

Reserved Matters for Construction of Phase 1 Residential Dwellings (and the associated Partial Discharge of Conditions 7, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 19, 21) in respect of 18/01154/OP at Highover Farm, Hitchin, SG4 0RQ

Planning Statement for
Barratt Redrow
29 October 2025
Our Ref: SRS/503/55/1/Phase1RM



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Quality Assurance

This report has been prepared within the quality system operated at Rapleys LLP according to British Standard ISO 9001:2015.

We confirm that the undersigned is an appropriately qualified and experienced Chartered Surveyor/Planner [delete as appropriate] experienced in the commercial property sector.

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared by Rapleys LLP in support of a reserved matters application (Condition 3) of 18/01154/OP at Highover Farm, Hitchin on behalf of Barratt Redrow ("the Applicant"). This is the second reserved matters application to be submitted, but the first involving the construction of dwellings and is herein 'the Phase 1 Residential RM Application'.

1.2 In addition, a number of conditions require a partial discharge where the information is required as part of each reserved matter application (condition 7 – detailed highway plans, condition 9 – lighting, condition 10 – waste management, condition 11 – landscape, condition 12 – sustainability strategy, condition 13 – open space management, condition 19 – fire hydrants, and condition 21 – LEMP).

1.3 The Phase 1 Residential RM Application therefore seeks approval for the following –

'The construction of Phase 1 Residential comprising 236 dwellings, associated highway, drainage, servicing/utilities infrastructure, landscaping and open space provision of Hitchin Meadows, Dane Walk, and Stotfold Linear Park in accordance with condition 3 of 18/01154/OP (and the associated partial discharge of conditions 7, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 19 and 21).'

1.4 The Phase 1 Residential RM Application Site falls within the administrative area of North Hertfordshire District Council ("the Council") and its redline extent is shown on the Site Location Plan.

1.5 This Phase 1 Residential RM Application Site forms part of the wider Highover Farm development site which has outline planning permission (18/01154/OP), granted on 29 November 2024 for the following description of development:

'Outline application with all matters reserved other than access, comprising residential led development of up to 700 dwellings of use class C3, approximately 500sqm of neighbourhood-level facilities, a new 2 FE primary school, open space, play space, green infrastructure, and associated accesses (vehicular, pedestrian and cycle), including a new primary access off Stotfold Road with limited access off High Dane (as amended).'

STRUCTURE OF PLANNING, DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

1.6 The Planning Statement explores the key planning issues and considerations relevant to the Phase 1 Residential RM Application Site's development and is structured by the following sections:

- Site, Surrounding Area and Planning History,
- Planning Policy,
- The Proposed Development,
- Planning Assessment, and
- Conclusions.

1.7 The Statement concludes that this Phase 1 Residential RM Application is in accordance with the general principles of the original outline permission, national planning policy, and the Council's adopted Development Plan, Hertfordshire County Council Highway Authority (HCCHA) standards and other adopted and relevant planning guidance and documentation.

1.8 In addition to this Planning Statement, the Phase 1 Residential RM Application comprises the following documents which provide the necessary information to describe, assess and determine the proposals (a full list can be found in the separate Application Documentation Schedule):

- Site Redline Boundary Location Plan,
- General Arrangement Layout,
- Bus Tracking,
- Refuse vehicle tracking,
- Road Construction Detail,
- Pavements and Kerbing,
- Signage, road markings,
- Drainage detail,
- Lighting Detail,
- Electricity substation detail,

- Landscaping Plans and Tree Pit Details,
- Updated Tree Survey,
- Phasing Strategy Plan for Phase 1,
- House types – various,
- Layout plans – various,
- Street scenes,
- Covering letter,
- Statement of Community Involvement,
- Environmental Impact Assessment Technical Note,
- Sustainability Statement,
- Design Code Compliance Statement including Design Code Checklist.

- 1.9 The Planning Statement also includes a section on the affordable housing provision as part of this RM Application, cross referenced with the S106 Obligational requirements.
- 1.10 The outline planning application 18/001154/OP was accompanied by an Environmental Statement as it was determined to be Environmental Impact Assessment development under the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2011. Under The Regulations, a 'subsequent application' is *'an application for approval of a matter where the approval – (a) is required by or under a condition to which a planning permission is subject, and (b) must be obtained before all or part of the development permitted by the planning permission may be begun'*, and 'subsequent consent' is *'a consent granted pursuant to a subsequent application'*.
- 1.11 This Phase 1 Residential RM Application is a 'subsequent application'. A separate Environmental Impact Assessment Technical Note accompanies this Phase 1 Residential RM Application having been produced in accordance with Regulation 8 of the aforementioned 2011 Regulations.

2 SITE, SURROUNDINGS AND PLANNING HISTORY

SITE

- 2.1 The Phase 1 Residential RM Application Site is located to the east of Stotfold Road which heads north from the Cambridge Road roundabout on the north-eastern edge of Hitchin. It forms part of the wider Highover Farm development allocation and outline planning permission (18/001154/OP). It is owned by Barratt Redrow.
- 2.2 The redline for this Phase 1 Residential RM Application covers an area either side of The Avenue at its Stotfold Road end sufficient to accommodate the 236 dwellings being applied for and also includes the Hitchin Meadows, Dane Walk, and Stotfold Linear Park areas of open space. It excludes the area that forms part of the Infrastructure RM (24/02780/RM).
- 2.3 The Phase 1 Residential RM Application Site is currently greenfield farmland although it has not been actively farmed for circa the last three/four years.

SURROUNDINGS

- 2.4 The land immediately surrounding the Phase1 Residential RM Application Site will be developed out in further phases of reserved matters for dwellings, open space and associated service and community infrastructure. Beyond the wider development site are existing residential estates to the south, the railway and industrial estates to the west and farmland designated as Green Belt to the east and the edge of Letchworth Garden City.

PLANNING HISTORY

- 2.5 The Highover Farm site was promoted through the review of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan for residential development from circa 2012. In November 2022 the North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011-2031 was finally adopted, with the site confirmed as allocation HT1 Highover Farm for up to 700 dwellings, primary school and neighbourhood centre.
- 2.6 To support the principle of the allocation during the local plan examination process and show delivery intent, an outline planning permission was submitted in April 2018 for the development of the proposed allocation. Following years of discussion with the Council, Hertfordshire County Council as Highway Authority (HCCCHA) and Education Authority, stakeholders and local community, during which time various revisions were made, outline planning permission was eventually granted on 29 November 2024 (18/01154/OP).
- 2.7 As part of that outline planning permission, a Strategic Masterplan Framework Document was approved which identifies the broad design layout and principles of the development that subsequent reserved matters and a Design Code should follow. Specifically, condition 6 on the outline permission requires the submission of a Site Wide Design Code as part of or prior to the first reserved matters application – this was submitted as a separate discharge of condition application concurrently with the Infrastructure RM Application.
- 2.8 The Infrastructure RM was granted planning permission, subject to conditions, on 27th October 2025 under reference 24/02780/RM. This permission provides for the strategic highway (The Avenue) and drainage necessary to open up the site for the residential development.
- 2.9 This Phase 1 Residential RM Application is the first such submission for the residential dwellings within the overall wider development site.

3 PLANNING POLICY

- 3.1 This Phase 1 Residential RM Application is assessed against national policy and the adopted planning policies of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan.

NATIONAL POLICY

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), December 2024

- 3.2 The NPPF is underpinned by a presumption in favour of sustainable development, which the document identifies as a 'golden thread' running through both plan-making and decision-taking.
- 3.3 Paragraph 11 advises that Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) should seek to approve development proposals that accord with an up-to-date Development Plan without delay, whilst also granting permission for proposals in instances where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies most important for determining the application are out of date, unless, inter alia, any adverse impact of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against the policies in the NPPF taken as a whole.
- 3.4 Paragraph 48 confirms that, in line with planning law, applications for planning permission should be determined in accordance with the Development Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 3.5 Paragraph 85 of the NPPF emphasises that planning decisions should help to create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt. Therefore, in the determination of planning applications, significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into consideration both local business needs and wider opportunities for development.
- 3.6 Development should be located in locations which are or can be made sustainable, through limiting the need to travel and offering a genuine choice of transport modes. Paragraph 117 states that applications for development should:
- Give priority to pedestrian and cycle movements,
 - Facilitate access to high quality public transport, with layouts that maximise the catchment area for public transport and encourage such use,
 - Address the transport needs of people with disabilities and reduced mobility,
 - Create places that are safe, secure and attractive, and respond to local character and design standards,
 - Allow for the efficient delivery of goods, and access by service and emergency vehicles, and
 - Be designed to enable charging of plug-in and other ultra-low emission vehicles in safe, accessible and convenient locations.
- 3.7 Paragraphs 131 to 139 are concerned with design and creating well designed places. Paragraph 137 requires that design quality be considered throughout the evolution and assessment of individual proposals. Paragraph 135 requires amongst other things that development should function well and add to the overall quality of the area, are visually attractive and establish and maintain a strong sense of place using arrangements of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit. Paragraph 134 notes that developers may choose to prepare design codes in support of planning applications, in conjunction with or without the local authority.

LOCAL POLICY

Adopted Development Plan

- 3.8 At the local level, the relevant Development Plan for the Phase 1 Residential RM Application Site is the North Hertfordshire Local Plan, adopted in November 2022.
- 3.9 There are a number of policies that are relevant within the wider context of the wider development site and therefore of relevance to the Phase 1 Residential RM Application proposals. The position can be summarised as follows -
- 3.10 Policy T1 requires applicants to demonstrate how the proposed scheme provides for public transport, safe, direct routes for pedestrians and cyclists and integration with existing networks.
- 3.11 Policy D1 is concerned with sustainable design, including the incorporation of SuDS, maximising accessibility, legibility and connectivity internally and between neighbourhoods.

- 3.12 Policy H2 relates to provision of affordable housing at 40%; H3 to housing mix and H4 to accessible and adaptable housing.

4 THE PHASE 1 RESIDENTIAL RM APPLICATION PROPOSAL

4.1 Condition 3 of 18/01154/OP requires the submission of reserved matters (in whole or in phases) prior to the commencement of built development, and Condition 1 requires the first reserved matters submission before the expiry of 3 years from the date of the outline permission.

4.2 In accordance with the above, this Phase 1 Residential RM Application seeks reserved matters approval for –

“The construction of Phase 1 Residential comprising 236 dwellings, associated highway, drainage, servicing/utilities infrastructure, landscaping and open space provision of Hitchin Meadows, Dane Walk, and Stotfold Linear Park in accordance with condition 3 of 18/01154/OP (and the associated partial discharge of conditions 7, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 19 and 21)‘.

4.3 The extent of this development is identified within the Redline Boundary Phase 1 Plan HITPH1-MCB-ZZ-ZZ-DR-A-0199-D5-P1. This reflects and is in accordance with the phasing strategy for the development as submitted under condition 5 of the outline permission (reference plan HITPH1-MCB-ZZ-ZZ-DR-A-0353-D5). It is further confirmed that there have been no changes to that presented in the Phasing Strategy recently discharged under 25/00076/DOC, in respect of the dwelling numbers/affordable housing or the open space areas to be constructed as part of Phase 1.

4.4 The discharge of associated conditions 7, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 19 and 21 are discussed separately in Section 5 of this Statement.

Design, Layout and Materials

4.5 The design and layout of the dwellings reflects the principles set out in the Design Code (recently discharged under condition 6, ref: 24/02906/DOC). A separate Design Code Compliance Statement and a Checklist are also submitted as part of this application in accordance with condition 6, which provides a full explanation of compliance/non-compliance.

4.6 Some 236 dwellings are provided within this phase at the Stotfold Road end of the Site either side of The Avenue on a Site area of circa 6.7ha. The dwellings are a mix of 2/3/4/5 bed houses and 1/2 bed apartments as referenced on the Accommodation Schedule. Affordable housing is also identified and located in accordance with policy and S106 requirements (see Section 5 specifically dealing with this), amounting to 95, some 40% provision being a mix of shared ownership and affordable rent. Some 50% of dwellings are M4(2) compliant and 19% (18) of the affordable are M4(3) standard.

4.7 The dwelling mix is summarized as –

Dwelling Type	Market	Affordable
2 bed house	0	24
3 bed house	96	22
4+ bed house	41	8
1 bed flat/FOG/Maisonette	0	23
2 bed flat/FOG	4	18
TOTAL	141	95

4.8 Building heights within Phase 1 area mix of 3, 2.5 and 2 storeys in accordance with the Design Code. The Avenue is framed by predominantly 2.5 storey houses and 3 storey apartments, the latter away from the Stotfold Road entrance. Higher building heights are also found on corner articulations and vistas.

4.9 Two character areas are presented within this Phase 1 – The Avenue, and Grovelands to the south and north of The Avenue. The street scene plans provided with the application detail the different characteristics applied to the design of each of these character areas in accordance with the Design Code.

Access/Highways

- 4.10 Access into each parcel of residential dwellings is provided via secondary roads (residential streets in the Design Code) leading from The Avenue - these are standard t-junctions with The Avenue. Some informal streets also access directly from The Avenue. Lanes or tertiary streets link secondary streets and informal streets.
- 4.11 The Avenue is also a bus route and a bus stop is provided on the western edge of this Phase.
- 4.12 Parking is provided in accordance with the Design Code and shown on plan HITPH1-MCB-ZZ-ZZ-DR-A-0234-P5.
- 4.13 Lighting, road signage and carriageway markings are all similarly in accordance with the required standards providing a safe and clear environment for all vehicle and non-vehicular users of the road.

Landscaping

- 4.14 The detailed landscaping included within this Phase 1 Residential RM has been designed comprehensively including those area of strategic drainage infrastructure (the infiltration basins, swales and underground pipes) that form part of the approved Infrastructure RM – to enable Officers and public alike to see the design in its full context. However, because of the issue of overlapping reserved matters redlines, the formal set of plans for approval as part of the Phase 1 Residential RM shows the landscape design greyed/hatched out within the area of the Infrastructure RM redline.
- 4.15 Landscaping is in the form of street trees and grass verges. Three specific areas of the open space strategy are provided within this RM application – Hitchin Meadows, Dane Walk and Stotfold Linear Park. Stotfold Linear Park runs parallel to Stotfold Road between it and the new housing; it runs seamlessly from the entrance roundabout north into the larger open space expanse of Hitchin Meadows. It is characterised by a suds soakaway feature, alongside mown grass paths and a hard surface footpath cycleway and new native planting (GL2024-LP-15A /GL2024-LP-19 and GL2024-LP-20/GL2024-LP-24).
- 4.16 Hitchin Meadows provides the principle area of open space within the whole site. It incorporates the attenuation and infiltration basins the technical detail for which has been provided as part of the Infrastructure RM (24/02780/RM). The Phase 1 RM provides the landscaping/planting detail for these drainage features. A variety of habitats are provided through different planting regimes in terms of both grassland, hedgerows, trees and shrubs, as the area serves not only a public open space function, but also a biodiversity net gain and ecological function. A variety of footpaths and cycleways wend their way through the area with benches provided periodically for residents to sit and enjoy the space (Plans GL2024 – LP-16A/17A/18A and GL2024-LP-21/22/23 refer).
- 4.17 A secure and inclusive LEAP play area is provided within Hitchin Meadows, as well as a more open area of play in the form of more rustic trim trail type apparatus – this is located close to the residential dwellings that will be provided within Phase 2 (Plan GL2024-LP-16A refers). A safe and controlled crossing of the northern temporary construction access from the phase 1 dwellings to the play area will be provided until such time that this construction access is removed.
- 4.18 Dane Walk is essentially a linear green space framed by the existing/retained hedgerow, with cycle and footpath access, together with elements of play-on-the-way that links into the Stotfold Linear Park at its eastern end (GL2024-LP-10C/11C/12C refer).

5 AFFORDABLE HOUSING SCHEME

5.1 The S106 Agreement to the outline permission (18/01154/OP) requires, at clause 1.5 of Schedule 2 Part 1, an Affordable Housing Scheme to be submitted for approval in respect of a Phase and/or a Reserved Matters Application containing the following details:

- Number of affordable units in that phase/application,
- A breakdown of type, size, tenure mix in that phase/application,
- The location of each affordable unit in that phase/application,
- The number of M4(3) units within that phase/application including number of bedrooms and tenure.

5.2 Clause 1.1.1 of the aforementioned Schedule requires that 40% of each phase be affordable dwellings, but not less than 35% may be agreed with the Council where there is a demonstration of how the shortfall will be achieved on other phases. Clause 1.2 requires that in each phase at least 65% are to be social rented/affordable rented tenure and 35% intermediate tenure. Clause 1.4 requires the affordable units to be designed in accordance with National Space Standards.

5.3 Plan HITPH1-MCB-ZZ-ZZ-DR-A-0233-P5(Affordable Tenure Plan) identifies the location and tenure of the dwellings provided within this Phase 1 Residential Application. The total number provided is 95 which equates to 40%.

5.4 The percentage split between social/affordable rent and intermediate tenure is 71.6% to 28.4% respectively, thereby according with the S106 schedule 2 Part 1 clause 1.2 requirement.

5.5 The table below details the affordable housing tenure, size, type –

	Size Sqft	RENT		INTERMEDIATE	
		No.	M4(3)	No.	M4(3)
2 bed house	866	24		0	
3 bed house	1025/1049	8		14	
4 bed house	1167	4		4	
2 bed FOG	794			3	
1 bed flat/maisonette/FOG	590 - 713.9	8	13		2
2 bed flat	689.8 – 815.5	8	3	4	
TOTAL		52	16	25	2

6 DISCHARGE OF CONDITIONS

PARTIAL DISCHARGE

Condition 7 – Detailed Highways Plans

6.1 Condition 7 requires –

'All reserved matters applications for each development parcel or sub-phase shall include full details in relation to the design of estate roads (in the form of scaled plans and / or written specifications) shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority to detail the following:

- a. Roads;*
- b. Footways;*
- c. New pedestrian and cycle accesses into the site;*
- d. Cycleways (compliant with LTN 1/20);*
- e. External public lighting;*
- f. Minor artefacts, structures and functional services;*
- g. Foul and surface water drainage;*
- h. Visibility splays;*
- i. Access arrangements including temporary construction access;*
- j. Hard surfacing materials;*
- k. Parking areas for vehicles and cycles;*
- l. Loading areas; and*
- m. Turning and circulation areas.*

The development shall be implemented in accordance with those approved plans'.

6.2 The following plans (as set out in the accompanying Documentation Table) provide all of the detailed specification as necessary for parts (a) to (m) of condition 7 in respect of this Phase 1 Residential RM Application –

General Arrangement including lighting Plans 1-8	HOF-WSP-ZZ-PH1-DR-C-1001-P03, HOF-WSP-ZZ-PH1-DR-C-1002-P03, HOF-WSP-ZZ-PH1-DR-C-1003-P03, HOF-WSP-ZZ-PH1-DR-C-1004-P03, HOF-WSP-ZZ-PH1-DR-C-1005-P03, HOF-WSP-ZZ-PH1-DR-C-1006-P03, HOF-WSP-ZZ-PH1-DR-C-1007-P03, HOF-WSP-ZZ-PH1-DR-C-1008-P01
External Levels Plans 1-8	HOF-WSP-ZZ-PH1-DR-C-1101-P04, HOF-WSP-ZZ-PH1-DR-C-1102-P04, HOF-WSP-ZZ-PH1-DR-C-1103-P04, HOF-WSP-ZZ-PH1-DR-C-1104-P04, HOF-WSP-ZZ-PH1-DR-C-1105-P04, HOF-WSP-ZZ-PH1-DR-C-1106-P04, HOF-WSP-ZZ-PH1-DR-C-1107-P04, HOF-WSP-ZZ-PH1-DR-C-1108-P01
Fire Tracking Plans 1-8	HOF-WSP-ZZ-PH1-DR-C-1101-P04, HOF-WSP-ZZ-PH1-DR-C-1102-P04, HOF-WSP-ZZ-PH1-DR-C-1103-P04, HOF-WSP-ZZ-PH1-DR-C-1104-P04, HOF-WSP-ZZ-PH1-DR-C-1105-P04, HOF-WSP-ZZ-PH1-DR-C-1106-P04, HOF-WSP-ZZ-PH1-DR-C-1107-P04, HOF-WSP-ZZ-PH1-DR-C-1108-P01
Road Construction Details	HOF-WSP-ZZ-PH1-DR-C-7101-P01
Pavement and Kerbing Detail 1-8	HOF-WSP-ZZ-PH1-DR-C-7001-P03, HOF-WSP-ZZ-PH1-DR-C-7002-P03, HOF-WSP-ZZ-PH1-DR-C-7003-P03, HOF-WSP-ZZ-PH1-DR-C-7004-P03, HOF-WSP-ZZ-PH1-DR-C-7005-P03, HOF-WSP-ZZ-PH1-DR-C-7006-P03, HOF-WSP-ZZ-PH1-DR-C-7007-P03, HOF-WSP-ZZ-PH1-DR-C-7008-P01

Refuse Tracking Plans 1-8	HOF-WSP-ZZ-PH1-DR-C-1551-P03, HOF-WSP-ZZ-PH1-DR-C-1552-P03, HOF-WSP-ZZ-PH1-DR-C-1553-P03, HOF-WSP-ZZ-PH1-DR-C-1554-P03, HOF-WSP-ZZ-PH1-DR-C-1555-P03, HOF-WSP-ZZ-PH1-DR-C-1556-P03, HOF-WSP-ZZ-PH1-DR-C-1557-P03, HOF-WSP-ZZ-PH1-DR-C-1558-P01
Parking Areas for Vehicles and Cycles	HITPH1-MCB-ZZ-ZZ-DR-A-0234-D5-P5
Temporary Construction Access Plans	HOF-WSP-S278-TA-DR-C-01101-P03 HOF-WSP-S278-TA-DR-C-01102-P03
Drainage Layout Plans 1-8	HOF-WSP-ZZ-PH1-DR-C-5001-P01, HOF-WSP-ZZ-PH1-DR-C-5002-P01, HOF-WSP-ZZ-PH1-DR-C-5003-P01, HOF-WSP-ZZ-PH1-DR-C-5004-P01, HOF-WSP-ZZ-PH1-DR-C-5005-P01, HOF-WSP-ZZ-PH1-DR-C-5006-P01, HOF-WSP-ZZ-PH1-DR-C-5007-P01, HOF-WSP-ZZ-PH1-DR-C-5008-P01

6.3 These detailed plans have been developed to meet all of the HCC requirements and specifications.

Condition 9 – Lighting

6.4 Condition 9 requires –

'No development shall commence within a development phase until the artificial lighting scheme for that development phase has been approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved lighting scheme for that phase shall be installed, maintained and operated in accordance with the approved details / measures for that phase unless the Local Planning Authority gives its written consent to any variation'.

6.5 The detailed lighting specification, location, etc for the provision of lighting within the residential parcels of Phase 1 and to discharge this condition, is provided on the following plans HOF-WSP-ZZ-PH1-DR-C-1001-P03, HOF-WSP-ZZ-PH1-DR-C-1002-P03, HOF-WSP-ZZ-PH1-DR-C-1003-P03, HOF-WSP-ZZ-PH1-DR-C-1004-P03, HOF-WSP-ZZ-PH1-DR-C-1005-P03, HOF-WSP-ZZ-PH1-DR-C-1006-P03, HOF-WSP-ZZ-PH1-DR-C-1007-P03, HOF-WSP-ZZ-PH1-DR-C-1008-P01.

6.6 The lighting will be offered for adoption to HCC and maintenance will be the responsibility of the adopting authority.

Condition 11 – Landscape

6.7 Condition 11 requires –

'All reserved matters applications for any development parcel or sub-phase shall include the follow design details:

Soft Landscape

- a) Details of trees, hedgerows, habitats, ponds and other natural features it is proposed to retain or remove and details of how they will be protected during the construction phase. Such details to include the tree protection measures in accordance with BS5837:2012.*
- b) Full details of planting plans and written specifications, including cultivation proposals for maintenance and management associated with plant and grass establishment, details of the mix, size, distribution, density and levels of all trees/hedges/shrubs to be planted and the proposed time of planting. The planting plan shall use botanic names to avoid misinterpretation. The plans should include a full schedule of plants;*
- c) 1:100 plans (or at a scale otherwise agreed) with cross-sections of mounding, ponds, ditches and swales and proposed treatment of the edges and perimeters of each development phase;*
- d) The landscape treatment of roads (primary, secondary, tertiary and green) through each development phase;*

- e) *A specification for the establishment of trees within hard landscaped areas including details of space standards (distances from buildings etc.), tree pit details and details of the species, number and spacing of trees and shrubs;*
- f) *The planting and establishment of structural landscape to be provided in advance of all or specified parts of the site as appropriate;*
- g) *Full details of any proposed alterations to existing watercourses/drainage channels and details of any water features;*
- h) *Details and specification of proposed earth modelling, mounding, re-grading and/or embankment areas or changes of level across the site to be carried out including soil quantities, topsoil storage to BS 3882 : 2007, haul routes, proposed levels and contours to be formed, sections through construction to show make-up, and timing of works;*
- i) *A specification for the Topsoil Strip, storage, re-spread and remediation in accordance with Defra : Construction Code of Practice for the Sustainable Use of Soils on Construction Sites.*

Hard Landscape

- j) *Full details, including cross-sections, of all bridges and culverts;*
- k) *The location and specification of minor artefacts and structures, including furniture, refuse or other storage units, signs and lighting columns/brackets;*
- l) *1:200 plans (or at a scale otherwise agreed) including cross sections, of roads, paths and cycleways;*
- m) *Details of all hard surfacing materials (size, type and colour)'.*

6.8 The detailed landscape specification for the provision of the grassed verge, associated tree planting within it along and within the highway network, on plot tree planting of this Phase 1 Residential RM Application and along Dane Walk to discharge this condition, is provided as detailed in paragraph 4.14 above and on plans GL2024-LP-10C-12C and GL2024-LP-01-04. The specification (GL2024-SP-01) is also in accordance with the Design Code.

6.9 To understand the comprehensive landscaping proposals for Hitchin Meadows and Stotfold Linear Park, Plans GL2024-LP-15A-19 provide the detail including the LEAP area. A separate set of plans are provided with the detail corresponding to the redline of the Infrastructure RM greyed out – these are the formal Phase 1 plans for approval (GL2024-LP-20-24).

6.10 Plans HOF-WSP-XXX-ZZ-SK-C-0005-P04/HOF-WSP-XXX-SK-C-0006-P03 and HOF-WSP-ZZ-PH1-DR-C-1101-P04, HOF-WSP-ZZ-PH1-DR-C-1102-P04, HOF-WSP-ZZ-PH1-DR-C-1103-P04, HOF-WSP-ZZ-PH1-DR-C-1104-P04, HOF-WSP-ZZ-PH1-DR-C-1105-P04, HOF-WSP-ZZ-PH1-DR-C-1106-P04, HOF-WSP-ZZ-PH1-DR-C-1107-P04, HOF-WSP-ZZ-PH1-DR-C-1108-P01 identify the general levels across the wider Site and within the area of the Phase 1 Residential Application, in accordance with part h of the condition.

6.11 Not all parts of this condition (g, j) are of relevance to this Phase 1 Residential RM Application.

Condition 10 – Waste and Recycling Collection

6.12 Condition 10 requires –

'Any reserved matters application pursuant to this outline permission for a development phase shall provide full details of the on-site storage facilities for waste including waste for recycling and/or composting. Such details shall identify the specific positions of where wheeled bins will be stationed, and the specific arrangements to enable collection from within 15m of the kerbside of the adopted highway/refuse collection vehicle access point and walk distances for residents. The approved facilities shall be provided prior to the commencement of the use hereby permitted and shall be retained thereafter unless alternative arrangements are agreed in writing by the local planning authority'.

6.13 Plan HITPH1-MCB-ZZ-ZZ-DR-A-0235-D5-P5 identifies the bin store location and the bin collection points together with distances for the apartments within the Phase 1 Residential RM Application. The Design Code identifies that the provision of bins and collection of waste/recycling will be carried out via the Council as per refuse collection arrangements that exist throughout their administrative area.

Condition 12 – Sustainability Statement

6.14 Condition 12 requires –

'Prior to or concurrently with each reserved matters submitted in each phase identified in Condition 5 Phasing and Delivery a sustainability strategy shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority for approval addressing renewable energy, reducing carbon emissions and water conservation'.

- 6.15 A Site wide Sustainability setting out the overarching principles has been submitted to discharge this condition (25/01299/DOC). That Strategy includes a chapter relating to this Phase 1 RM. In addition to that, and for the avoidance of doubt, for this Phase 1 RM submission, a separate short Sustainability Statement is included, which identifies the specific measures that are incorporated into the RM application (document ref: 02927_SUST, June 2025, by Turley).

Condition 13 – open space management

- 6.16 A short note on this is provided as part of the application. It is linked with the provisions of the LEMP in respect of condition 21.

Condition 21 - LEMP

- 6.17 Revisions to the wording of this condition have been submitted via S96a which is still being determined. Work has nonetheless commenced on the detail to be provided as part of the Phase 1 RM and will be submitted in a few weeks.

7 PLANNING ASSESSMENT

7.1 Paragraph 2 of the NPPF states that planning law (namely, Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990) requires all planning applications to be determined in accordance with the Development Plan, unless there are material considerations that indicate otherwise.

7.2 This section provides an assessment of the key planning considerations relevant to the determination of the Phase 1 Residential RM Application and associated conditions and is informed by the information contained within the preceding chapters of this Statement and other supporting application documentation.

PRINCIPLE OF DEVELOPMENT

7.3 The principle of the Proposed Development has already been established through the outline planning permission, 18/01154/OP for the wider development site. In addition, the outline application documentation included a Design and Access Statement and an approved Strategic Masterplan Framework Document in which the parameters and principles of the layout and design of the Proposed Development were set out. The Design Code provides further detail in terms of design principles that this RM Application has followed and the Design Code Compliance Statement/Checklist confirms this.

7.4 The Proposed Development is itself sustainable development in accordance with the NPPF and Development Plan policies and also contributes to the overarching principle of achieving sustainable development in the wider context. In particular –

- In economic and social terms, the proposals will assist in supporting a strong and vibrant community in Hitchin by providing new much needed housing and open space; will provide new employment opportunities for the local workforce, both directly from the physical construction of the road and drainage infrastructure and housing and indirectly through the social benefits that such further development brings with it, and
- In environmental terms, the proposals will assist in achieving sustainable development through the provision of safe alternative modes of transport, reducing the need to rely on private vehicles with consequential reduced impact on air quality.

7.5 Furthermore, the Proposed Development is part of the allocated site HT1 within the adopted Development Plan.

7.6 As such, in accordance with paragraph 11 of the NPPF, planning permission should be granted, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The other material considerations pertaining to this Phase 1 Residential RM Application are considered in turn below.

HOUSING DELIVERY

7.7 The Proposed Development provides some 257 (95 of which are affordable) of the 700 dwellings to be built on the Highover Farm site as a whole. The Proposed Development forms part of the largest allocated and consented site within Hitchin and is a major part of the Council's housing delivery requirement over the next few years. permission. Without the Proposed Development, the Council will not be able to meet its social, economic, housing and environmental growth objectives for Hitchin of the District as a whole.

HIGHWAY DESIGN AND ACCESS CONSIDERATIONS

7.8 Paragraph 109 of the NPPF states that significant development should be located in locations which are, or can be made sustainable, through limiting the need to travel and offering genuine choice of transport modes. Furthermore, adopted Policy SP6 reinforces the Council's position in seeking to minimise private car travel, by providing linkages via footways and cycle paths, and by supporting access to public transport.

7.9 The design of The Avenue means that buses can easily service and access the wider development from High Dane to Stotfold Road without having to turn around, providing an improved, regular and more efficient service. A bus stop is provided on The Avenue within this Phase 1 Residential RM Application.

7.10 The provision of cycleways and pedestrian footpaths that are provided along and linking to The Avenue from the residential parcels increases the ability of residents to make safe non-vehicular choices to move around the wider development. In the wider Hitchin context, the provision of segregated cycle and pedestrian links through from High Dane to Stotfold Road which then link into the new Toucan crossing on Stotfold Road and new dedicated off-road route east cross the field to join up with the Letchworth Greenway provides Hitchin residents with a safe, attractive and more direct link between the two towns as an alternative to the existing road network.

- 7.11 In this context, the Phase 1 Residential RM Application demonstrates that the Proposed Development is accessible by sustainable transport modes, including walking, cycling and public transport.
- 7.12 The Proposed Development is appropriately designed and encourages active travel and as such, accords with both the NPPF and local policies and highway design standards.
- 7.13 A variety of secondary road, lanes and tertiary road using different surface treatment to slow speeds and create legibility throughout the residential parcels have been incorporated into the highway network design alongside the aforementioned pedestrian cycle links/routes.

FLOOD RISK AND DRAINAGE

- 7.14 The Proposed Development is not expected to increase flood risk elsewhere within the wider site or Hitchin generally, and surface water runoff can be suitably managed in accordance with the NPPF and adopted policies SP11, D1 and NE7.
- 7.15 The original Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy was submitted as part of the now approved outline application. The principles of this surface water drainage strategy identify that SUDs drainage techniques are achievable on the Site which is in accordance with adopted Policies SP11, NE7 and D1.
- 7.16 Foul drainage is catered for through connection to the Anglian Water sewer network.
- 7.17 The surface and foul drainage provision for this Phase 1 Residential RM Application reflects the longstanding principles for this site and which form the detail that has also been submitted to discharge condition 15 (25/01378/DOC) of the outline permission.

GROUND CONDITIONS AND ARCHAEOLOGY

- 7.18 The Proposed Development is not anticipated to create or increase the risk of contamination. The Phase 2 Assessment Report has been accepted as appropriate and condition 20 (Ref: 25/00916/DOC) of the outline permission has consequently been discharged. The report identifies that contamination linkages are absent and that consequently the site is suitable for the proposed use, that the soils confirm no asbestos and that piled foundations or ground improvement is not necessary – a Remediation Strategy is therefore not necessary.
- 7.19 The wider site, including that part subject of this Phase 1 Residential RM Application, has been the subject of a desk-based archaeological assessment, geophysical analysis and trial trenching evaluation.
- 7.20** A Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) has been agreed with the County Archaeologist, albeit it the condition on the outline permission has still to be formally discharged. The WSI identifies two types of further archaeological work to be undertaken in three areas prior to any development (see Plan Figure 2 in **Appendix 1**) –
- Area 1: An open area of excavation measuring circa 1.22ha, located around the school and Highover Park, and
 - Areas 2 & 3: Areas of strip, map and record/sample of circa 6.43ha extending from the very northern part of the wider development site to the south-eastern boundary with the existing adjacent estate development.
- 7.21 Area 1 is outside of this Phase 1 RM Application site area.
- 7.22 Areas 2 & 3 are encompassed within this Phase 1 RM Application site area. The WSI required archaeological mitigation works have been in progress since early June 2025 and are anticipated to be completed by early September, notwithstanding extensions to the current scope of works (yet to be agreed at the time of writing).
- 7.23 Notable archaeological remains identified within Areas 2 and 3 include a number of burials part of a cemetery, as well as settlement and industrial activity, including possible evidence of copper smelting, predominantly of late Iron Age and Roman date. Area 3 includes postholes which are currently considered to be the remains of a Neolithic house.
- 7.24 Sign off by the Hertfordshire Senior Historic Environment Advisor for the mitigation works in Areas 2 and 3 is currently awaited. It is likely that further excavation works will be required, but it is not clear at this point what this may entail and associated timescales but will likely include the full excavation of some of the features already identified, notably in Area 3. If and where full excavation is required, this would mean that the Proposed Development is not anticipated to impact on the archaeological or heritage asset.
- 7.25 The Hertfordshire Senior Historic Environment Advisor has been undertaking regular site monitoring visits and has been pleased with the work completed to date. Some visits have also been undertaken with the North Hertfordshire Museum Curator and Heritage Access Officer who has also been advising

on the results of the mitigation work. Reporting on this will take place as per the WSI and in accordance with condition16 of the outline permission.

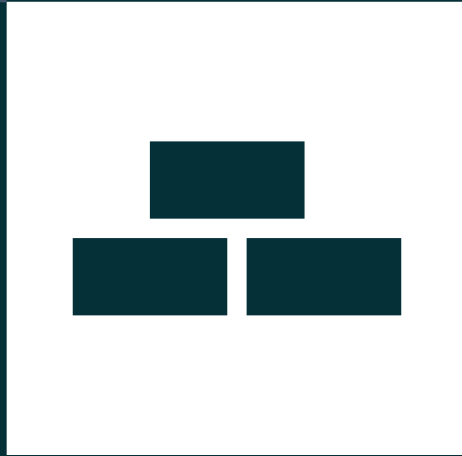
ECOLOGY AND BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN (BNG)

- 7.26 The outline application was submitted prior to the Environment Act and Biodiversity Net Gain Regulations coming into effect, notwithstanding (i) that the actual planning permission was granted post the legislation, and (ii) that the outline permission proposals have actually been designed to provide net gain in excess of 10%.
- 7.27 BNG is provided across the wider development site as a whole and provision is not specifically related to an individual reserved matters phase or application. BNG is governed through the production of an Outline Landscape Environmental Management Plan (OLEMP) to be submitted through the discharge of Condition 21 – this will also detail the percentage and location of that BNG which is being provided within the Phase 1 RM. General enhancements like bird and bat boxes, hibernacula, etc is detailed as part of the Design Code and within the landscape drawings that have been submitted.

8 CONCLUSIONS

- 8.1 This Planning Statement forms part of a suite of documents and plans which have been prepared in support of this Phase 1 Residential RM Application and the discharge/partial discharge of associated conditions. This Application is for the construction of the first 257 dwellings, of which 95 are affordable, as approved under 18/01154/OP.
- 8.2 The following conclusions are drawn:
- The principle of the Proposed Development is established through the outline planning permission,
 - That the Proposed Development of this Phase 1 Residential RM Application and associated conditions is sustainable as it (i) links into and integrates with the existing surrounding highway network via Stotfold Road providing not only vehicle access but also safe inclusive access for cyclists and pedestrians, and (ii) provides much needed market and affordable housing,
 - The Proposed Development provides construction employment opportunities for the local community,
 - The Proposed Development accords with the Design Code and other relevant Building Regulations, standards and principles, and
 - The Proposed Development accords with both national and local planning policies and principles and would help achieve economic and housing planning policy aims and objectives.
- 8.3 Consequently, when considered against the Development Plan and the Framework, the benefits of the Proposed Development clearly outweigh any residual negative impact, and there are no specific policies that would either preclude the construction of the Proposed Development or would indicate that it should be resisted on development management or technical grounds.
- 8.4 To that effect, the Phase 1 Residential RM Application and the associated conditions should be approved/discharged without delay.





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