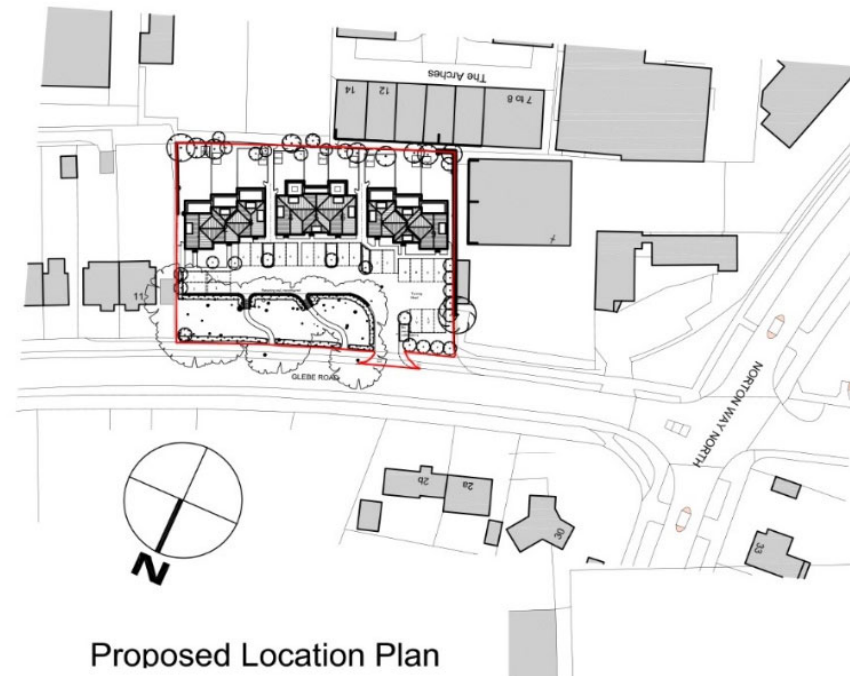
At first floor level, all proposed units will house 2 double bedrooms, one with an en-suite, at the front of the units and a separate family bathroom at the rear.

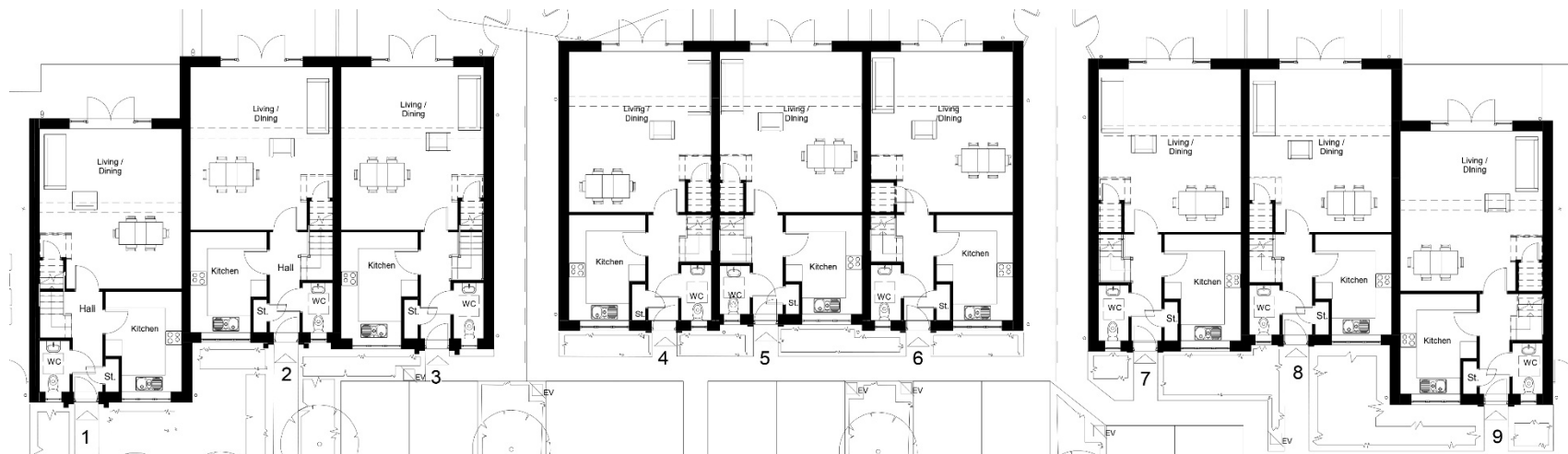
At second floor level, all units will house the third double bedroom with an en-suite facing the garden and a generous window at the front.

Externally, the buildings will be faced in white render with brick on the lower levels to suit the character of the street and typical architectural style of Letchworth Garden City. Additionally, the pitched roofs will have gables spanning the full width of each end unit at the front.

Dormers to some end units have been designed allowing headroom above the staircase as well as to provide additional natural light.

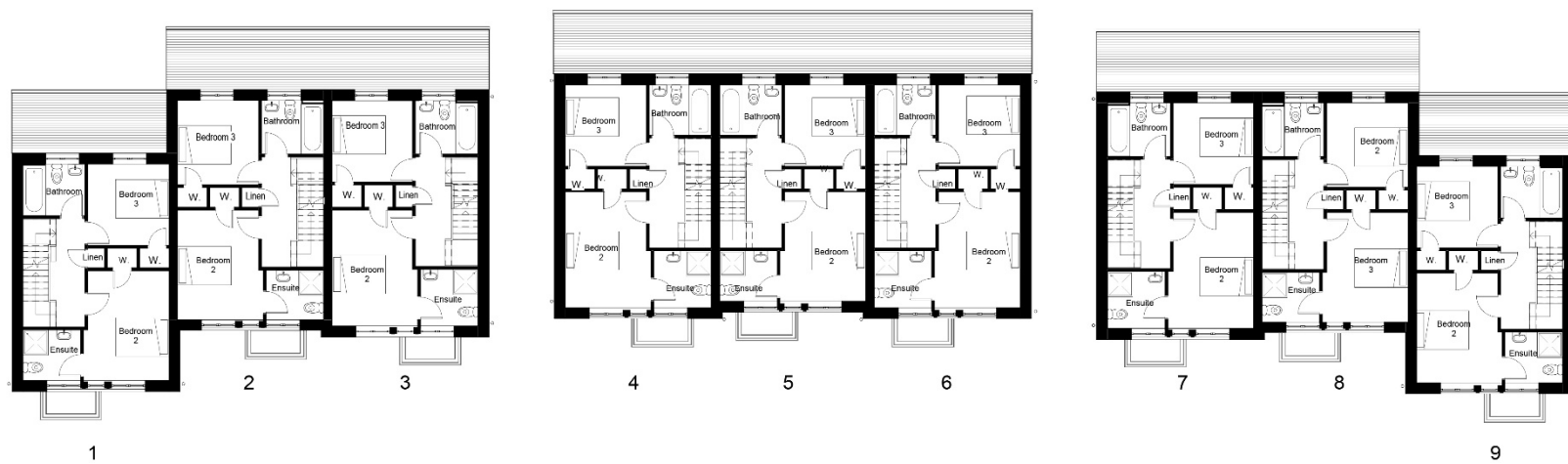
At the rear roofs will be hipped with dormers, units 1 and 9 are stepped forward from the grouping; these roofs are gabled to the rear. This will allow for the full row of houses to be symmetrical visually and coherent with the rest of the existing street scene.

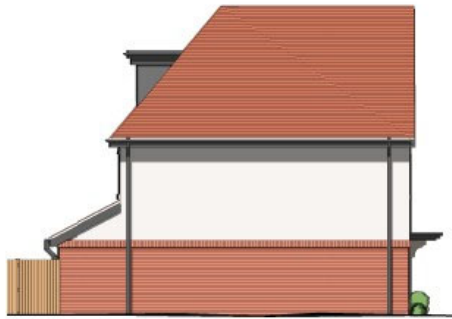






Units 1-9 Rear Elevations

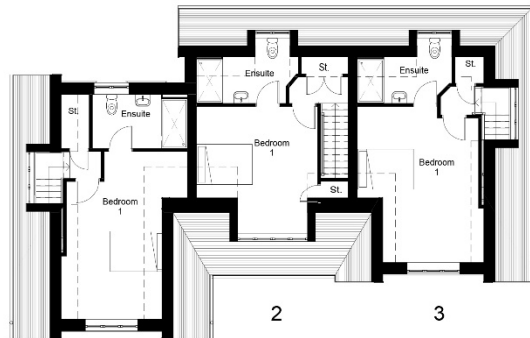
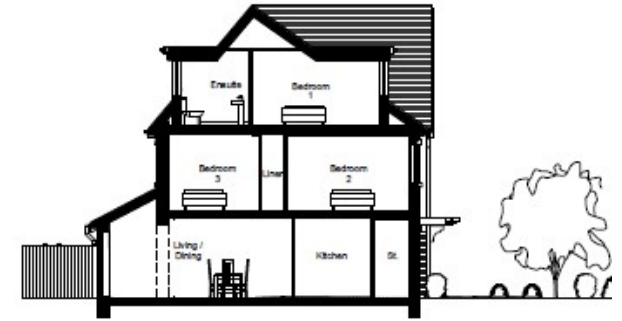




Units 4-6 East Elevation



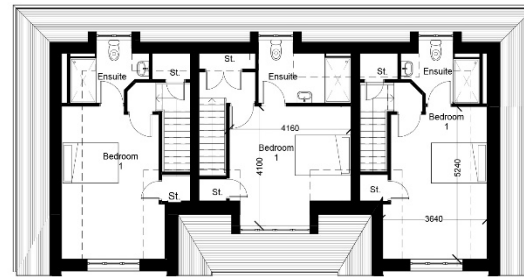
Units 7-9 East Elevation



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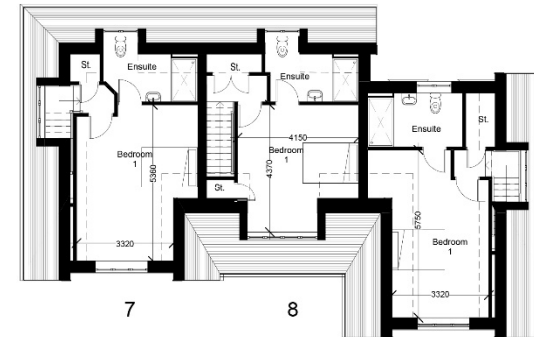
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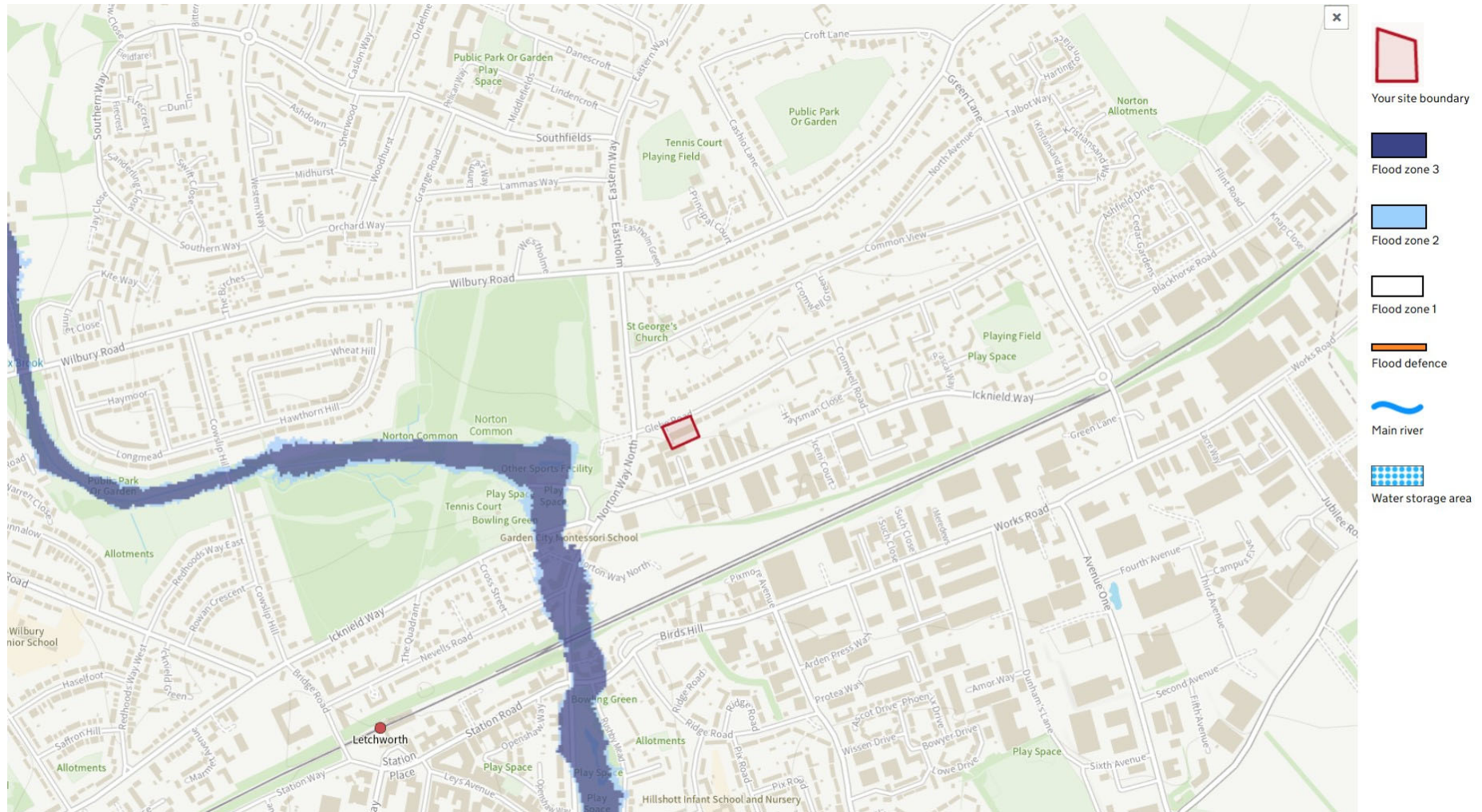
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5. Flooding

There is no history or risk of flooding through surface or drainage water on this site.



6. Trees, Landscape and Ecology

The small area of woodland and shrubs at the front of the site is a key consideration in the proposal in terms of trees and landscaping. The proposal aims to minimise the impact on this area, with existing trees and planting being retained and supplemented as necessary.

The application site comprises predominantly hardstanding, with the existing warehouse building occupying most of the plot. However, a landscaped area exists at the site frontage along Glebe Road, featuring a range of shrubs and small to medium-sized trees enclosed by a hedge. These existing features positively contribute to the street scene and will be retained and enhanced where possible to support the garden city character of Letchworth.

Two direct pedestrian paths are proposed through this area to connect the street with the site and improve pedestrian access. These will be positioned in areas between the existing trees to impact minimally on the existing trees.

An Ecological Appraisal was undertaken by Coyne Environmental Ltd in December 2024. The appraisal categorised the site as comprising developed land, modified grassland, lowland mixed deciduous woodland, ruderal species, and an ornamental hedge.

The site does not lie within or adjacent to a statutory designated site or priority habitat. While Norton Common LNR (~166m west) and Ivel Springs LNR (~1.86km north-east) are nearby, no significant ecological constraints were identified on-site.

The report confirmed no ponds within 500m and no signs of protected species, including great crested newts, bats, or badgers. The development will incorporate mitigation measures such as sensitive landscaping, retention of existing vegetation, and provision of bird and bat boxes to support ecological networks and maintain local biodiversity.

Throughout the rest of the site, planting and trees will be implemented where possible, which will include private gardens to each unit, with a row of new trees to the rear of the gardens.

Small front gardens will also be provided, as well as communal green areas and small sections of planting and trees integrated into the car parking.

The proposal aims to minimise the space taken up by hard standing such as the new access road and parking in order to implement as much planting and trees as possible.

7. Biodiversity Net Gain

In line with Policy NE4 of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan and national policy requirements, the proposed development seeks to deliver measurable Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG). While the application site is previously developed and contains limited ecological value, enhancements will be made through:

- Retention and enhancement of existing vegetation along the northern boundary;
- Introduction of native and wildlife-friendly planting in both front and rear gardens;
- Provision of bird and bat boxes to promote urban wildlife;
- Green landscaping and the inclusion of permeable surfaces to improve habitat value.

A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (Coyne Environmental, 2024) concluded the site has low ecological sensitivity. While no formal DEFRA BNG metric calculation is required for a scheme of this scale, the applicant commits to ecological enhancements proportionate to the site's size and former use, as guided by BS 42020:2013 and local policy.

8. Archaeology

An Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment was undertaken by Archaeological Solutions Ltd in January 2017. The site lies within Area 2 of the Letchworth Conservation Area and historically formed part of Norton parish's Glebe Lands prior to urbanisation in 1903.

- The study identified:
- Moderate to high potential for prehistoric remains;
- Moderate potential for Anglo-Saxon archaeology;
- Low to moderate potential for Roman remains;
- Low potential for medieval and post-medieval remains.

However, due to development in the late 20th century (1967–1985) for industrial use, the site has experienced significant ground disturbance. Any residual archaeology is therefore likely to be limited or truncated.

Should planning approval be granted, a written scheme of investigation (WSI) will be agreed with the Hertfordshire Historic Environment Advisor in accordance with Policy HE1 and the site allocation requirements under LG13 of the Local Plan.

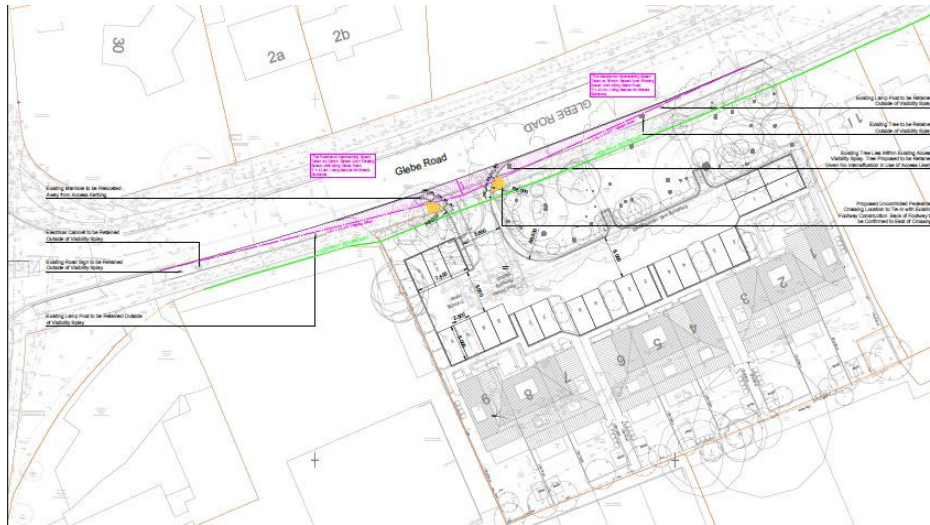
9. Highways Considerations

As part of the new site plan, it is proposed that the vehicular access to the site be relocated by approximately 11 metres eastwards. This will result in a number of benefits for the design of the site including:

- Improved sight lines for vehicles leaving the site
- Increased distance from the junction of Glebe Road and Norton Way, which the current site access is close to
- Relocating the access from the west of the site providing sufficient space for a turning head for cars or larger deliver vans, emergency vehicles and refuse lorry.
- Efficient layout of parking on the site and space to provide parking and access.

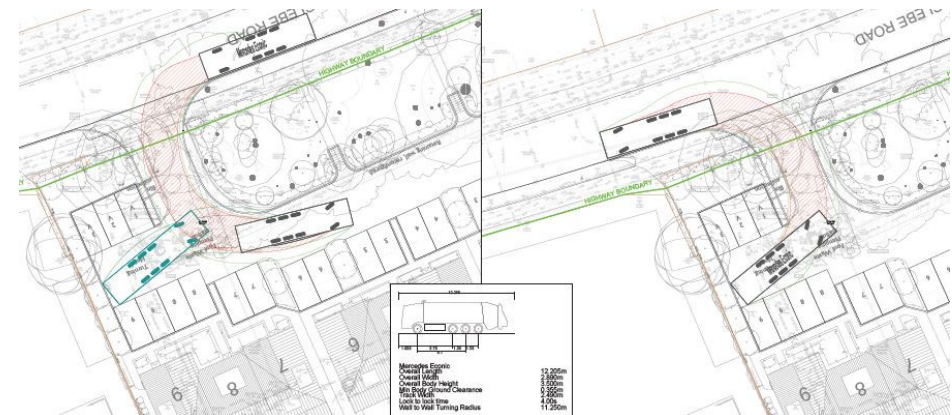
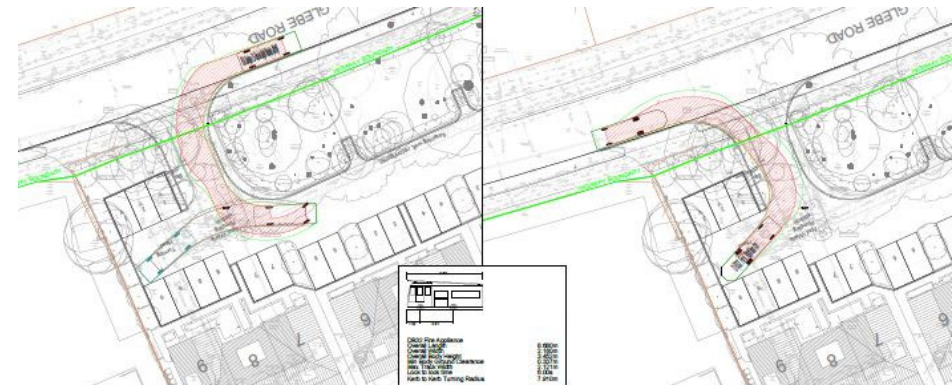
This proposed relocation will minimally impact the woodland area at the front of the site.

It is proposed that a total of 21 parking spaces will be provided, 2 spaces allocated to each dwelling and an additional 3 visitor spaces at the front of the site, adjacent to the site access road. A 6-metre



access will run perpendicular to the site and parallel to Glebe Road and the proposed houses, to access all parking spaces and dwellings.

A highways study has been carried out – pictured below – to demonstrate and provisions needed for the new access as well as show accessibility to the site for larger vehicles, including bin lorries and fire trucks. With the current arrangement of the access road, there is little to no impact on the visibility splay and no trees or infrastructure is to be removed. The width of the access together with the turning head provide enough space for larger vehicles to manoeuvre in and out of the site.



10. Scale and Street Scene

These proposals are intended to sympathetically extend the existing street scene with domestic units that respects the architectural style of the area including traditional design elements and materials typical of the Letchworth Garden City style.

The development is also thought to enhance the immediate street scene through the removal of the industrial unit and introduction of new dwellings.

The proposals also include an increase in green space and planting which will have a positive impact on the appearance of the site, therefore improving the quality of the street as a whole.

The scale and proportions are carefully managed so as not to detract or interfere with existing proportions of size and scale of the street. The 3 storey houses are similar in proportion to surrounding units and roof height from neighbouring properties. It is noted that the lower site level results in the roof heights of proposed buildings do not rise above

those of adjacent properties and provide a transition in height to the much lower industrial building to the west of the site.

Careful consideration has been made with regards to the finish of the proposed buildings. As a result, white render has been selected for the upper floors, with brick facing on the ground floor to clad the proposed buildings; it is believed that this provides cohesion with existing buildings as well as a contemporary appearance, which will improve the flow of the street as a whole while also providing some distinction between the existing houses and the new development.

The proposal has been carefully designed so that it respects current building lines and does not impact the neighbouring properties and respects current property boundaries.

The roof design has been carefully selected to provide efficient plans internally, but also to suit neighbouring properties and architectural style of the street, with gables and dormers being integrated into pitched, tiled roofs, as well as hipped roof to the rear of the units. These are all common features on most homes in the area.



11. Use and Amount

The proposal is to provide 9, 3-bedroom houses, with near identical internal gross areas. There will be some variety on the second-floor level due to varying roof designs.

While, during the design process 10 units had previously been considered, ultimately 9 units have been designed into the site providing a better use of the site and providing suitably sized dwellings and gardens.

The minimum schedule of accommodation for the units are as follows:

Ground Floor	50 m ²	537 sqft
First Floor	40 m ²	431 sqft
Second Floor	29 m ²	313 sqft
	119 m ²	1281 sqft

The approximate area of existing warehouse building to be demolished is 770 m².

It is noted that the site is currently wholly concreted over, save for the green frontage offering no green space.

12. Internal Layout and Personal Access

At ground floor level all units will comprise a kitchen and WC at the front of the property, and an open plan dining/living space at the rear, facing the garden. 2 enclosed storage spaces are also included, one just off the hallway and one under the stairs, accessibly from the living room. It is proposed that the ground floors will extend beyond the upper floors to maximise the useable living space.

At first floor level, all proposed units will house 2 double bedrooms, one with an en-suite, at the front of the units and a separate family bathroom at the rear. The 2 bedrooms will be separated by a built-in wardrobe to one of the rooms and a linen cupboard accessible from the hallway.

At second floor level, all units will house a final third double bedroom with an en-suite facing the garden and a Juliette balcony at the front. Additional storage spaces in the eaves are also provided varying in size depending on the house type.

Ground floor hallways will be 1.1m wide while first floor landings will be 1m at their narrowest point, providing ease of access and manoeuvrability.

The front entrance freeholds were designed to comply with current building regulations.

13. Access, Sustainability and Energy

Front doors and access to entrances have been designed to accord with the building regulations offering a 'level' threshold into the properties.

The site as a whole will be carefully graduated to allow full accessibility into and throughout the site.

The construction of the dwellings will be such that they offer the minimum insulating standard to the building regulations including windows and external doors.

14. Amenity for Residents

Each unit in the proposed scheme will benefit from a sizeable private rear garden, each with a small shed. The gardens vary in size due to the nature of the site boundary and proposed layout; the smallest will measure approximately 7.6m by 6m. Additionally, each garden will be accessible externally through side gates and alleyways between gardens.

It is proposed that each house is allocated 2 parking spaces, as well as 3 visitor spaces for the whole site.

Cycle storage will be provided by way of garden sheds in the rear gardens of each dwelling.

15. Proposed Site Plan

The drawing on the right shows the proposed site plan, 9 No. 3 storey houses, arranged in small terraces of 3.

The arrangement is linear and largely uniform with the exception of units 1 and 9 which are brought forward to maximise their garden space. The proposed buildings will be parallel to Glebe road and other houses on the street so as not to disrupt the flow of the street visually.

The site plan also demonstrates the position of the proposed access road to the site, creating space for a turning head for vehicles on the site as well as 3 additional parking spaces for use by visitors.

New pedestrian access routes are also proposed to run through the green area at the front of the site, easing the access for pedestrians and shortening the walking distances depending on direction of approach to the site.



16. Pre-App response

A formal pre-application enquiry was submitted and reviewed by North Hertfordshire District Council under ref. 24/02919/PRE. The response, dated 24 March 2025, confirmed that residential development of the site aligns with Policy LG13 of the adopted Local Plan, which allocates the site for housing with an estimated yield of 10 dwellings.

The pre-app response welcomed the revised layout, particularly the improved alignment and reduced impact on neighbouring properties compared to the 2018 withdrawn scheme. The originally withdrawn scheme was designed as a horse-shoe arrangement breaking up the regular pattern of design that Glebe Road presents, this being, house frontages facing the main road with parking to the front. Great care has been taken in ensuring this regular pattern of design has been retained both as part of the scheme and as part of retaining the Letchworth Garden City Heritage Character which has been welcomed within the pre-app.

It recommended careful design consideration regarding building height and front-facing glazing elements.

Since the pre-app, continued conversations have been had with Heritage Foundation Officer's and the Juliet Balconies have been omitted from the scheme.

Concerns were raised about the proposed three-storey scale, particularly its visibility in the street scene. In response, the design has been amended to reduce visual massing by bringing roof ridges down as well as reducing the number of gables to the unit frontages which in turn improves the roofscape rhythm and brings the character back in line with Heritage principals. Architectural detailing has also been enhanced to better reflect the Arts and Crafts character of Letchworth, including stone detailing to cills, omitting stone to heads of windows softening the material pallet also.

Further adjustments to the architectural typology have also been made to window sizes, which have been brought in line with Heritage principals – window materials will remain uPVC, however, the Heritage requirements of windows will be implemented within the construction including equal sight lines.

The response also noted requirements for archaeological survey, a preliminary risk assessment, SUDs strategy, and ecological mitigation, all of which have been incorporated into this full submission.

17. Summary and Conclusion

This Full Plans application proposes a sustainable residential development of nine high-quality family dwellings, consistent with the site allocation under Policy LG13 of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011–2031.

The scheme responds to local character through the use of sympathetic materials, roof forms, and a considered streetscape layout. Pre-application feedback has informed significant improvements, including revisions to roofscape, window design, and massing.

- Supporting documentation addresses all planning considerations:
- Flood risk mitigation and drainage strategy;
- Noise, air quality, and ground contamination assessments;
- Ecological appraisal and biodiversity enhancements;
- Archaeological desk-based assessment;
- Highway's access and swept path analysis.

The proposal makes efficient use of a previously developed brownfield site, delivering much-needed housing with high amenity value in a sustainable location. It represents a valuable contribution to the district's housing supply in a manner aligned with Garden City principles and planning policy.

It is felt that these proposals meet local plan, sustainable development guidance as well as simply being a distinct improvement to the current site. The proposals are highly sustainable in that they enhance the current brownfield site, creating more biodiversity and providing new residential development in a high demand market. The proposed properties were designed with the aim to complement existing surroundings and enhance the street scene.

