

BEDFORDSHIRE AND RIVER IVEL INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

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North Herts District Council
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BY E-MAIL ONLY

For the attention of **Tom Rea**

Dear Sir/Madam

Planning Application Number:	25/01361/FP
Location:	White House Ashwell Road Newnham Baldock Hertfordshire SG7 5JU
Proposal:	Change of use and conversion of barn to provide one self-contained two-bed dwelling including single storey front and rear extensions, side porch extension and alterations to fenestration including parking and hardscaping.
Grid Reference:	524832 237820

The proposal falls within the Board's district. The Board **objects** to the proposal based on the following grounds:

1. Inadequate Surface Water Drainage Strategy & Soakaway Viability

The application proposes surface water disposal via soakaways. However, no infiltration testing (BRE Digest 365) has been provided to confirm the viability of this method. Soakaways are potentially unsuitable in Flood Zone 3, particularly in the absence of a detailed, site-specific assessment. A detailed drainage strategy is essential to confirm:

- Soakaway performance.
- Groundwater protection.
- Fallback measures should infiltration prove unviable.

Should soakaways be deemed unsuitable, any discharge to the nearby watercourse will require the Board's prior consent and will be subject to a surface water development contribution (SWDC).

2. Lack of Floodplain Compensation Assessment

The submitted FRA states that the proposed finished floor level will be set 0.30m above existing ground levels, within Flood Zone 3. This constitutes ground raising within the floodplain, and the Board would therefore expect a

level-for-level, volume-for-volume floodplain compensation assessment to ensure no net loss of flood storage. No such assessment has been included.

3. Foul Water Disposal Unspecified

The application makes no provision for foul water disposal. The Board advises that these arrangements must be confirmed prior to the issue of planning permission. Should the applicant propose a package treatment plant discharging to a watercourse, the Board's prior consent will be required, along with payment of the relevant contribution fee.

4. Proximity to IDB-Maintained Watercourse

An IDB watercourse borders the site. Therefore, the applicant must:

- Avoid development within the Board's byelaw distance (9m from top bank)
- Not discharge surface water to the ditch without appropriate attenuation, treatment, and prior IDB consent.

5. Surface Water Discharge

If discharge to a watercourse is proposed, it must be restricted to greenfield runoff rates.

6. Safe Access and Egress

Although the FRA states that access along Ashwell Road presents a "very low hazard" during climate change scenarios, the Board would require confirmation that access routes remain passable during a 1 in 100-year event plus climate change to ensure there is no residual risk to residents or emergency services.

Please direct any reply to Rachel Hughes at the Board's offices.

Yours faithfully

Rachel Hughes
Senior Engineer
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