

DELEGATED FILE NOTE

CASE OFFICER: ...Henry Thomas.....

APPLICATION REFERENCE	BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT	APPLICATION SITE
26/01132/FP	Erection of 5 detached dwellings (use class C3) with associated car ports, access, parking, EV charging points and landscaping following demolition of no. 2 existing equestrian buildings.	Glebe House New Inn Road Hinxworth Baldock Hertfordshire SG7 5HB

Submitted Plan Nos

SRL.026.25 224420-3-PL-00-001 REV A 224420-3-PL-01-100 224420-3-PL-01-200 224420-3-PL-01-300 224420-3-PL-01-301 224420-3-PL-02-100 224420-3-PL-02-101 224420-3-PL-02-300 224420-3-PL-02-301 224420-3-PL-S-00-100 REV B 224420-3-PL-S-00-101 REV A 224420-3-PL-03-300 224420-3-PL-S-00-102 REV A 224420-3-PL-03-100 224420-3-PL-03-101 224420-3-PL-03-301 224420-3-PL-04-100 224420-3-PL-04-101 224420-3-PL-04-110 224420-3-PL-04-200 224420-3-PL-04-300 224420-3-PL-04-301 224420-3-PL-05-100 224420-3-PL-05-101 224420-3-PL-05-110 224420-3-PL-05-200 224420-3-PL-05-300 224420-3-PL-05-301 224420-PL-EX-300 224420-PL-EX-301 5809-SK05 Rev A 5809-SK06

1.0 Policies

D1	Sustainable design
D3	Protecting living conditions
SP1	Sustainable development in North Herts
SP9	Design and Sustainability
CGB1	Rural Areas beyond the Green Belt.
CGB4	Exist buildings in the RA Beyond GB
T2	Parking
SP2	Settlement Hierarchy and Spatial Distrib
SECN4	Achieving sustainable development
SECN12	Making effective use of land
SECN14	Achieving well-designed places

2.0 Site History

- 2.1 25/02408/FP - Four dwellings (use class c3) together with associated car ports, access, parking and landscaping following demolition of No.2 equestrian buildings. (Amended plans received 17/11/25).

Conditional Permission.

- 2.2 91/00307/1 - Retention of use of agricultural land for stabling and grazing of horses and use of part of barn for indoor exercise area.

Conditional Permission.

- 2.3 86/00051/1 - Conversion and adaptation of part of existing stable block into residential use, to be occupied by agricultural students associated with Glebe Farm.

Conditional Permission.

Neighbouring Sites: Place Farm

- 2.4 23/01232/FP - Change of use of land to residential and conversion of two existing barns to create two 4-bed detached dwellings with detached garage, car port, landscaping and creation of additional vehicular access following demolition of farmhouse garage and workshop.

Conditional Permission.

3.0 **Representations**

- 3.1 **Site Notice and Neighbour Consultation** – three received. One in objection and two neutral comments. They are summarised as:

- ☐ Loss of openness and harm to rural character
- ☐ Water pressure and infrastructure capacity
- ☐ Lack of neighbour notification.
- ☐ Swift boxes should be conditioned

- 3.2 **Hinxworth Parish Council** – No objection.

- 3.3 **Environmental Health** – No objection, Conditions recommended for:

- ☐ Phase 2 Land contamination investigation report.
- ☐ Validation Report
- ☐ EV Charger

- 3.4 **Hertfordshire County Council highways** – No objection. Condition recommended for:

- ☐ Existing Access – Widened or Improved
- ☐ Surface water discharge

- 3.5 **NHC Ecology** – No objection. Conditions recommended for:

- ☐ Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan
- ☐ Ecological Enhancement Plan
- ☐ A lighting design strategy.

- 3.6 **NHC North Herts Waste** – None received.

4.0 **Planning Considerations**

4.1 **Site and Surroundings**

- 4.1.1 The site is an equestrian yard on the west side of New Inn Road. The yard is served by an existing access onto New Inn Road. The Yard consists of two barn buildings. The site is located within Rural Area Beyond the Green Belt

4.2 **Proposal**

- 4.2.1 Planning permission is sought for the erection of 5 detached dwellings (use class C3) with associated car ports, access, parking, EV charging points and landscaping following demolition of no. 2 existing equestrian buildings.

- 4.2.2 The proposal seeks to erect three 4-bedroom dwellings and one 5-bedroom dwelling around a green and one 3-bedroom dwelling along the access road. All but one of the dwellings have a double garage. Plot 4 is served by a triple garage. Each dwelling has a modest rear garden. There are 2 visitor spaces proposed on the south side of the access road.

- 4.2.2 Plots 2-5 are two storey dwellings with kitchen / dining room, utility /boot room, bathroom, lounge and study on ground floor level and bedrooms / en-suites at first floor level. Plot 1 is a 3 bedroom bungalow dwelling consisting of kitchen / dining / lounge, utility room, study and bedrooms with en-suite.

- 4.2.2 The proposed materials are:

- ☐ Walls – Red brickwork & Horizontal timber weatherboarding
- ☐ Roof – Grey slate tiles.
- ☐ Windows - White Aluminium
- ☐ Doors - White Aluminium

- 4.2.3 The proposed dwellings are:

- ☐ House 1 – 3 bed, Gross internal area: 146.16 sq m
- ☐ House 2 – 4 bed, Gross internal area: 222.78 sq m
- ☐ House 3 – 4 bed, Gross internal area: 255.20 Sq m
- ☐ House 4 – 4 bed, Gross internal area: 252.91 Sq m
- ☐ House 5 – 4 bed, Gross internal area: 253.69 Sq m

4.3 **Key Issues**

- 4.3.1 The key issues for consideration are as follows:

- ☐ Principle of Development
- ☐ Five year land supply
- ☐ Sustainability
- ☐ The acceptability of the design of the proposed development and its resultant impact on the character and appearance of the area.

- The impact that the proposed development would have on the living conditions of both future occupiers and neighbouring properties.
- The impact that the proposed development would have on highway safety and car parking provision in the area.

Principle of Development – Rural Area Beyond the Green Belt

- 4.3.2 Policy S5 of the NPPF states that “only certain forms of development should be approved outside settlements...unless the benefits of doing so would be substantially outweighed by any adverse effects”. This includes development such as:

“The redevelopment of previously developed land (including a material change of use to residential or mixed-use including residential).”

- 4.3.3 The NPPF definition for Previously Development Land is:

“Land which has been lawfully developed and is or was occupied by a permanent structure and any fixed surface infrastructure associated with it, including the curtilage of the developed land (although it should not be assumed that the whole of the curtilage should be developed). It also includes land comprising large areas of fixed surface infrastructure such as large areas of hardstanding which have been lawfully developed. Previously developed land excludes: land that is or was last occupied by agricultural or forestry buildings; land that has been developed but where provision for restoration has been made through development management procedures (including development related to minerals extraction, waste disposal by landfill and renewable and low carbon energy development, where provision for restoration exists); land in built-up areas such as residential gardens, parks, recreation grounds and allotments; and land that was previously developed but where the remains of the permanent structure or fixed surface structure have blended into the landscape

- 4.3.4 The application site is an equestrian barn and stables which would fall under the NPPF definition of Previously Development Land. As such, the NPPF supports the principle of residential development on this site.

- 4.3.5 The application site falls within the Rural Area Beyond the Green Belt where Policy CGB4 of the Local Plan states:

“Planning permission for the re-use, replacement or extension of buildings in the Rural Area beyond the Green Belt will be granted provided that:

- c) The resultant building(s) do not have a materially greater impact on the openness, purposes or general policy aims of the Rural Area beyond the Green Belt than the original building(s)”*

- 4.3.6 The proposal seeks a floorspace and volume trade off with the existing equestrian buildings. The proposal would see a 23.75% decrease in built footprint and a 9.21% decrease in built volume. However, that being said, the proposed layout of the site and the siting of plots 2 – 5 away from the footprint of the existing barn would have an inherently greater impact on the openness of the site. The proposal would result in the further urbanisation and sprawl of the site. It is acknowledged that some views of the site from the public realm are possible through

the gaps in the treeline along New Inn Road. In my view, the applicant has attempted to site the dwellings reasonably close to the footprint of the existing barn and their general appearance would be visually appropriate for their setting. As such, I consider that harm to the openness of the site would be minor when compared against the existing buildings, but recommend that permitted development rights are removed to ensure that any further impacts in the future are assessed.

- 4.3.7 It is acknowledged that there is some policy conflict between Policies CGB1/CGB4 of the Local Plan and Policy S5 of the NPPF. The NPPF was published August 2026 and therefore supersedes the local plan in this instance of policy conflict. As such, the principle of residential development in this location is supported unless the benefits are substantially outweighed by any adverse effects.

Sustainability

- 4.3.11 The overarching purpose of the planning system is to contribute to achieving sustainable development, as stated in Section 2 of the NPPF. This is considered against the three objectives of sustainable development, the economic, social and environmental objectives.
- 4.3.8 Firstly, in terms of the economic objective, the proposed development would see the delivery of jobs during the build/construction phase which is a benefit. Secondly, in terms of the social objective, this proposal would add an additional dwelling to the District's housing supply which could be delivered in a relatively short space of time. Lastly, in terms of the environmental objective, the proposal would incorporate some sustainable building features, such as an EV charging point and new landscaping where appropriate.
- 4.3.9 Overall, on the grounds of sustainability, the economic and social benefits of the proposal are modest in my opinion, which is relative to the scale of development of 5 dwellings. Moreover, there would be some environmental benefits through the incorporation of sustainable building features. Overall, moderate weight is attributed to these benefits.

Design, layout and Landscaping

- 4.3.15 Policy D1 of the Local Plan states that planning permission will be granted provided that development responds positively to the site's local context in addition to other criteria. Policy SP9 of the Local Plan further considers that new development will be supported where it is well designed and located and responds positively to its local context. These considerations are echoed in Section 12 of the NPPF.
- 4.3.16 New Inn Road is predominantly rural and open, however there is some sporadic development. The application site is set back sufficiently from the highway and therefore limited views are achievable through the gaps in the treeline. Two barns style dwellings have been erected opposite the site (planning ref: 24/00442/S73) with similar materials.
- 4.3.17 The proposed dwellings have been designed with a similar roof form and materials appropriate for the agrarian setting. Similarly designed dwellings were approved under the previous scheme (25/02408/FP). The proposed dwellings all would have a generous internal area, with modest private gardens.

- 4.3.18 Notwithstanding the non-compliance with Policy CGB1 and CGB4, the proposal would comply with Policies SP9 and D1 of the Local Plan, and Section 12 of the NPPF in terms of the design of the scheme.

Impact on Neighbouring Properties

- 4.3.19 Policy D1 of the Local Plan also requires that development proposals meet or exceed the nationally described space standards. Policy D3 of the Local Plan states that planning permission will be granted for development proposals which do not cause unacceptable harm to living conditions. These considerations are echoed within Section 14 of the NPPF.

Impact to future occupiers

- 4.3.20 The houses are acceptable in size, all exceeding the minimum space requirements of these standards. This, along with private rear gardens, on plot parking and bin and bike storage means that these houses can be considered to represent a good standard of amenity for future occupiers, and Policy D1 is considered to be met in this regard. The new homes will provide a fairly traditional relationship with each other and will not give rise to unacceptable overlooking of each other's homes.

Impact on Neighbouring residential properties

- 4.3.21 The dwellings are sufficiently set off the boundary with the host dwelling Glebe House. The proposed side windows on Plot 4 at first floor level would serve a bathroom. Should permission be granted, a condition for obscure glazing to ensure no overlooking could be utilised.
- 4.3.22 The application is therefore considered to be in accordance with the aims of Policy D3 of the Local Plan.

Highways and Parking

- 4.3.23 The site would be accessed via the existing access. The Highway Authority have formally commented on this application, stating no objection with conditions and informatives. It is not considered that nine dwellings in this location would have a significant material impact on traffic and highway safety in this area compared to the existing use of the site. The proposal provides adequate space to allow for vehicles to turn and exit the site in forward gear.
- 4.3.25 The provision of 2 parking spaces per dwelling, bicycle storage within the garages and 2 visitor parking spaces would satisfy the requirements under Policy T2 of the Local Plan.

Bin Stores and Collection

- 4.3.26 The proposed development would be served by a bin collection within the site that would not be visible from the site entrance and would therefore reduce the harm from bin blight on the street scene. Residents will be able to store bins in the ample spaces to the side and/or to the rear of the houses

Biodiversity and landscaping

- 4.3.27 The proposed development is supported by a biodiversity metric and ecological impact assessment which assures that a 10% biodiversity net gain can be achieved in line with Article 2(1) of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015. NHC Ecologist has recommended a condition for a Habitat Management Plan and Ecological Enhancement Plan to secure these gains.
- 4.3.28 The site would have a relatively small amount of new hard landscaping, and a large amount of new planting. The new hard landscaping is not considered excessive in relation to the size of the proposal. If permission was to be granted, details of new hard and soft landscaping would be required by condition. The proposal complies with Policy NE2 of the Local Plan.
- 4.3.29 With regards to public comments received asking for Swift Boxes, this is covered by the Ecological Enhancement Plan.

Other Matters

- 4.3.30 With regards to the public comments. It is a requirement of the water companies to improve infrastructure to meet the demand of housing within the local area. Regarding the lack of consultation, a site notice was displayed outside the site fronting New Inn Road, neighbour consultation letters were also sent to properties along New Inn Road and the Hinxworth High Street.

4.4 Conclusion

- 4.4.1 Acceptable in planning terms.

4.5 Alternative Options

- 4.5.1 None applicable

5.0 Recommendation

- 5.1 That planning permission be **GRANTED** subject to the following conditions:

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of 3 years from the date of this permission.

Reason: To comply with the provisions of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

2. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out wholly in accordance with the details specified in the application and supporting approved documents and plans listed above.

Reason: To ensure the development is carried out in accordance with details which form the basis of this grant of permission.

3. Prior to the first commencement, the hereby permitted vehicular access improvements, as indicated on drawing number SK05 Rev A, shall be completed and thereafter retained in accordance with details/specifications to be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority in consultation with the Highway Authority. Measures to ensure the existing drainage channel at the access remains operational must be provided.

Reason: To ensure construction of a satisfactory access and in the interests of highway safety, traffic movement and amenity in accordance with Policy 5 of Hertfordshire's Local Transport Plan (adopted 2018).

4. Prior to the first use of the development hereby permitted, arrangement shall be made for surface water from the proposed development to be intercepted and disposed of separately so that it does not discharge onto the highway carriageway.

Reason: To avoid the carriage of extraneous material or surface water from or onto the highway in accordance with Policy 5 of Hertfordshire's Local Transport Plan (adopted 2018).

5. No development approved by this permission shall take place until a Phase 2 investigation report, as recommended by the previously submitted HESI Ltd report dated April 2025 (Ref: 19533), has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Where found to be necessary by the phase 2 report a remediation strategy to deal with the risks associated with contamination of the site shall also be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The remediation strategy shall include an options appraisal giving full details of the remediation measures required and how they are to be undertaken. The strategy shall include a plan providing details of how the remediation works shall be judged to be complete and arrangements for contingency action.

Reason: To prevent unacceptable risk to Human Health and Controlled Waters and to prevent pollution of the Environment in accordance with the aims and Paragraphs 187(f), 196 and 197 of the National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024).

6. Prior to any permitted dwelling being occupied a validation report shall be submitted and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority to demonstrate the effectiveness of any agreed Remediation Strategy. Any such validation shall include responses to any unexpected contamination discovered during works.

Reason: To prevent unacceptable risk to Human Health and Controlled Waters and to prevent pollution of the Environment in accordance with the aims and Paragraphs 187(f), 196 and 197 of the National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024).

7. The development shall not commence until a Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan (HMMP), prepared in accordance with the approved Biodiversity Gain Plan has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the local planning authority and including;
- (a) a non-technical summary;
 - (b) the roles and responsibilities of the people or organisation(s) delivering the [HMMP];
 - (c) the planned habitat creation and enhancement works in accordance with the approved Biodiversity Gain Plan;
 - (d) the management measures to maintain habitat in accordance with the approved Biodiversity Gain Plan for a period of 30 years from the completion of development;
 - (e) the monitoring methodology and frequency in respect of the created or enhanced habitat to be submitted to the local planning authority.
- The agreed measures are to be implemented on site prior to the first occupation of the first dwellinghouse hereby approved and shall remain on site thereafter.

8. No development shall take place until an Ecological Enhancement Plan (EEP) for the creation of new wildlife features such as the inclusion of integrated bird/bat and bee boxes in buildings/structures, and hedgehog holes in fences has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority.

Reason: To ensure development is ecologically sensitive and secures biodiversity enhancements in accordance with the North Herts Local Plan policy NE4.

9. A lighting design strategy for biodiversity for the site shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The strategy shall;
- a) identify those areas/features on site to which bats and other nocturnal species are particularly sensitive and that are likely to cause disturbance in or around their breeding sites and resting places, or along important routes used to reach key areas of their territory, for example, for foraging,
- and b) show how and where external lighting will be installed (through the provision of appropriate lighting contour plans and technical specifications) so that it can be clearly demonstrated that areas to be lit will not disturb or prevent the above species using their territory or having access to their breeding sites and resting places.

All external lighting shall be installed in accordance with the specifications and locations set out in the strategy, and these shall be maintained thereafter in accordance with the strategy. Under no circumstances should any other external lighting be installed without prior consent from the local planning authority.

10. Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015 as amended no development as set out in Classes A, B, C, D and E of Part 1 of Schedule 2 to the Order, (or any subsequent Statutory Instrument which revokes, amends and/or replaces those provisions) shall be carried out without first obtaining a specific planning permission from the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: Given the nature of this development, the Local Planning Authority considers

that development which would normally be "permitted development" should be retained within planning control in the interests of the character and amenities of the area and to comply with Policy D1 and/or Policy D3 of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011 to 2031.

11. Before any development commences on site landscape details are to be submitted to and approved in writing by the LPA. The details must be implemented on site in the first planting season following the substantial completion of the development hereby permitted. The details shall include:

- a) what new trees, shrubs, hedges and grassed areas are to be planted, together with the species proposed and the size and density of planting;
- b) the location and type of any new walls, fences or other means of enclosure and any hardscaping proposed;
- c) details of any earthworks proposed.

Reason: To ensure the submitted details are sufficiently comprehensive to enable proper consideration to be given to the appearance of the completed development.

12. The approved details of landscaping shall be carried out before the end of the first planting season following either the first occupation of any of the buildings or the completion of the development, whichever is the sooner; and any trees or plants which, within a period of 5 years from the completion of the development, die, are removed or become seriously damaged or diseased, shall be replaced during the next planting season with others of similar size and species, unless the Local Planning Authority agrees in writing to vary or dispense with this requirement.

Reason: To safeguard and enhance the appearance of the completed development and the visual amenity of the locality, and to comply with Policy NE2 of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011 to 2031.

13. The window(s) at first floor level on the east elevation of Plot 4 of the development hereby permitted shall be permanently glazed with obscure glass.

Reason: To safeguard the privacy of the occupiers of the adjacent dwelling and to comply with Policy D3 of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011 to 2031.

Biodiversity Net Gain

1. The effect of paragraph 13 of Schedule 7A to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 is that planning permission granted for the development of land in England is deemed to have been granted subject to the condition "(the biodiversity gain condition)" that development may not begin unless:
- (a) a Biodiversity Gain Plan has been submitted to the planning authority, and
 - (b) the planning authority has approved the plan.
- The planning authority, for the purposes of determining whether to approve a Biodiversity Gain Plan if one is required in respect of this permission would be North Hertfordshire District Council.
- There are statutory exemptions and transitional arrangements which mean that the biodiversity gain condition does not always apply

(<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/biodiversity-net-gain-exempt-developments>).

Based on the information available this permission is considered to be one which will require the approval of a biodiversity gain plan before development is begun because none of the statutory exemptions or transitional arrangements are considered to apply.

Proactive Statement:

Planning permission has been granted for this proposal. Discussion with the applicant to seek an acceptable solution was not necessary in this instance. The Council has therefore acted proactively in line with the requirements of the Framework (paragraph 38) and in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015.

Informative/s:

1. It is an offence under section 137 of the Highways Act 1980 for any person, without lawful authority or excuse, in any way to wilfully obstruct the free passage along a highway or public right of way. If this development is likely to result in the public highway or public right of way network becoming routinely blocked (fully or partly) the applicant must contact the Highway Authority to obtain their permission and requirements before construction works commence.

Further information is available via the County Council website at:

<https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/highways-roads-and-pavements/business-and-developer-information/business-licences/business-licences.aspx> or by telephoning 0300 1234047.

2. It is an offence under section 148 of the Highways Act 1980 to deposit compost, dung or other material for dressing land, or any rubbish on a made up carriageway, or any or other debris on a highway to the interruption of any highway user. Section 149 of the same Act gives the Highway Authority powers to remove such material at the expense of the party responsible. Therefore, best practical means shall be taken at all times to ensure that all vehicles leaving the site during construction of the development and use thereafter are in a condition such as not to emit dust or deposit mud, slurry or other debris on the highway. Further information is available by telephoning 0300 1234047.
3. The applicant is advised that in order to comply with this permission it will be necessary for the developer of the site to enter into an agreement with Hertfordshire County Council as Highway Authority under Section 278 of the Highways Act 1980 to ensure the satisfactory completion of the access and associated road improvements. The construction of such works must be undertaken to the satisfaction and specification of the Highway Authority, and by a contractor who is authorised to work in the public highway. Before works commence the applicant will need to apply to the Highway Authority to obtain their permission and requirements.

Further information is available via the County Council website at:

<https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/highways-roads-and-pavements/business-and-developer-information/development-management/highways-development-management.aspx> or by telephoning 0300 1234047.

4. The applicant is advised that all new roads associated with this development will remain unadopted (and shall not be maintained at public expense by the highway authority). At the entrance of the new estate the road name plate should indicate that it is a private road, and the developer should put in place permanent arrangements for long-term maintenance.

Signed  Sarah Kasparian	Development Management North Hertfordshire District Council Council Offices Gernon Road Letchworth Herts SG6 3JF
Determining Officer Date: 13 October 2026	