

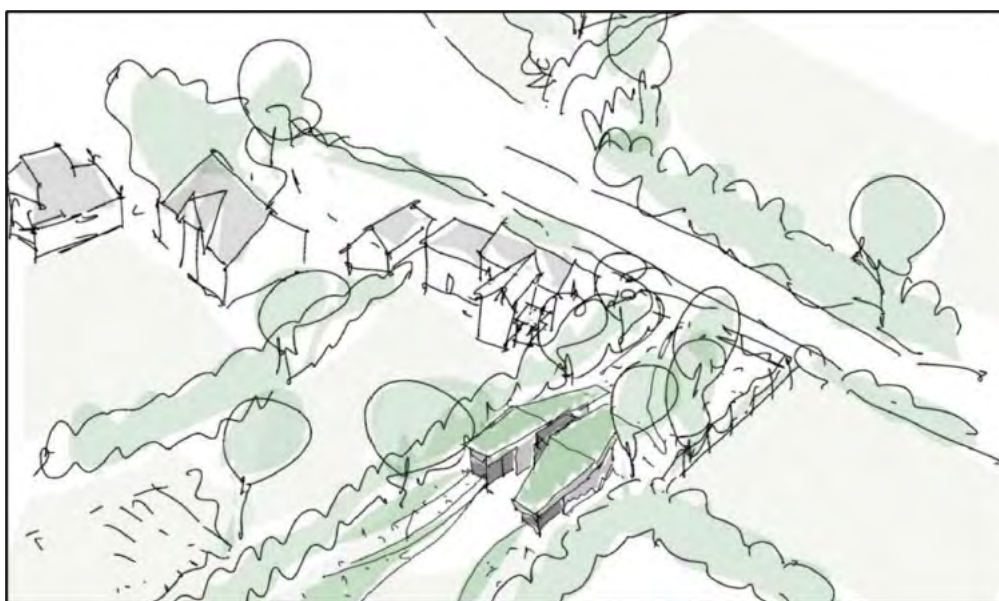
PLANNING APPEAL - STATEMENT OF CASE

Land Adjacent to 1 Ninesprings Cottage, Wymondley Road, Hitchin, SG4

9QL

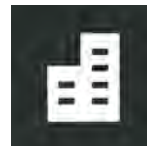
Job Ref: 24/056

Date: May 2026



Prepared by Tom Donovan BA (Hons), MA, MRTPI on behalf of

PETER GEORGE TOWN PLANNING



PAGE INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK

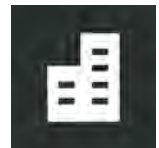


Table of Contents

Section 1: Introduction & Background	4
Section 2: Analysis of the Site and Surroundings	6
Section 3: The Development Proposal	9
Section 4: Relevant Planning Policy	11
Section 5: Planning Analysis	14
Section 6: Summary & Conclusions	28

APPENDIX 1: Decision Notice Application Ref. 26/00361/PIP

APPENDIX 2: Delegated Report Application Ref. 26/00361/PIP

APPENDIX 3: Five-Year Housing Land Supply Update (November 2025)

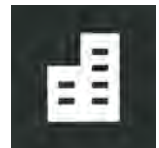


Section 1: Introduction & Background

Introduction

- 1.1 Peter George Town Planning has been instructed by Mr Hill (the Appellant) to submit an appeal on their behalf against the decision of North Hertfordshire District Council (the Council) to refuse permission in principle for the erection of a single dwelling.
- 1.2 Application reference 26/00361/PIP was refused by the Council by notice (attached as **Appendix 1**) dated 22/04/2026 for the following reason:

“1. The proposal would comprise inappropriate development in the Green Belt and it is considered that the proposed dwelling in this location would be unacceptable for this reason. Therefore the proposed development would contravene Policies SP2 and SP5 of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011-2031 and Section 13 of the NPPF.”
- 1.3 The appellant is of the view that the Council have erred in their refusal of the planning application. The purpose of this statement is therefore to provide an analysis of the proposals in light of the Council’s reasons for



refusal and ultimately make the case that the appeal should be allowed, and planning permission granted.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

Ref.	Proposal	Decision
26/00361/PIP	Erection of one detached dwelling	Refused 22/04/2026
25/01077/PRE	Pre Application Advice: Erection of 1 detached 4 bed low energy dwelling	Advice issued 11/07/2025
15/02037/1	Change of use of farmland to residential and erection of 2 x 3-bed dwellings as semi-detached pair	Refused 25/09/2015



Section 2: Analysis of the Site and Surroundings

The Appeal Site

- 2.1 The appeal site is an undeveloped parcel of land immediately to the south side of Wymondley Road on the outskirts of Hitchin. The site bounds the defined settlement area of Hitchin but is located within the Metropolitan Green Belt.



Figure 1 - Site Location

- 2.2 The site lies immediately to the east side to nos. 1-2 Ninesprings Cottages which are themselves immediately adjacent to existing dwellings fronting Wymondley Road. Nos.1-2 Ninesprings Cottages are a semi-detached pair of two-storey dwellings. The neighbouring properties fronting Wymondley Road are pairs of chalet bungalows.



2.3 The site is demarcated from the adjacent agricultural field by an established hedgerow which extends along almost the full extent of its eastern side. A reasonably dense tree belt is located to the rear beyond which is the railway line. The site itself is largely scrubland with some scattered trees and other natural features.

2.4 The site is located wholly within flood zone 1 according to the Environment Agency mapping. The site is not located within nor is it adjacent to a conservation area. The nearest listed buildings are located within Great Wymondley which is some 800m to the east.



Figure 2 - Public Rights of Way

2.5 The site lies in close proximity to Hitchin's south-eastern edge. It is a short distance from the site to the existing pedestrian footpath on the south side



of Wymondley Road with Footpath Hitchin 091 nearby. Further, signage is located near to the junction with the roundabout to the west indicating that the section of Wymondley Road between restricted byway Hitchin 094 and bridleway Wymondley 006 is a 'Highway Verge Path'



Section 3: The Development Proposal

3.1 The appeal proposal was described on the decision notice as follows:

“Permission in principle: Erection of one detached dwelling.”

3.2 The Planning Practice Guidance sets out that:

“The permission in principle consent route is an alternative way of obtaining planning permission for housing-led development which separates the consideration of matters of principle for proposed development from the technical detail of the development. The permission in principle consent route has 2 stages: the first stage (or permission in principle stage) establishes whether a site is suitable in-principle and the second (‘technical details consent’) stage is when the detailed development proposals are assessed.”

3.3 This appeal is submitted as the ‘first stage’ or the ‘permission in principle’ stage. Subject to permission being granted, the detailed development proposals would be submitted as part of the ‘second stage’ otherwise known as ‘technical details consent’.



- 3.4 Accordingly, no ‘details’ are submitted as part of the proposals, only an indicative block plan setting out how it is envisaged that one dwelling could be accommodated on the site in a manner in keeping with the prevailing context.
- 3.5 Vehicular access is shown indicatively, albeit its precise positioning will need careful consideration prior to the submission of any technical details consent application which would follow any grant of permission in principle. This is not a matter to be considered at this stage.



Section 4: Relevant Planning Policy

Basis for Determining Planning Applications/ Appeals

- 4.1 Section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act together require that planning applications for planning permissions be determined in accordance with the Development Plan, read as a whole, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

The Tilted Balance

- 4.2 The National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) is a material consideration in decision making. The Council are unable to demonstrate a five-year supply of land for housing and so the Tilted Balance is engaged. This means that planning permission should be granted unless: the application of policies in the Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole. Therefore, the primary concern when



assessing the application is conflicts with policies within the Framework.

However, the development plan context will still assist.

Development Plan

4.3 Section 38(6) of the Planning Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 states that:

“If regard is to be had to the development plan for the purpose of any determination under the Planning Acts, the determination must be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations dictate otherwise.”

4.4 The development plan context for the appeal is provided by:

- **North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011-2031 (adopted November 2022)**

4.5 The following policies are considered relevant to the consideration of this appeal:

North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011-2031

- Policy SP1: Sustainable Development in North Hertfordshire
- Policy SP2: Settlement Hierarchy and Spatial Distribution
- Policy SP5: Countryside and Green Belt
- Policy SP6: Sustainable Transport
- Policy SP8: Housing
- Policy SP9: Design and Sustainability
- Policy SP11: Natural Resources and Sustainability



- Policy SP12: Green Infrastructure, Landscape and Biodiversity
- Policy T1: Assessment of Transport Matters
- Policy T2: Parking
- Policy D1: Sustainable Design
- Policy D3: Protecting Living Conditions
- Policy D4: Air Quality
- Policy NE1: Strategic Green Infrastructure
- Policy NE4: Biodiversity and Geological Sites
- Policy NE7: Reducing Flood Risk
- Policy NE8: Sustainable Drainage Systems
- Policy NE9: Water Quality and Environment
- Policy NE11: Contaminated Land

Other Material Considerations

National Policy & Guidance

- 4.6 The Framework is a material consideration, as is the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG).

Supplementary Planning Documents

- Vehicle Parking at New Development SPD September 2011
- Design SPD July 2011



Section 5: Planning Analysis

Background & Key Issues

Permission in Principle

- 5.1 As set out within the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG), the permission in principle consent route is an alternative way of obtaining planning permission for housing-led development which separates the consideration of matters of principle for proposed development from the technical detail of the development.
- 5.2 In considering whether to grant permission in principle, the PPG sets out that **the scope of permission in principle is limited to location, land use and amount of development**. In this case, this will require an assessment as to whether the proposed development would be inappropriate development in the Green Belt. All other matters should be considered at the technical details consent stage.

Principle of Development – Location & Land Use

Whether Inappropriate Development

- 5.3 North Herts Local Plan (LP) Policy SP5 deals with development within the countryside. It largely defers to the contents of the National Planning Policy



Framework (the Framework) in respect to the consideration of development in the Green Belt.

- 5.4 Paragraph 154 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) states that, unless compliant with a series of stated exceptions, development in the Green Belt should be regarded as being inappropriate in the Green Belt. Paragraph 155 of the Framework states that, the development of homes in the Green Belt on ‘grey belt’ land should also not be regarded as inappropriate development subject to compliance with a specific set of criteria.

- 5.5 ‘Grey belt’ is defined in the glossary to the Framework as follows:
- “For the purposes of plan-making and decision-making, ‘grey belt’ is defined as land in the Green Belt comprising previously developed land and/or any other land that, in either case, does not strongly contribute to any of purposes (a), (b), or (d) in paragraph 143. ‘Grey belt’ excludes land where the application of the policies relating to the areas or assets in footnote 7 (other than Green Belt) would provide a strong reason for refusing or restricting development.”***

The Council’s Position



5.6 In assessing whether the site would be grey belt, the planning officer noted in his delegated report (attached as **Appendix 2**) that:

“The North Herts Green Belt Review identifies the parcel of Green Belt that the site is within (10b) as making a strong contribution to purposes A and B of the Green Belt. It is noted that the site sits at the periphery of Hitchin and would comprise the last dwelling to this part of Wymondley Road before entering open countryside to the east of Hitchin towards Wymondley and Stevenage. This would amount to the extension of the residential and urban core of Hitchin out into the Green Belt and onto this green field site, resulting in an encroachment and outward sprawl into the countryside. The PPG sets out the features that would make a strong contribution to purpose A of the Green Belt. This describes how a site free of existing development and physical features in reasonable proximity that could restrict or constrain the development, and would be adjacent to a large built-up area, or result in an incongruous pattern of development. I consider that the site is green field in nature, and is free from existing development and lacks physical features. It is noted that the train line is to the south and west of the site, and this can be considered as being a physical feature, particularly given its raised elevation. However, the site would remain open to the east and would not be enclosed or restricted by this feature. The site would be adjacent to a large built-up area. In circumstances I consider that the site makes a strong contribution to



Green Belt purpose A round, and that the development would therefore conflict with the aims of that purpose. The site is therefore not grey belt.”

- 5.7 In light of the above, it appears that the main issue is therefore whether the site **strongly contributes** to purpose (a) of the Green Belt. An assessment is subsequently also required in respect to the sites contribution to purposes (b) and (d) as the Council’s position is not entirely clear in this respect.

Contribution to Purpose (a)

- 5.8 The site occupies a small undeveloped parcel of land to the south side of Wymondley Road, Hitchin. It is situated immediately to the edge of Hitchin’s defined settlement boundary. It is located immediately adjacent to existing residential properties to the west and is demarcated from the surrounding agricultural field by existing boundary hedging along much of the eastern boundary. To the rear, the site is contained by existing trees and vegetation with the existing railway line beyond.

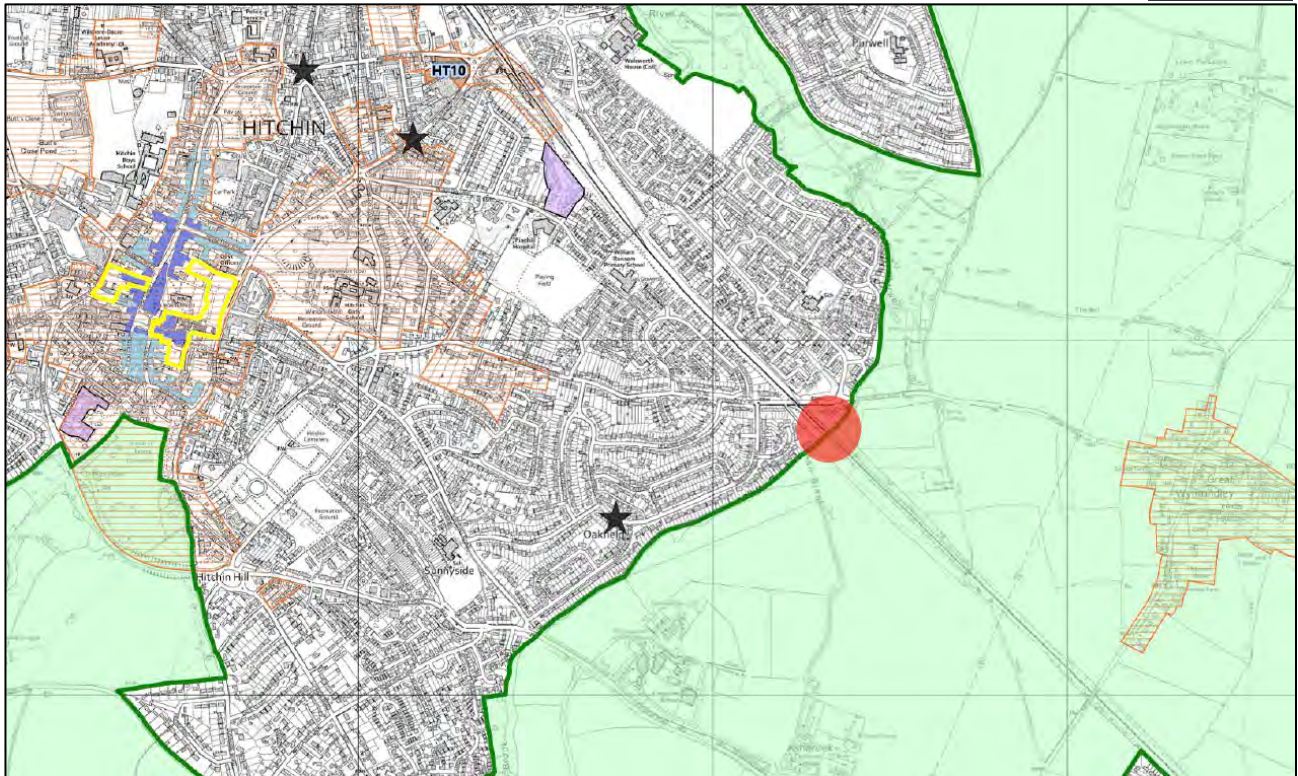
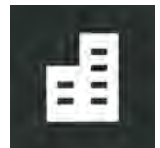
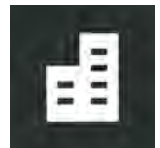


Figure 3 - Excerpt from LP Mapping

5.9 The North Herts Green Belt Review July 2016 (GBR) identifies the site as falling within sub-sector 10b of sector 10 (Little Wymondley). Sub-sector 10b is described as follows: ‘Abuts the southern edge of Hitchin bounded by A602 Stevenage Road, Arch Road and Hitchin Road.’ The GBR assesses the contribution that each of the sectors make to each of the Green Belt purposes.

10 Little Wymondley	3 - Plays a significant part in the prevention of sprawl from Hitchin to the north west.	3 - Plays a significant part in the preventing Hitchin and Stevenage merging.	2 - This parcel is more urbanised than the neighbouring countryside due to the amount of transport routes, small settlements	2 - Has some contribution to the setting of Hitchin. However no direct visual link with the historic core.	Has a close relationship with the north-west edge of Stevenage and the southern edge of Hitchin. Links the buffer between Letchworth/Hitchin to the wider countryside to the west. Overall makes a significant contribution to Green Belt purposes, helping to prevent sprawl and the merger of towns.
---------------------	--	---	--	--	---

Figure 4 - Sector 10 Contribution to Green Belt Purposes (Taken from GBR)



10b Abuts the southern edge of Hitchin bounded by A602 Stevenage Road, Arch Road and Hitchin Road.	3 – Plays important role in preventing expansion of Hitchin southwards.	3 – Plays a critical role in preventing Hitchin and Stevenage merging.	2 – Protects countryside in gap between Hitchin and Stevenage.	1 – No direct link with historic core of Hitchin.	Urban influences include the Wymondley bypass and the east coast mainline railway. School playing fields on edge of Hitchin. Ippolyts Brook runs along the northern boundary. Significant Contribution
--	---	--	--	---	--

Figure 5 - Sub-Sector 10b Contribution to Green Belt Purposes (Taken from GBR)

5.10 Regarding sub-sector 10b and sector 10, the GBR considers that these land parcels make a strong contribution to Purpose (a) because they play a significant role in preventing the expansion of Hitchin southwards.

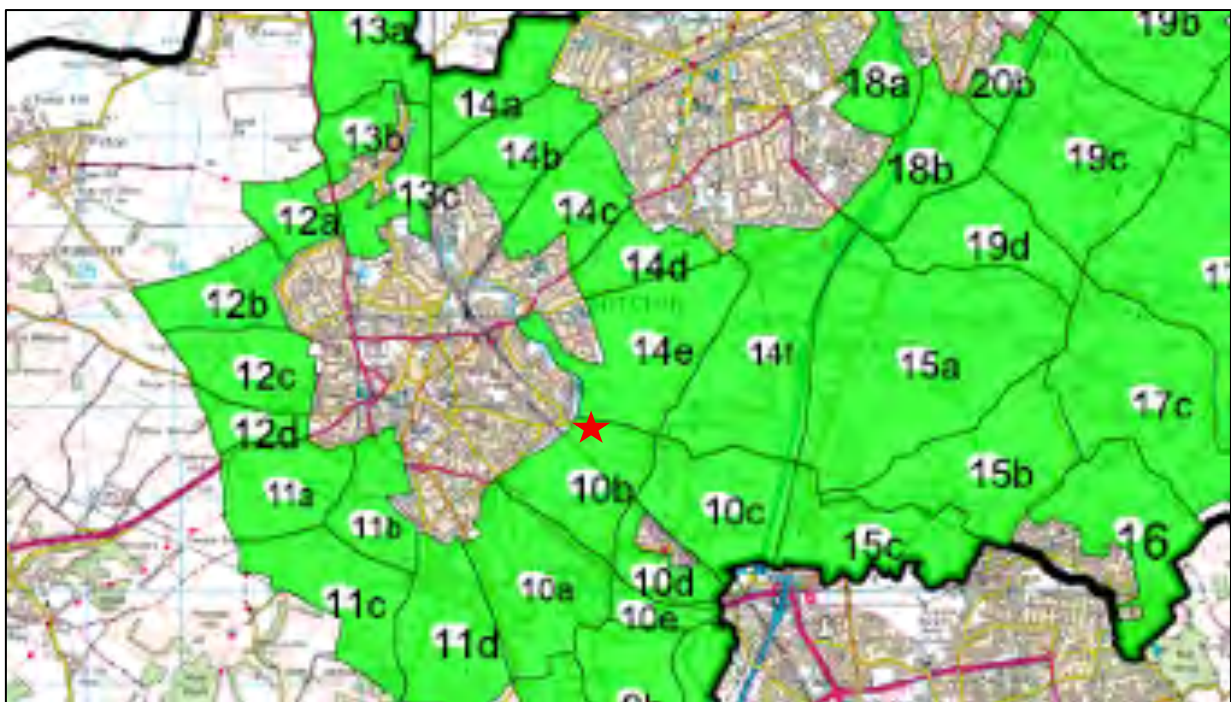


Figure 6 - Excerpt from Green Belt Review

5.11 Sector 10 is a large parcel of land, and it is undoubtedly the case that much of the Sector contributes to preventing sprawl northward of Hitchin. However, as noted above, the site is a very small component part of the much wider land parcel, and the proposed development of a single dwelling is unlikely to diminish or cause harm to the contribution that the wider parcel makes in preventing sprawl.



5.12 Moreover, the site has a reasonably high degree of self-containment from the adjacent agricultural field and from the wider countryside more generally as a result of the existing residential properties to the west, the established boundary hedging to the east, and the trees and railway line to the south. As such, the development of the site could occur in a manner that would be largely self-contained in terms of the wider land parcel, would not extend incongruously into the Green Belt, and preserve the overall strategic importance of sector 10 (and sub-sector 10b) in preventing sprawl.



Figure 7 - The Appeal Site in Context

5.13 Consequently, judged in relation to the criteria set out in the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG), it is not considered that the site makes any more than a moderate contribution to purpose (a).



Contribution to Purpose (b)

- 5.14 The GBR concluded that sub-sector 10b and sector 10 make a significant contribution to preventing Hitchin and Stevenage merging. However, the site is small and largely self-contained and is moreover immediately at the edge of Hitchin and is thus a significant distance from Stevenage's settlement boundary.
- 5.15 As per the guidance in the PPG, the site is considered to make no contribution to purpose (b) in light of the fact that it forms only a very small part of the gap between Hitchin and Stevenage and does not bound both towns thus making no meaningful contribution to their visual separation.
- 5.16 Accordingly, it is not considered that the site makes a strong contribution to Purpose (b) of the Green Belt purposes.

Contribution to Purpose (d)

- 5.17 The site is located at the south-eastern edge of Hitchin, an historic market town. However, given its opaque relationship with the historic core it is considered that it makes a weak contribution to this purpose or a moderate contribution at best. This conclusion is consistent with the GBR which



confirms that sub-sector 10b has no direct link with the historic core of Hitchin.

- 5.18 Accordingly, it is not considered that the site makes a strong contribution to Purpose (d) of the Green Belt purposes.

'Grey Belt' Summary

- 5.19 For the reasons discussed above, it is considered that the site meets the definition of 'grey belt' as it does not contribute strongly to functions (a), (b) or (d) of the Green Belt purposes.

Compliance with Paragraph 155

- 5.20 It is now necessary to consider Paragraph 155 of the Framework which states that:

“The development of homes, commercial and other development in the Green Belt should also not be regarded as inappropriate where:

a. The development would utilise grey belt land and would not fundamentally undermine the purposes (taken together) of the remaining Green Belt across the area of the plan;

b. There is a demonstrable unmet need for the type of development proposed;



c. The development would be in a sustainable location, with particular reference to paragraphs 110 and 115 of this Framework; and

d. Where applicable the development proposed meets the ‘Golden Rules’ requirements set out in paragraphs 156-157 below.”

5.21 The appellant’s response to each of the above is set out below:

a. The development would utilise grey belt land and would not fundamentally undermine the purposes (taken together) of the remaining Green Belt across the area of the plan;

5.22 In terms of the first part of this criterion, the site meets the definition of grey belt land for the reasons discussed above.

5.23 Regarding the second part of this criterion, the PPG provides guidance regarding the consideration of the impact of releasing or developing grey belt sites on the remaining Green Belt in the plan area to be assessed. This states that:

“In reaching this judgement, authorities should consider whether, or the extent to which, the release or development of Green Belt Land would affect the ability of all the remaining Green Belt across the area of the plan from serving all five of the Green Belt purposes in a meaningful way.”



- 5.24 The site is a very small component part of the District's Green Belt which covers approximately 47% of its entire administrative area. Accordingly, its development would have little impact on the ability remaining Green Belt across the area of the Plan from serving its functions as intended.
- 5.25 Consequently, the impact of the development of the site upon the strategic Green Belt within the district would be negligible. In those terms, the proposed would not fundamentally undermine the purposes of the remaining Green Belt across the area of the Plan and would not affect the ability of all the remaining Green Belt across the area of the plan from serving all five of the Green Belt purposes in a meaningful way.
- 5.26 The proposed development would thus be compliant with limb (a) of paragraph 155 of the Framework.

b. There is a demonstrable unmet need for the type of development proposed;

- 5.27 Footnote 56 notes that, in the case of applications involving the provision of housing, a demonstrable unmet need for the type of development proposed, means the lack of a five-year supply of deliverable housing sites, including the relevant buffer where applicable, or where the Housing



Delivery Test was below 75% of the housing requirement over the previous three years.

5.28 The Council's Five-Year Housing Land Supply Update (November 2025) (attached as **Appendix 3**) sets out that the Council are currently only able to demonstrate a 2.6-year supply of land for housing. Accordingly, there is no dispute between the parties that there is a demonstrable unmet need for new housing development.

5.29 The proposed development would thus be compliant with limb (b) of paragraph 155 of the Framework.

c. The development would be in a sustainable location, with particular reference to paragraphs 110 and 115 of this Framework;

5.30 The site is located immediately adjacent to Hitchin's built-up area as defined in the North Herts Local Plan (NHLP). It is a short distance from the site to the existing pedestrian footpath on the south side of Wymondley Road. The site is moreover located a short walk from three Public Right of Ways: restricted byway Hitchin 094 and bridleway Wymondley 006 which are situated approximately 200m to the east, and footpath Hitchin 091 which is adjacent to the roundabout with St Michael's Road to the west.



- 5.31 The site lies within walking distance of a number of bus stops including several along St Michael's Way, Wymondley Road and Ninesprings Way. These provide bus services to other locations within the town itself, as well as service to Letchworth, Stevenage and other nearby villages.
- 5.32 Accordingly, potential occupants of the site would not be unduly reliant on the use of the private car for access to the wide range of services and facilities that Hitchin contains. Moreover, it is clear based on the planning officer's report that the Council's position is that the site is a sustainable location for new housing for the reasons discussed above.
- 5.33 Accordingly, it is agreed between the two parties that site would represent a sustainable location for new housing with respect to paragraphs 110 and 115 of the Framework and would therefore be compliant with limb (c) of paragraph 155 of the Framework.

d. Where applicable the development proposed meets the 'Golden Rules' requirements set out in paragraphs 156-157 below.

- 5.34 Not applicable: Development is not major development.

Summary



5.35 As discussed above, it is considered that the proposed development meets the definition of grey belt land and is moreover in full accordance with the requirements of Paragraph 155 of the revised Framework. Accordingly, it would **not be inappropriate development** in the Green Belt.

5.36 Consequently, it is considered that the site is suitable in terms of the **location** and **land use** components of a Permission in Principle application.

Amount of Development

5.37 There is no dispute between the parties that the proposal would be acceptable inasmuch as it relates to the amount of development.

Other Matters

5.38 There are no other matters relevant to a determination on this appeal.



Section 6: Summary & Conclusions

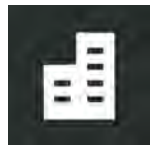
- 6.1 This statement accompanies an appeal against the decision of North Hertfordshire District Council to refuse permission in principle for the erection of a single dwelling. The PPG confirms that the only matters pertinent to the consideration of such an application is limited to location, land use and amount of development.
- 6.2 The Council are not currently able to demonstrate a five-year supply of land for housing. Accordingly, paragraph 11(d) of the Framework is engaged, and planning permission should be granted unless the application of policies in the Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits.
- 6.3 As discussed in the foregoing, it is considered that the proposed development would be grey belt land and not inappropriate development in the Green Belt on the basis of compliance with Paragraph 155 of the Framework. The site is therefore suitable for residential development with



respect to location and land use and there is moreover no dispute between the parties that the appeal proposal is suitable inasmuch as it relates to the amount of development.

6.4 All other matters are not relevant to the determination of the appeal but should rather be dealt with at technical details stage. Such an approach is clearly consistent with the guidance contained within the PPG.

6.5 Accordingly, and in light of the contents of this statement, it is respectfully requested that the appeal is allowed and permission in principle granted.



APPENDIX 1: Decision Notice Application Ref. 26/00361/PIP

NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Town and Country Planning Act 1990

DECISION NOTICE

Correspondence Address:

Peter George Town Planning Ltd
Nine Hills Road
Cambridge
CB2 1GE

Applicant:

Mr J Hill

PARTICULARS OF DEVELOPMENT

Application: 26/00361/PIP

Proposal: Erection of one detached dwelling

Location: Land Adjacent To 1 Ninesprings Cottage, Wymondley Road,
Hitchin, Hertfordshire, SG4 9QL

Refused Plan Nos: 010 021 Rev A

PARTICULARS OF DECISION

In pursuance of its powers under the above Act and the associated Orders and Regulations, the Council hereby **REFUSE** the development proposed by you in your application received with sufficient particulars on 17 February 2026.

1. The proposal would comprise inappropriate development in the Green Belt and it is considered that the proposed dwelling in this location would be unacceptable for this reason. Therefore the proposed development would contravene Policies SP2 and SP5 of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011-2031 and Section 13 of the NPPF.

Proactive Statement:

1. Planning permission has been refused for this proposal for the clear reasons set out in this decision notice. The Council has not acted proactively through positive engagement with the applicant as in the Council's view the proposal is unacceptable in principle and the fundamental objections cannot be overcome through dialogue. Since no solutions can be found the Council has complied with the requirements of the Framework (paragraph 38) and in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015.

Signed:



Development Management
North Hertfordshire District Council
Council Offices
Gernon Road
Letchworth
Herts
SG6 3JF

Shaun Greaves
Development & Conservation Manager

Date: 22 April 2026

The Council's Privacy Notice is available on our website: <https://www.north-herts.gov.uk/home/council-data-and-performance/data-protection/information-management-gdpr>.

NOTES

- 1 If you are aggrieved by the decision of your local planning authority to refuse permission for the proposed development or to grant it subject to conditions, then you can appeal to the Secretary of State under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

If you want to appeal against your local planning authority's decision then you must do so within 6 months of the date of this notice.

Appeals can be made online at: <https://www.gov.uk/planning-inspectorate>. If you are unable to access the online appeal form, please contact the Planning Inspectorate to obtain a paper copy of the appeal form on tel: 0303 444 5000

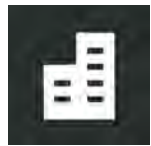
The Secretary of State can allow a longer period for giving notice of an appeal, but he will not normally be prepared to use this power unless there are special circumstances which excuse the delay in giving notice of appeal.

If you intend to submit an appeal that you would like examined by inquiry then you must notify the Local Planning Authority and Planning Inspectorate (inquiryappeals@planninginspectorate.gov.uk) at least 10 days before submitting the appeal. [Further details are on GOV.UK.](#)

Purchase Notices

If either the local planning authority or the Secretary of State refuses permission to develop land or grants it subject to conditions, the owner may claim that he can neither put the land to a reasonably beneficial use in its existing state nor render the land capable of a reasonably beneficial use by the carrying out of any development which has been or would be permitted.

In these circumstances, the owner may serve a purchase notice on the Council (District Council, London Borough Council or Common Council of the City of London) in whose area the land is situated. This notice will require the Council to purchase his interest in the land in accordance with the provisions of Part VI of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.



APPENDIX 2: Delegated Report Application Ref. 26/00361/PIP

DELEGATED FILE NOTE

CASE OFFICER: ...Thomas Howe.....

APPLICATION REFERENCE	BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT	APPLICATION SITE
26/00361/PIP	Erection of one detached dwelling	Land Adjacent To 1 Ninesprings Cottage Wymondley Road Hitchin Hertfordshire SG4 9QL

Submitted Plan Nos

010 021 Rev A

1.0 Policies

SP2 Settlement Hierarchy and Spatial Distrib

SP5 Countryside and Green Belt

SECN13 Protecting Green Belt Land

2.0 **Site History**

2.1 No relevant history.

3.0 **Representations**

3.1 **Neighbour Consultation** – None received.

3.2 **Environmental Health:**

Noise – Expects submission of noise assessments due to proximity to the railway tracks.

Contamination – No Objection. Seeks phased contamination investigation reports to ensure that land is suitable for residential use.

Air Quality – No Objections.

3.3 **Highways** – Recommends refusal. Unlikely that visibility splays could be achieved. No active travel infrastructure supports the site.

3.3 **Parish Council** – Objection:

- Contrary to Green Belt policy.
- Inappropriate development.
- Would erode protected land.
- Harm to visual amenities of the area and the intrinsic open nature and character of the area.
- Out of context with existing developments patterns, which is limited to established cottages with large gardens and open spaces.
- Ecological sensitivity to the site.
- No evidence of safeguarding of ecological assets.
- Unsafe vehicular access to the site and poor pedestrian access.
- Harmful precedents would be set.

4.0 **Planning Considerations**

4.1 **Site and Surroundings**

4.1.1 The application site comprises a parcel of land adjacent to No. 1 Ninesprings Cottage, Wymondley Road, Hitchin. It is within the Green Belt, and is in close proximity to the

settlement boundary of Hitchin. To the west is a pair of dwellings, Nos. 1 and 2 Ninesprings Cottages. To the south of the site is a railway line, with residential dwellings to the north-west. Open countryside borders the site to the east.

4.2 **Proposal**

- 4.2.1 The application seeks permission in principle for the erection of a single dwelling. The submitted plan 251 021 shows a two-storey dwelling set centrally behind a grouping of trees. Access would be provided by a private drive off Wymondley Road, with a turning head and driveway for vehicles. Amenity space is shown to the front and rear.

4.3 **Key Issues**

- 4.3.1 Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) explains that permission in principle is an alternative way of obtaining planning permission for housing led development as part of a two-stage procedure. Stage 1 ('permission in principle stage'), is limited to the consideration of location, land use and the amount of development which, in the event of an approval, would leave the remaining matters to be considered in a technical details application (Stage 2) (i.e. the 'technical details consent').
- 4.3.2 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 states that applications for planning permission, which would include applications for permission in principle (PIP), must be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. This application is a Stage 1 PIP application therefore the three matters are considered below.

Location

- 4.3.3 The application site is located outside of the settlement boundary of Hitchin and is within the Green Belt and therefore does not comply with the approach to development hierarchy and distribution of homes as set out in Local Plan Policy SP2.

Local Plan Policy SP5 confirms support for the principles of the Green Belt and the intrinsic value of the countryside and that development proposals within the Green Belt would not result in inappropriate development or where very special circumstances have been demonstrated. It is not considered that that the proposed development would fall within an exception for development as defined by Paragraph 154 of the NPPF. Therefore, the development is considered to comprise inappropriate development in the Green Belt.

- 4.3.4 Amendments to the NPPF in December 2024 introduced the concept of Grey Belt and exceptions set out at Paragraph 155 advises:

"The development of homes, commercial and other development in the Green Belt should also not be regarded as inappropriate where all the following apply:

- a. The development would utilise grey belt land and would not fundamentally undermine the purposes (taken together) of the remaining Green Belt across the area of the plan;*
- b. There is a demonstrable unmet need for the type of development proposed;*
- c. The development would be in a sustainable location, with particular reference to paragraphs 110 and 115 of this Framework; and*
- d. Where applicable the development proposed meets the 'Golden Rules' requirements set out in paragraphs 156-157 below."*

The NPPF Definition for Grey Belt is:

“For the purposes of plan-making and decision-making, ‘grey belt’ is defined as land in the Green Belt comprising previously developed land and/or any other land that, in either case, does not strongly contribute to any of purposes (a), (b), or (d) in paragraph 143. ‘Grey belt’ excludes land where the application of the policies relating to the areas or assets in footnote 7 (other than Green Belt) would provide a strong reason for refusing or restricting development.”

The five purposes of the Green Belt are set out below:

- a) to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;
- b) to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another;
- c) to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;
- d) to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and
- e) to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.

- 4.3.5 The North Herts Green Belt Review identifies the parcel of Green Belt that the site is within (10b) as making a strong contribution to purposes A and B of the Green Belt. It is noted that the site sits at the periphery of Hitchin and would comprise the last dwelling to this part of Wymondley Road before entering open countryside to the east of Hitchin towards Wymondley and Stevenage. This would amount to the extension of the residential and urban core of Hitchin out into the Green Belt and onto this green field site, resulting in an encroachment and outward sprawl into the countryside. The PPG sets out the features that would make a strong contribution to purpose A of the Green Belt. This describes how a site free of existing development and physical features in reasonable proximity that could restrict or constrain the development, and would be adjacent to a large built-up area, or result in an incongruous pattern of development. I consider that the site is green field in nature, and is free from existing development and lacks physical features. It is noted that the train line is to the south and west of the site, and this can be considered as being a physical feature, particularly given its raised elevation. However, the site would remain open to the east and would not be enclosed or restricted by this feature. The site would be adjacent to a large built-up area. In circumstances I consider that the site makes a strong contribution to Green Belt purpose A round, and that the development would therefore conflict with the aims of that purpose. The site is therefore not grey belt.

It is difficult to properly consider whether there are material considerations that together constitute very special circumstances that would clearly outweigh the harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness and any other harms, this may rely on matters that would be considered at Stage 2, but certainly requires a robust evidence-based case, which is not evident.

- 4.3.6 Turning to the sustainability of the site, it is noted that the Highways Authority have objected to the sustainability and safe access of the site. Their concerns of safety rest on a lack of a footway to the site to provide a safe pedestrian link into Hitchin and concerns of the feasibility of the vehicular access. Matters of safe access are a Stage 2 matter, and are therefore not for consideration at this stage.
- 4.3.7 Paragraph 110 of the NPPF emphasises how development should be focused on locations that would offer a genuine choice of transport modes. Given the proximity to Hitchin and associated bus stops and footpaths into the wider area, the location is

considered to be suitably sustainable in the view of Stage 1. The site is considered to be sufficiently sustainable.

4.3.8 The National Planning Policy Framework also supports achieving sustainable development provided the economic, social and environmental objectives are met.

4.3.9 In conclusion on this matter, the site is within the Green Belt and the proposed development would be inappropriate development in this location as the proposal would not meet any of the exceptions set out at NPPF 154 and 155. The development would therefore fail comply with Policy SP5 of the Local Plan and is not an acceptable location for the proposed development in Green Belt policy terms.

Land Use:

4.3.10 The site is adjacent to residential dwellings and is close to Hitchin. I consider that its location is not unsuitable for residential uses, and would not result in conflicts with nearby land uses. However, built form related to residential use would be inappropriate in this Green Belt location, for the reasons given above.

Amount of Development:

4.3.11 This application seeks confirmation of whether a single dwelling in this location would result in an acceptable amount of development. The site is deep and relatively constrained in width. The development density and amount of the site that would be developed would result in a majority of the plot remaining as green field, or landscaped, though the entirety would be residential curtilage. The site could accommodate a single dwelling. It would be unlikely to result in a constrained form of development, or an overdevelopment of the site, and would also result in a development density similar to nearby plots, notably Ninesprings Cottages to the side. The development amount would therefore be acceptable.

Other Matters:

4.3.12 Matters such as the feasibility of vehicular access and pedestrian access, parking, scale, design and appearance, landscaping, relationship with neighbours and environmental matters such as land contamination, flood risk and ecological issues would be considered at the technical details stage (stage 2) should permission in principle be granted.

Procedural Matters:

4.3.13 The DLUHG sets out guidance (Gov.uk) on what is required in the determination of a 'permission in principle' application. No conditions can be attached to the grant of permission only confirmation of site location, the type of development and the amount of amount development (Paragraph: 020 Reference ID: 58-020-20180615).

4.3.14 The default duration of permission in principle is 3 years therefore there is no requirement to specify the time limit (Paragraph: 014 Reference ID: 58-014-20180615)

4.3.15 Local Planning Authorities can inform applicants what they expect to see at the technical details stage (Paragraph: 045 Reference ID: 58-045-20180615). It is recommended that this can be done by attaching an informative to the grant of permission in principle. In this case the following matters would be expected to form part of a technical details consent application:

- ☐ Scaled drawings showing all floor plans and elevations and slab levels of the proposed dwellings
- ☐ External materials and details of hard and soft landscaping including boundary treatment
- ☐ Preliminary Risk Assessment concerning land contamination
- ☐ Noise Impact assessment
- ☐ Provision of electric vehicle re-charging infrastructure
- ☐ Pedestrian and vehicular visibility splays
- ☐ Vehicle tracking to demonstrate safe and usable parking spaces
- ☐ Construction management statement
- ☐ Cycle parking
- ☐ Drainage details
- ☐ Details of refuse and recycling provision

However, in this case it is recommended that the Stage 1 application for permission in principle be refused.

4.4 **Conclusion and Planning Balance**

- 4.4.1 The proposed erection of a dwelling in this location would comprise inappropriate development in the Green Belt. No benefits associated with the delivery of a dwelling have been identified that would outweigh the harm to the Green Belt. Therefore, this application should be refused as it would contravene Policies SP2 and SP5 of the Local Plan 2011-2031 and Section 13 of the NPPF.

4.5 **Alternative Options**

- 4.5.1 None applicable.

5.0 **Recommendation**

- 5.1 That planning permission be **REFUSED** for the following reasons:

1. The proposal would comprise inappropriate development in the Green Belt and it is considered that the proposed dwelling in this location would be unacceptable for this reason. Therefore the proposed development would contravene Policies SP2 and SP5 of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011-2031 and Section 13 of the NPPF.

Proactive Statement:

Planning permission has been refused for this proposal for the clear reasons set out in this decision notice. The Council has not acted proactively through positive engagement with the applicant as in the Council's view the proposal is unacceptable in principle and the fundamental objections cannot be overcome through dialogue. Since no solutions can be found the Council has complied with the requirements of the Framework (paragraph 38) and in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015.

--	--

Signed  Shaun Greaves Determining Officer	Development Management North Hertfordshire District Council Council Offices Gernon Road Letchworth Herts SG6 3JF
Date: 22 April 2026	



APPENDIX 3: Five-Year Housing Land Supply Update (November 2025)

Five-Year Housing Land Supply Update

November 2025



**North
Herts**
Council

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	3
FIVE-YEAR HOUSING REQUIREMENT	5
DELIVERABLE HOUSING SUPPLY	12
CONCLUSIONS	16

INTRODUCTION

Introduction

North Hertfordshire's Local Plan (NHLP) was adopted on 8 November 2022. Since the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was updated on 20 December 2024, the rules for demonstrating a five-year housing land supply have changed and we must now show how housing delivery is expected to roll out over the plan period.

The updated NPPF requires us to identify and update, each year, a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to meet a minimum five years' worth of housing against our adopted strategic housing requirement, or against local housing need where strategic policies are more than five years old.

The five-year supply must include a buffer to strengthen prospects of delivery:

- **5%** to ensure choice and competition, or
- **20%** where there has been significant under-delivery over the previous three years, or
- From 1 July 2026 a 20% buffer will be required for decision-making if our housing requirement was adopted within the last five years against an earlier version of the Framework **and** that requirement is 80% or less of the most up-to-date local housing need calculated using the standard method. Will shall keep this element under review.

How this affects North Hertfordshire

We are no longer protected by the transitional provisions in earlier versions of the NPPF that previously guarded five-year supply positions tied to recently adopted local plans. That change means we must now demonstrate a compliant five-year housing land supply under the current Framework tests.

Purpose of this update

This Five-Year Housing Supply Update sets out our position as of **31 March 2025** and explains how that position should be applied to relevant planning applications and decisions.

What to expect next

This Update explains our delivery trajectory, the sites included in the five-year supply, and any buffer applied. It provides the transparent, up-to-date evidence decision-makers and applicants need to understand how housing supply is being met across North Hertfordshire.

This report sets out the figures underpinning our Objectively Assessed Needs, forming a key foundation for the preparation of our Local Plan. In addition, we've included indicative calculations based on the Government's New Standard Method for assessing Local Housing Need. These figures are provided for context only, as we are currently unable to formally progress our Local Plan Update, pending the publication of the necessary regulations by Government.

FIVE-YEAR HOUSING REQUIREMENT

Five-Year Housing Requirement

Our Local Plan requires us to provide land for a minimum of 13,000 homes between 2011 and 2031. That target translates to an annual requirement of 650 homes. We monitor residential land availability every year, and this statement records the position as at 31 March 2025, prepared in line with national [Planning Practice Guidance \(PPG\)](#).

Paragraph 31 of the PPG directs us to make up any past shortfall within the next five years using the Sedgefield approach. During plan preparation we chose a different, more measured route to address historical under-delivery which involved spreading the shortfall across the remaining Plan period. The Examining Inspector agreed with this approach and confirmed it as the most appropriate method for calculating our five-year housing land supply.

*'...the Council proposes to use the 'three-stepped approach'...in combination with applying the 'Liverpool' method, spreading the shortfall in delivery since the beginning of the Plan period across the remainder of the Plan period...I am of the firm view that it is the most appropriate in this case and should form the basis for future calculations of the district's five-year housing land supply.'*¹.

Policy IMR1 in the NHLP sets out our approach clearly:

- We apply the **Liverpool approach**, meeting the accumulated shortfall over the remainder of the Plan period rather than compressing it into the next five years.
- Once the combined annual requirement and any remaining shortfall are established, we apply a buffer if required, reflecting the most recent Housing Delivery Test outcome.

Policy IMR1: Five Year Housing Land Supply

In order to identify and update annually a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide five years worth of housing, we will:

- Deliver the total housing requirement of 13,000 net dwellings over the plan period on a stepped basis. The Council's five-year housing land supply will be measured against housing requirement targets of:
 - 350 dwellings per annum for the plan period from 2011 to 31 March 2020;
 - 500 dwellings per annum for the plan period from 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2024; and
 - 1,120 dwellings per annum for the remainder of the plan period from 1 April 2024 to 2031.
- Add any shortfall in housing delivery since the plan's start date, spread evenly over the remaining plan period, to the calculation of the requirement;
- Ensure that the supply of specific, deliverable sites included a buffer (moved forward from later in the plan period) in line with national planning policy; and
- Monitor housing completion and permissions on an ongoing basis to ensure the housing trajectory is based upon robust and up-to-date information and assumptions.

Stepped housing delivery

Liverpool Approach

As such, the annual housing requirement that should be used for calculating our five-year housing land supply is that set out in Policy IMR1: Five Year Housing Land Supply, of our

¹ Paragraph 113 [Inspectors Report](#)

Local Plan:

- 350 dwellings per year from 2011 to 31 March 2020
- 500 dwellings per year from 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2024; and
- 1,120 dwellings per year from 1 April 2024 to 2031.

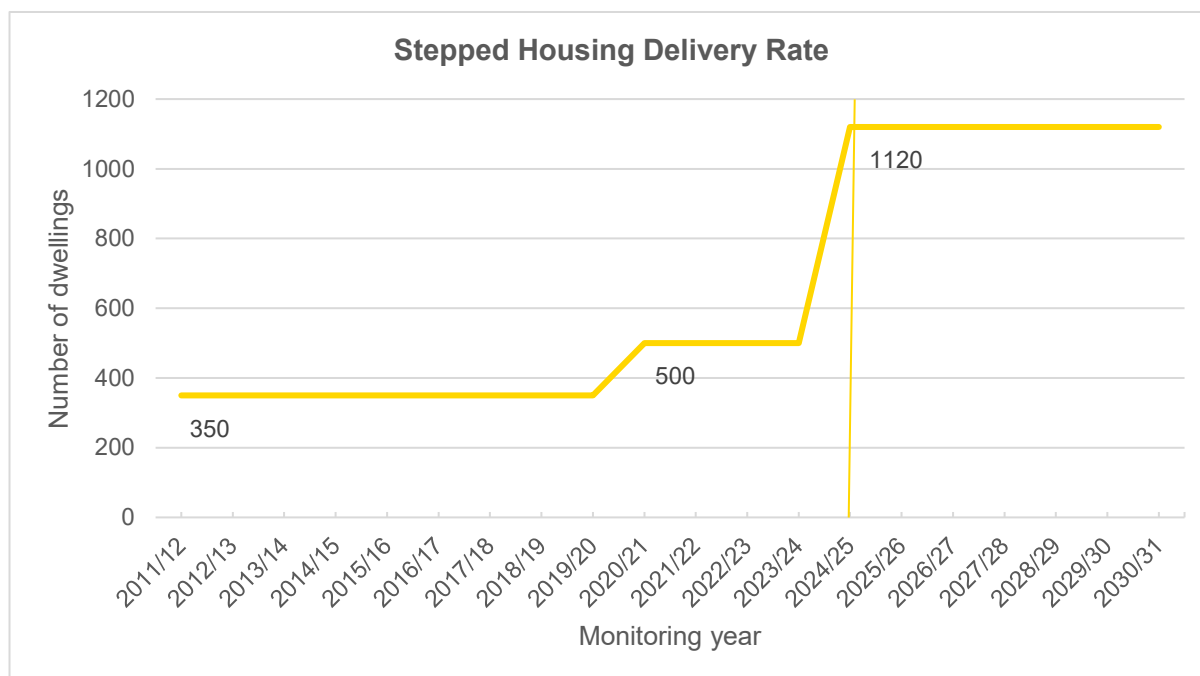


Fig 1 – Stepped housing delivery rate

Annual housing requirement figure	1,120
--	--------------

Table 1 – Annual housing requirement figure to 31 March 2025

Table 2 presents our cumulative net housing completions from the Local Plan base date of 1 April 2011 through to the current monitoring date.

The PPG² requires any shortfall to be measured from this adopted plan start date. The table therefore sets out, year by year, how many homes have been completed and highlights the aggregated shortfall against the Plan target since the Plan period began.

Table 2 shows that since 2020/21 our annual housing completions have not met the Plan requirement, and the cumulative shortfall has continued to increase across the Plan period. As of 31 March 2025, our district faces an undersupply of 1,253 dwellings.

² (Paragraph: 031 Reference ID: 68-031-20190722, Revision date: 22 July 2019)

Monitoring year	Annual net housing completions	Annual housing completion target	Annual net housing surplus/shortfall	Cumulative net housing completions	Cumulative housing completion target	Cumulative net housing surplus/shortfall
2011/12	384	350	34	384	350	34
2012/13	291	350	-59	675	700	-25
2013/14	259	350	-91	934	1,050	-116
2014/15	180	350	-170	1,114	1,400	-286
2015/16	341	350	-9	1,455	1,750	-295
2016/17	539	350	189	1,994	2,100	-106
2017/18	282	350	-68	2,276	2,450	-174
2018/19	220	350	-130	2,496	2,800	-304
2019/20	318	350	-32	2,814	3,150	-336
2020/21	593	500	93	3,407	3,650	-243
2021/22	333	500	-167	3,740	4,150	-410
2022/23	445	500	-55	4,185	4,650	-465
2023/24	425	500	-75	4,610	5,150	-540
2024/25	407	1120	-713	5,017	6,270	-1,253

Table 2 – Cumulative net housing completions and shortfall in housing provision 2011/12 to 2023/24

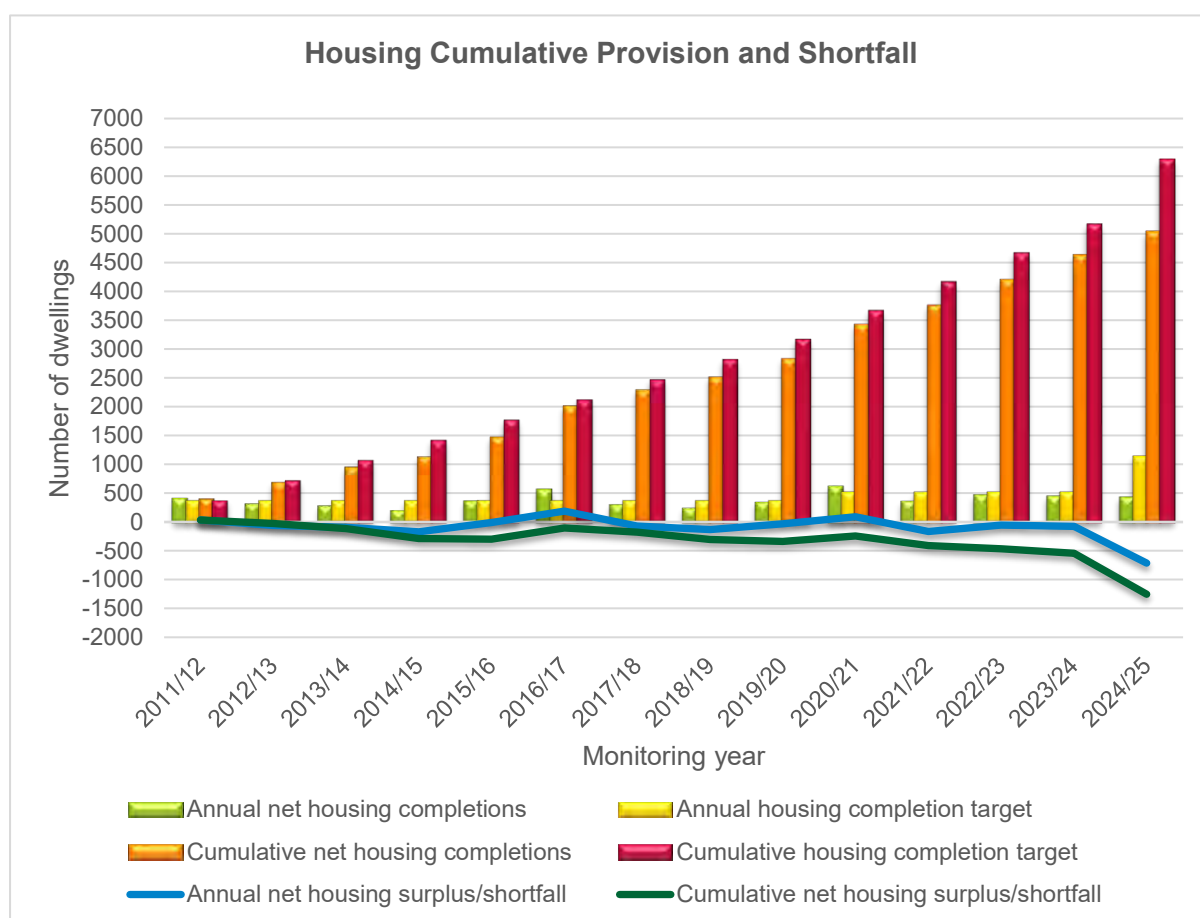


Fig 2 - Cumulative net housing completions and shortfall in housing provision 2011/12 to 2023/24

Under the Liverpool approach, this historic shortfall will be made up evenly over the remainder of the Plan period, so delivery of the 1,253 homes is spread across each year up to 2031. This approach smooths expectations for developers and communities, reduces pressure on the next five years, and provides a realistic, deliverable trajectory for meeting the Plan target by the end of the period.

Annualised requirement to provide for historic undersupply of housing using the Liverpool approach (1,253/6)

209

Table 3 – Annualised requirement for historic undersupply of housing

Paragraph 79 of the 2024 NPPF says that where an authority has experienced significant under-delivery of housing over the previous three years, an additional buffer should be added to the supply of specific deliverable sites.

The latest [Housing Delivery Test](#) (HDT) result for North Hertfordshire (published in December 2024) was 105%, so no delivery buffer is required for our five-year supply.

The HDT assesses actual housing delivery over the prior three years and is published

annually by government. Consequences by HDT band:

- >95% = No further action required.
- <95% = Authority must prepare an Action Plan.
- <85% = Action Plan plus a 20% buffer on the five-year supply.
- <75% = Action Plan, 20% buffer, and the presumption in favour of development.

Because our HDT score exceeds 95%, we do not apply an additional buffer when calculating our five-year housing land supply. This confirms that recent delivery performance (as of March 2023) is strong enough that no compensatory uplift is needed to improve the prospect of meeting planned supply.

The formula for the HDT calculation is:

$$\text{HDT \%} = \frac{\text{Total net homes delivered over three-year period}}{\text{Total number of homes required over 2-year 8-month period}^3}$$

Our results for the last published year (2023) are shown in Table 4.

ONS code	Area name	Number of homes required			Number of homes required
		2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	
E07000099	North Hertfordshire	333 ⁴	500	500	1,333
Number of homes delivered		Number of homes delivered		Score	Consequence
2020/21	2021/22	2022/23			
618	335	447	1,400	105%	None

Table 4 – HDT score 2024

The updated NPPF (December 2024) has reintroduced the 5% buffer for calculating five-year housing land supply to preserve choice and competition in the land market, reinforcing the expectation that we factor a modest uplift into supply figures to support a healthy, competitive development environment.

Following the steps above, the total five-year requirement is:

Annual homes requirement for 2024/25	Annual shortfall (Table 3)	Total annual requirement	5-Year requirement	Annual 5% buffer	Total 5-year requirement including buffer
1,120 ⁵	209 ⁶	1,329	6,645	332	6,976

Table 5 – Five-year housing requirement for North Herts, 2024/5 – 2028/29

³ For the 2023 measurement, there is a reduction in the period for measuring total homes required – usually this would be measured over a 3-year period, but an 8-month period has been used for the 2020/21 monitoring year; requirement is assessed from 1 August 2020, meaning that 243 days are assessed. This is to account for the considerable variations in levels of housing delivery as local planning authorities and construction industry faced disruption on a national, regional, and local level due to the pandemic. No adjustment was made in the 2021/22 and 2022/23 monitoring years

⁴ This figure differs from the 350-figure set out in the Local Plan - this includes the Covid-related adjustments applied by Government to the annual target figures.

⁵ From 2024/25, the annual housing requirement increases from 500 to 1,120 dwellings per year.

⁶ Rounded up from 208.83

New Standard Methodology

In December 2024 the Government published a revised standard method alongside the updated NPPF, producing a new method of calculating indicative local housing need figures for our area.

The calculation sets our annual local housing need at 1,043 homes⁷ (published 22 May 2025) and is expected to remain in force until the affordability ratios are next updated in March 2026. This is an increase from the [figure published in December 2024](#). The affordability ratio that is used to calculate the standard method Local Housing Need figure has deteriorated and therefore our housing number has increased.

The updated standard method effectively resets the baseline for housing need, removing the obligation to make up past shortfalls under the old figures and, in practical terms, allows us to “start again” on meeting housing targets. This change means historic under-delivery no longer automatically increases our current requirement, so the focus shifts to delivering against the newly calculated need going forward.

Following the same steps as previous, the total five-year requirement looks like this:

Annual homes requirement of 2024/25	Annual shortfall	Total annual requirement	5-Year requirement	Annual 5% buffer	Total 5-year requirement including buffer
1,043	0	1,043	5,215	261	5,476

Table 6 – Five-year housing requirement for North Herts - new standard method, 2024/5 – 2028/29

As stated previously, this is an indicative calculation based on the Government’s New Standard Method for assessing Local Housing Need. These figures are provided for context only, as we are currently unable to formally progress our Local Plan Update, pending the publication of the necessary regulations by Government. However, we expect to transition to this figure upon the publication of the new regulations for plan making and will use the most up to date figures for any emerging housing target for the development of the new Local Plan update.

⁷ https://www.turley.co.uk/sites/default/files/pdf/file/2025-05/turley_lpdf_-_revised_standard_method_analysis_may2025_0.pdf

DELIVERABLE HOUSING SUPPLY

Deliverable Housing Supply

We have identified an annual supply of sites that can realistically deliver homes within the next five years.

The NPPF defines “deliverable” housing sites as those that are:

- Available now,
- In a suitable location for development now, and
- Achievable with a realistic prospect of delivering homes within five years.

Two important distinctions follow:

- Part (a): Non-major sites with planning permission, and all sites with detailed permission, should be treated as deliverable until permission expires, unless there is clear evidence they will not deliver within five years (for example, viability issues, lack of demand, or long-term phasing).
- Part (b): Major sites with outline permission, sites allocated in a development plan, sites with a grant of permission in principle, or sites on a brownfield register are only deliverable where there is clear evidence that completions will start within five years.

For sites that require extra proof of deliverability, notably outline permissions, allocated sites, permissions in principle, and brownfield register entries, PPG suggests the following types of evidence:

- Current planning status - progress on reserved matters, linked planning performance agreements and discharge of conditions.
- Developer commitment - written agreements with the local planning authority confirming expected start dates and build-out rates.
- Concrete site preparation - firm progress on site assessments and pre-application work.
- Practical constraints and mitigation - information on viability, ownership, infrastructure delivery, or successful bids for infrastructure funding.

We are also able to draw on the [Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment](#) to demonstrate deliverability.

All sites we have identified meet the NPPF and PPG deliverability tests by being:

- Available now,
- Situated in suitable locations, and
- Achievable within a five-year horizon.

We have grouped sites against the Annex 2 tests so it's clear which require additional

evidence, and which do not.

Part A (normally deliverable)

- Sites under construction
- Sites with detailed planning permission
- Sites with prior notification

Part B (require clear evidence to demonstrate deliverability)

- Sites with outline permission or subject to S106 agreements
- Allocated deliverable housing sites

These Part B sites will only be treated as deliverable where there is demonstrable, site-specific evidence that housing completions will begin within five years.

		Units deliverable withing 5 years
Part A	Sites under construction	691
	Sites with detailed planning	372
	Sites with Prior Notification	84
Part B	Sites with Outline Permission/S106	387
	Deliverable sites	1,882
Total		3,416

Table 7 – Summary of supply of deliverable housing identified 31 March 2025

In addition to the deliverable sites above, we include a windfall allowance to reflect smaller sites likely to come forward during the Plan period. This approach follows the Local Plan examination recommendations and provides useful flexibility to support delivery.

Paragraph 98 states

‘Also within the supply are 440 new houses on small windfall sites, and 257 on large windfall sites. Windfall delivery is planned for in both the first five years of the Plan from adoption and in the remaining years afterwards.’

We include a windfall figure because it builds careful contingency into the housing supply without double-counting our identified sites, reflecting the Inspector’s view that modest, site-specific opportunities, particularly in town centres. It can also help speed delivery, allowing the Plan to remain responsive to changing market signals and local development opportunities over time.

Monitoring year	Small sites	Large sites	Total
2025/26	-	-	-
2026/27	25	-	25
2027/28	35	-	35
2028/29	50	-	50
2029/30	60	43	103
Final Total	170	43	213

Table 8 – Total supply of windfall housing identified 31 March 2025



Fig 3 – Total gross windfall completions since the start of the Plan period

Our projected windfall figures are deliberately conservative, grounded in actual delivery since the Plan period began in 2011. Figure 3 plots the number of sites recorded as “windfall” through the development management process and logged by Hertfordshire County Council, showing a reliable record that supports our cautious assumptions.

CONCLUSIONS

Conclusions

Local Plan Figures

Our total requirement for housing delivery from 1 April 2025 – 31 March 2030 in our District is **6,976 dwellings**. This incorporates the objectively assessed housing need annual rate of 1,120 dwellings per year, the annual shortfall of 209 dwellings, totaling 1,044 dwellings per year, and the 5% buffer amounting to 332.

Total supply of deliverable housing identified	31 March 2025
Total number of dwellings under construction	691
Total number of dwellings with detailed planning permission	372
Total number of dwellings with prior notification (including -10% for non-implementation of under ten dwellings)	84
Total number of dwellings with outline permission/S106 (including -10% for non-implementation of under ten dwellings)	387
Total number of dwellings for other 'Deliverable' sites	1,882
Total number of dwellings for windfall sites	213
Total identified supply	3,629

Table 9 – Total supply of deliverable housing identified 31 March 2025

Table 9 shows that the **total supply of deliverable housing identified by the Council for that five-year period is 3,629 dwellings**.

This means we can demonstrate a deficit of **3,347 dwellings** over the five-year period of 2025/26 – 2029/30.

Table 10 shows that we can demonstrate a five-year land position of **2.6 years** against our adopted housing requirement. This figure falls below the five-year requirement.

Five-year housing supply calculation		
A	Objectively Assessed Need (OAN) (dwellings per year)	1,120
	OAN over 5 years	5,600
B	Remaining Local Plan period (years)	6
C	Completions 1 April 2011 – 31 March 2024	5,017
D	Target 1 April 2011 – 31 March 2024	6,270
E	Shortfall against target on 31 March 2024 (D – C)	-1,253
F	Target 1 Apr 2025 – 31 Mar 2030	5,600
G	Surplus / Shortfall to be delivered in 5yr period (E / 6 x 5)	1,044
H	Buffer to be applied (5%) based on 2023 HDT consequence	332
I	Total 5yr requirement (F + G + H)	6,976
J	Dwellings for sites under construction	691
K	Dwellings granted permission or prior approval	456
L	Dwellings granted outline permission or subject to S106	387
M	Other dwellings considered 'deliverable'	1,882
N	Dwellings from Windfall sites	213
O	Total deliverable dwellings (supply) 1 Apr 2024 – 31 Mar 2029 (J + K + L + M + N)	3,629
P	Total Years Housing Supply ((O / I) x 5)	2.6

Table 10 – Five-Year Housing Land Supply Calculation

New Standard Method

Our 5-year housing land supply under the standard housing method is also shown for comparison purposes and would be used if the new plan-making system had come into force and we were able to give formal notice to start preparing a new Local Plan.

Our total requirement for housing delivery from 1 April 2025 – 31 March 2030 in our District is **5,215 dwellings**. This incorporates the new standard method housing need annual rate of 1,043 dwellings per year, no shortfall, and the 5% buffer amounting to 261.

Table 8 shows that the **total supply of deliverable housing identified by the Council for that five-year period is 3,629 dwellings**.

This means there is a deficit of **1,586 dwellings** over the five-year period of 2025/26 – 2029/30.

Table 11 shows that we can demonstrate a five-year land position of **3.3 years** using the Governments New Standard Methodology. This figure falls below the five-year requirement.

Five-year housing supply calculation		
A	New Standard Method Local Housing Need (LHN) (dwellings per year)	1,043
	LHN over 5 years	5,215
B	Remaining Local Plan period (years)	6
C	Completions 1 April 2011 – 31 March 2024	5,017
D	Target 1 April 2011 – 31 March 2024	6,270
E	Shortfall	0
F	Target 1 Apr 2025 – 31 Mar 2030	5,215
G	Surplus / Shortfall to be delivered in 5yr period (E / 6 x 5)	0
H	Buffer to be applied (5%) based on 2023 HDT consequence	261
I	Total 5yr requirement (F + G + H)	5,476
J	Dwellings for sites under construction	691
K	Dwellings granted permission or prior approval	456
L	Dwellings granted outline permission or subject to S106	387
M	Other dwellings considered 'deliverable'	1,882
N	Dwellings from Windfall sites	213
O	Total deliverable dwellings (supply) 1 Apr 2024 – 31 Mar 2029 (J + K + L + M + N)	3,629
P	Total Years Housing Supply ((O / I) x 5)	3.3

Table 11 – Five-Year Housing Land Supply Calculation – New Standard Method