

PLANNING STATEMENT

(incorporating Sustainability Statement & Draft Heads of Terms)

Land to the rear of Reed House, Jacksons Lane, Reed, Royston, SG8 8AB

Prepared by Strutt & Parker on behalf of David Tait

March 2025

Site Name: Land to the rear of Reed House, Jacksons Lane, Reed, Royston, SG8 8AB

Client Name: David Tait

Type of Report: Planning Statement

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APPENDIX 1 – 2016 SHLAA ASSESSMENT

APPENDIX 2 - SUMMARY OF TITLE

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared by Strutt and Parker in support of a planning application by David Tait (the applicant) for:

“Full planning application for 14 dwellings and associated infrastructure.”

- 1.2 The Plan led approach at Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 necessitates that development proposals are determined in accordance with the Statutory Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. As such, the purpose of this statement is to assess and justify the proposed development having regard to the Development Plan and other relevant material considerations. In doing so, the relevant sections of this report are as follows:

- **Section 2: Site and Surroundings**
Analysis of the application site and surrounding area
- **Section 3: The Proposed Development**
A description of the proposed development and pre-application discussions with the Council
- **Section 4: Policy Context**
Identification of relevant local and national planning policies
- **Section 5: Planning Assessment**
An assessment of the proposals within the context of the development plan and other material considerations
- **Section 6: Assessment Against Previous Decisions**
An assessment of the proposals against previous reasons for refusal
- **Section 7: Conclusions**
Concluding assessment of the proposals

- 1.3 This planning application is submitted in full. This statement seeks to establish that residential development of this site is achievable, deliverable and suitable, and that it forms a high-quality and sustainable development which will help meet the District’s identified housing needs and will greatly enhance the site and its surrounding area.

- 1.4 The following assessments and supporting documents are submitted in support of this application as follows:

Document Name	Author
Application Forms and Certificates	Strutt and Parker
Planning Statement	Strutt and Parker
Design and Access Statement	Sapele Design
Energy Statement	Energist
Heritage Statement	GHC Archaeology and Heritage

Flood Risk, Surface Water and Drainage Assessment	Peter Dann
Arboricultural Impact Assessment	Arb Tech
Archaeological Evaluation	Archaeological Solutions Ltd
Preliminary Ecological Assessment	Cambridge Ecology
Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment	Cambridge Ecology
Tier 1 Contamination Assessment	JPC Environmental Services

1.5 The following drawings prepared by Sapele Design are submitted for approval:

Drawing Name	Drawing Number
Location Plan	S1017 PL01.P1
Master Site Plan Layout	S1017 PL22.P1
Roof Plan Layout	S1017 PL23.P1
Visibility Splay Layout	S1017 PL25.P1
Street Elevations	S1017 PL30.P1
Proposed Floor Plans Type A	S1017 PL35.P1
Proposed Elevations Type A Sheet 1	S1017 PL36.P1
Proposed Elevations Type A Sheet 2	S1017 PL37.P1
Proposed Floor Plans Type B	S1017 PL38.P1
Proposed Floor Plan Type C	S1017 PL39.P1
Proposed Elevations Type B + C Sheet 1	S1017 PL40.P1
Proposed Elevations Type B + C Sheet 2	S1017 PL41.P1
Proposed Floor Plans Type D	S1017 PL42.P1
Proposed Elevations Type D Sheet 1	S1017 PL43.P1
Proposed Elevations Type D Sheet 2	S1017 PL44.P1
Proposed Floor Type E	S1017 PL45.P1
Proposed Elevations Type E	S1017 PL46.P1

2. SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

Location

- 2.1 The village of Reed is located approximately 2 miles south of the town of Royston and 5 miles north of the town of Buntingford. It is identified as a Category A village in the Local Plan settlement hierarchy (see Policy SP2: Settlement Hierarchy and Spatial Distribution).
- 2.2 Immediately west of the village is the A10, connecting it with Royston and Cambridge to the north and Buntingford and Ware to the south. The nearest train station is in Royston providing regular services and connections to Cambridge and London. The village is served by buses with a service running between Royston (including the train station) and Buntingford providing connections to a wider range of services and facilities by public transport. An on-demand service by Hertslynx (owned by Hertfordshire County Council) was introduced for the village, and others in the North Herts area, in December 2023.
- 2.3 The Hertfordshire Way public bridleway runs between the village and Royston.
- 2.4 The village is served by a good range of local services and facilities including a primary school (70m west of the site), church (950m south of the site), village hall (450m west of the site), cricket club and recreation ground (500m west of the site). The nearest bus stop is 350m west of the site. A café is located 450m west.

The Site

- 2.5 The site itself is located to the rear of Reed House, Jacksons Lane, Reed (hereafter referred to as the site). It extends to approximately 1.4 hectares and is currently used as a residential garden and is therefore considered previously developed land as confirmed by planning permission 93/00961/1. It is located adjoining a residential area, adjacent to the northern edge of the village's settlement boundary.
- 2.6 To the north of the site is 'The Joint' (a local road running between the A10 and the village of Barkway), beyond which are open fields. To the east of the site are extensive trees and hedging, and beyond this is the Hertfordshire Way. To the south of the site is Reed House and neighbouring residential properties which are accessed from Jackson's Lane. To the west of the site is Mill Corner Farm and further residential properties. The site boundary is largely defined by existing trees and hedgerows ensuring it is well contained and not particularly visible within the wider landscape.
- 2.7 In accordance with the Environment Agency flood maps, the site is situated wholly in Flood Zone 1 and has a very low risk of surface water flooding.
- 2.8 The site is located outside but adjacent to the Reed Conservation Area. There are no listed buildings within the immediate vicinity of the site. There are no designated buildings of local interest in the village. There is one non-designated heritage asset, Thatchers Cottage, located immediately adjacent to the application site but this was subject to extensive fire damage and has largely been rebuilt. The building is, therefore, unlikely to be of sufficient historic interest to be considered as a non-designated heritage asset in its own right.

Planning History

- 2.9 A search of the Council's online planning register has determined the following planning history of relevance to this site:

Reference	Description	Outcome
83/01311/1	Formation of additional vehicular access	Conditional Permission granted: 29.09.1983
93/00961/1	Change of use of 1.9 ha of agricultural land to garden within the curtilage of existing dwellinghouse	Conditional Permission granted: 13.10.1993
02/01213/1HH	Formation of new vehicular access onto The Joint, Reed.	Conditional Permission granted: 03.01.2003
04/01397/1	Outline Application: Erection of 24 detached and terraced dwellings with garaging, open space, estate road and formation of vehicular accesses onto Jackson's Lane and The Joint. (Design, external appearance and landscaping reserved).	Refused: 30.09.2004
11/02254/1	Erection of 13 dwellings (outline application - appearance, landscaping and scale reserved)	Refused: 25.11.2011 Appeal dismissed: 2012
13/01999/1	Erection of 13 dwellings and a business / I.T building (outline application - appearance, landscaping and scale reserved)	Refused: 28.03.2014 Appeal dismissed: 04.03.2015
15/02724/1	Outline application: Erection of 12 dwellings (all matters except access reserved)	Refused: 22.02.2016 Appeal dismissed: 03.08.2016

Planning History

- 2.10 In 2016, an outline application for the erection of 12 dwellings (15/02724/1) was dismissed at appeal (APP/X1925/W/16/3147753). The primary reasons for refusal were:
- The proposal may give rise to significant reliance on private transport;
 - Planning obligations, with particular regard to local infrastructure and affordable housing provision; and

- The effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area and its landscape setting.

2.11 This application seeks to address the concerns raised by the Inspector (discussed in further detail in Section 7 of this Statement).

3. THE PROPOSAL

- 3.1 This application is submitted in full and is for:

“The erection of 14 dwellings and associated infrastructure.”

The Proposed Development

- 3.2 The proposed layout is shown on dwg S1017 PL22.P1. The vehicular access into the site will be taken from The Joint to the north of the site, whilst pedestrian and cycle access will be provided by a dedicated access from Jackson’s Lane to the south.
- 3.3 The plan proposes a mix of 1, 2, 3 and 4 bed properties, both 1 and 2 stories, as shown in the Table below. All properties have a garage and electric vehicle charge points.

Property	Bed. No	No. Storeys	Parking Spaces
1	4	2	2 + garage
2	3	2	2 + garage
3	4	2	2 + garage
4	4	2	2 + garage
5	4	2	2 + garage
6	4	2	2 + garage
7	4	2	2 + garage
8	4	2	2 + garage
9	3	2	2 + garage
10	2	1	2
11	2	1	2
12	1	1	2
13	2	1	2
14	2	1	2

- 3.4 All properties are Nationally Described Space Standard compliant.
- 3.5 The layout seeks to accommodate waste storage within the curtilage of each dwelling. Cycle storage is also provided for each property to the rear of each dwelling.
- 3.6 The proposal seeks to pick up on simple vernacular housing typologies within the local area and is informed by the local palette of materials and details which have been used to create an environment sympathetic to the local context. Further details of the proposed design and materials are contained in the accompanying Design and Access Statement and are shown on the elevations.
- 5.1 An area of informal open space is proposed in the centre of the site, overlooked by all properties. Across the site, 1,545 sqm of open space is provided. If the proposed SuDS pond and adjacent grass bank is excluded, this extends to 1,492 sqm.

- 3.7 A 12-metre buffer is proposed between all properties and the site boundary as required by Policy NE4 (Biodiversity and Geodiversity). This is discussed in further detail in Section 6.
- 3.8 To confirm it is not anticipated the access road within the site will be adopted with this intended to be subject to ownership and maintenance by a private management company. Internal footways are provided throughout the site. Public Footpath 013 runs immediately to the east of the site.
- 3.9 A new cycle and pedestrian footpath is proposed between the main site and Jackson's Lane. The path connects the site with the village centre to the south and the various services and amenities there, including the primary school which is located approximately 70 metres west of the site.

Pre-application Discussions

- 3.10 A formal pre-application enquiry was submitted to the District Council in March 2023 and a written response was received on 21 June 2023. Since this pre-application advice was received, the policy context in the District has changed significantly. The new National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) has recently been published, discussed in further detail in Chapters 4 and 5, whilst the Council can no longer demonstrate a housing land supply of five years or more (discussed in Chapter 5).
- 3.11 Pre-application discussions have not been held with Hertfordshire County Council (HCC). However, the proposed vehicular access is the same as proposed for planning application 15/02724/1 to which the highways authority raised no objection.

4. PLANNING POLICY

- 4.1 The plan led approach at Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 necessitates that development proposals are determined in accordance with the statutory Development Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. An important material consideration in the determination of planning applications is that of Government planning policy and guidance, which takes the form of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2024) and Planning Policy Guidance (PPG) respectively.
- 4.2 The site lies within the local authority area of North Hertfordshire District Council and thus the adopted Local Plan (November 2022) provides the starting point for the consideration of this application. For the avoidance of doubt, Reed does not have a Neighbourhood Plan.
- 4.3 Following a prolonged examination, the Inspector found the Local Plan sound subject to an early review of the plan which needed to have been undertaken by the end of 2023 at the latest. At its Cabinet meeting on 24 January 2024, the Council agreed to Review its local plan noting work would commence during 2024/25 on updating the technical studies.
- 4.4 The latest Local Development Scheme (January 2025) suggests that the first stage of public consultation will take place in Autumn 2025 and the Plan could be adopted by December 2027.

Adopted Local Plan (2022)

- 4.5 The following policies are considered relevant to the determination of this planning application:
- SP1 (Sustainable Development in North Hertfordshire)
 - SP2 (Settlement Hierarchy and Spatial Distribution)
 - SP6 (Sustainable Transport)
 - SP7 (Infrastructure Requirements and Developer Contributions)
 - SP8 (Housing)
 - SP9 (Design and Sustainability)
 - SP10 (Healthy Communities)
 - SP11 (Natural Resources and Sustainability)
 - SP12 (Green Infrastructure, Landscape and Biodiversity)
 - SP13 (Historic Environment)
 - CGB1 (Rural Areas Beyond the Green Belt)
 - T1 (Assessment of Transport Matters)
 - T2 (Parking)
 - HS1 (Local Housing Allocations)
 - HS2 (Affordable Housing)
 - HS3 (Housing Mix)
 - HS5 (Accessible and Adaptable Housing)
 - D1 (Sustainable Design)
 - NE1 (Strategic Green Infrastructure)
 - NE2 (Landscape)
 - NE4 (Biodiversity and Geological Sites)
 - NE8 (Sustainable Drainage Systems)

- NE10 (Water Conservation and Wastewater Infrastructure)
- NE11 (Contaminated Land)
- HE1 (Designated Heritage Assets)
- HE4 (Archaeology)
- RD1 (Land at Blacksmiths Lane)
- IMR1 (Five Year Housing Land Supply)
- IMR2 (Local Plan Early Review)

4.6 An overview of the most important policies to the determination of this application is provided below.

4.7 Policy SP2 (Settlement Hierarchy) identifies settlements within North Hertfordshire and places them into a hierarchy based on their relative sustainability. Reed is identified as a Category A village in which 'general development will be allowed within the defined settlement boundaries.' Supporting paragraph 4.11 notes that whilst the majority of new growth will be focused on the towns, *"it is important to allow growth of the villages in order to allow those communities to continue to function."*

4.8 Policy SP8 (Housing) sets out the Council's housing strategy for the plan period and the means by which its housing requirement will be met. The policy notes that over the period 2011-2031 the Council will:

a) Release sufficient land to deliver at least 11,600 net new homes for North Hertfordshire's own needs. Of these:

- i. around 11,500 net new homes will be provided within that part of the District falling within the Stevenage Housing Market Area (HMA); while*
- ii. around 100 net new homes will be provided within that part of the District falling within the Luton HMA;*

b) Provide additional land within the Luton HMA for a further 1,950 net new homes as a contribution towards the unmet needs for housing arising from Luton with approximately 1,400 of these being delivered over the Plan Period to 2031;

c) Deliver these homes through the sites and allowances identified in this Plan that will support approximately:

- i. 5,100 homes from completions and permissions achieved since 2011 and other allowances;*
- ii. 7,700 homes from six Strategic Housing Sites delivering approximately 5,560 of these by 2031:*
 - BA1 - North of Baldock for 2,800 homes (approximately 1,400 to be delivered by 2031);*
 - LG1 - North of Letchworth for 900 homes (approximately 600 by 2031);*
 - NS1 - North of Stevenage in Graveley parish for 900 homes (approximately 775 by 2031);*
 - HT1 - East of Hitchin for 700 homes;*
 - GA2 - North-east of Great Ashby in Weston parish for 600 homes; and*
 - EL1 / EL2 / EL3 - East of Luton for 2,100 homes (approximately 1,500 by 2031);*

iii. 4,000 homes through local housing allocations that will provide homes on:

- further sites within the adjusted settlement boundaries of the towns;*
- land within the adjusted settlement boundaries of five villages identified for growth where more than 200 homes are expected to be built over the Plan period; and*
- sites identified within the defined settlement boundaries of the Category A villages.*

- 4.9 As discussed in further detail in Chapter 5, none of the above sites have planning permission.
- 4.10 The policy goes on to note that a range of housing tenures, types and sizes should be provided along with a broadly even split between smaller (1- and 2-bed) and larger (3+ bed) properties subject to up-to-date assessments of housing needs. The Policy also notes a review of the plan will be undertaken by the end of 2023.
- 4.11 Policy HS2 (Affordable Housing) sets out the Council's proposed approach to the delivery of affordable housing across the District over the plan period. It states that for sites of between 11 and 14 dwellings, such as this proposed scheme at Reed, the target percentage of dwellings to be affordable will be 25%. The Council's expectation is that 65% of the affordable housing required by criterion (a)(i) will be rented and 35% other forms of affordable housing.
- 4.12 Policy HS3 (Housing Mix) notes proposals will provide for an appropriate range of house types which take into account the latest evidence including the Strategic Housing Market Assessment.
- 4.13 Policy HS5 (Accessible and Adaptable Housing) requires proposals to demonstrate that at least 50% of homes can be built to the M4(2) standards and that 10% of all homes will be M4(3).
- 4.14 In accordance with Policy T1 (Assessment of Transport Matters), planning permission will be granted provided that:
- a) Development would not lead to highway safety problems or cause unacceptable impacts upon the highway network;*
 - b) Mechanisms to secure any necessary sustainable transport measures and / or improvements to the existing highway network are secured in accordance with Policy SP7;*
 - c) Suitable Transport Statements, Transport Assessments and / or Travel Plans along with supporting documents are provided where required; and*
 - d) For major developments, applicants demonstrate (as far as is practicable) how:*
 - i. the proposed scheme would be served by public transport;*
 - ii. safe, direct and convenient routes for pedestrians and cyclists will be provided; and*
 - iii. comprehensive integration into the existing pedestrian and cycle, public transport and road networks will be secured.*

- 4.15 Policy D1 (Sustainable Design) requires proposals to respond positively to the site's local context. It also notes that for residential schemes, proposals should meet or exceed the nationally described space standards and optional water efficiency standards.
- 4.16 Policy NE4 (Biodiversity and Geological Sites) notes that all development should deliver measurable net gains for biodiversity and geodiversity, contribute to ecological networks and the water environment, and/or restore degraded or isolated habitats where possible. This position has arguably been strengthened by the Environment Act 2021 which notes that any new planning application for development will be required to meet the objective that the "*biodiversity value attributable to the development exceeds the pre-development biodiversity value of the on-site habitat by at least [10%].*"
- 4.17 This policy also requires proposals to incorporate 12 metres of complimentary habitat around wildlife sites (locally designated sites and above), trees and hedgerows.
- 4.18 Policy NE6 (New and improved open space) notes that planning permission will be granted for development proposals that make provision for new and/or improved open space which:
- a) Meets the needs arising from the development having regard to the Council's open space standards and other relevant guidance;*
 - b) Contributes towards improving the provision, quality and accessibility of open space; and*
 - c) Incorporate any necessary open space buffer(s) for landscape, visual, ecological or air quality reasons.*
- 4.19 The Council's Open Space Review SPD (2016) can be used to determine the amount of open space required. This is discussed in further detail in Chapter 5.
- 4.20 Policy HE1 (Designated Heritage Assets) notes that planning permission will be granted for proposals that will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, and this harm is outweighed by the public benefits of the development, including securing the asset's optimum viable use.
- 4.21 Policy T2 (Parking) requires parking for residential development to comply with Appendix 4 of the Local Plan as set out below.

Class Use C3	Car Parking Standard	Minimum Cycle Parking Standard
1 bedroom	1 space per dwelling minimum	1 secure covered space per dwelling. None if garage or secure area provided within curtilage of dwelling
2 – 3 bedrooms	2 spaces per dwelling minimum	
Retirement developments (e.g. warden assisted independent living accommodation)	1 space per dwelling minimum	1 secure and covered space for residents per 5 units.

4.22 Policy IMR1 (Five Year Housing Land Supply) notes that in order to identify and update annually a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide five years worth of housing, the Council will:

- a) *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;
- b) *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;*
- c) *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*
- d) *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.*

4.23 In accordance with Policy IMR2 (Local Plan Early Review), the Council will undertake a whole plan review of the Local Plan 2011-2031 by the end of 2023 at the latest. It notes that one of the reasons for the early review is to review the Housing Requirements for the District and wider housing market areas, and to consider Housing Delivery having regard to the progress and implementation of the Strategic Housing Sites and Local Housing Allocations identified in this plan and the rates of development being achieved measured against the stepped approach and housing trajectory set out in this plan. This is discussed in further detail in Chapter 5.

Strategic Housing Market Assessment Volume 2 (2016)

4.24 Figure 28 in the report identifies the need for market and affordable housing of different types (in terms of flats and houses) and sizes (in terms of number of bedrooms). This is summarised in the Tables below.

Market Housing

Flat	1-bed	2%
	2+ bed	3.6%
House	2-bed	8.4%
	3-bed	53%
	4-bed	25.4%
	5+ bed	7.9%

Affordable Housing

Flat	1-bed	2%
	2+ bed	3.6%
House	2-bed	8.4%
	3-bed	53%
	4+ bed	25.4%

North Hertfordshire and Stevenage SHMA Part II Update Including Impact of First Homes (November 2023)

- 5.2 The North Hertfordshire and Stevenage SHMA Part II Update Including Impact of First Homes (November 2023) provides the most up to date data on affordable housing needs in the District. This estimates there are 1,908 households in North Herts who are currently living in unsuitable housing and are unable to afford their own home and this is only anticipated to rise.
- 5.3 This report does not consider market housing.

National Planning Policy Framework

- 4.25 In December 2024, the Government published an updated version of the NPPF which reflects it's stated ambition to deliver record levels of housebuilding, significantly increase growth and "unlock" the economic potential the Government consider the planning system to be holding back. Key paragraphs to the determination of this application are identified below.

- 4.26 Paragraph 11 (d) notes:

"where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permission unless:

- i. the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a strong reason for refusing the development proposed; or*
- ii. 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, having particular regard to key policies for directing development to sustainable locations, making effective use of land, securing well-designed places and providing affordable homes, individually or in combination."*

4.27 As discussed in further detail in Section 5, the Council cannot demonstrate a 5 year housing land supply and consequently paragraph 11 (d) is engaged.

4.28 Chapter 5 concerns the Government's objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes. Paragraph 62 notes that to determine the minimum number of homes needed, strategic policies should be informed by a local housing need assessment, conducted using the standard method in national planning practice guidance. The standard method for North Hertfordshire indicates a housing need 1,018 dwellings per annum. This is discussed in further detail in Section 5.

4.29 Paragraph 73 notes that "*small and medium sized sites can make an important contribution to meeting the housing requirement of an area.*"

4.30 In accordance with paragraph 78:

Strategic policies should include a trajectory illustrating the expected rate of housing delivery over the plan period, and all plans should consider whether it is appropriate to set out the anticipated rate of development for specific sites. Local planning authorities should identify and update annually a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide a minimum of five years' worth of housing against their housing requirement set out in adopted strategic policies, or against their local housing need where the strategic policies are more than five years old. The supply of specific deliverable sites should in addition include a buffer (moved forward from later in the plan period) of:

a) 5% to ensure choice and competition in the market for land; or

b) 20% where there has been significant under delivery of housing over the previous three years, to improve the prospect of achieving the planned supply; or

c) From 1 July 2026, for the purposes of decision-making only, 20% where a local planning authority has a housing requirement adopted in the last five years examined against a previous version of this Framework, and whose annual average housing requirement is 80% or less of the most up to date local housing need figure calculated using the standard method set out in national planning practice guidance.

4.31 Paragraph 82 states that "*In rural areas, planning policies and decisions should be responsive to local circumstances and support housing developments that reflect local needs.*"

Paragraph 83 goes on to note "To promote sustainable development in rural areas, housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities. Planning policies should identify opportunities for villages to grow and thrive, especially where this will support local services. Where there are groups of smaller settlements, development in one village may support services in a village nearby."

4.32 Paragraph 110 acknowledges that "*opportunities to maximise sustainable transport solutions will vary between urban and rural areas, and this should be taken into account in both plan-making and decision-making.*"

4.33 Paragraph 116 notes that "*Development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative*

impacts on the road network, following mitigation, would be severe, taking into account all reasonable future scenarios.”

- 4.34 In accordance with paragraph 124, *“planning policies and decisions should promote an effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses, while safeguarding and improving the environment and ensuring safe and healthy living conditions.”*
- 4.35 Paragraph 125 (c) notes that decision should *“give substantial weight to the value of using suitable brownfield land within settlements for homes and other identified needs, proposals for which should be approved unless substantial harm would be caused, and support opportunities to remediate despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated or unstable land.”*
- 4.36 In accordance with paragraph 215, *“Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.”*

5. PLANNING ASSESSMENT

- 5.4 The following considerations are identified as being important to the determination of the application. An assessment of these principles against relevant Development Plan policies and other material considerations including the NPPF (2024) is set out below.

Principle of Development

- 5.5 The principle aim of this application is to provide high quality residential development in a sustainable village location to help meet local housing needs.
- 5.6 The starting point for the determination of all planning applications is the adopted development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The NPPF is a material consideration in determining applications.
- 5.7 As stated at paragraph 7 of the NPPF, the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. Paragraph 8 goes on to identify three overarching objectives: economic, social and environmental.
- 5.8 Paragraph 11 sets out that in the context of determining planning applications this means:

(c) “approving development proposals that accord with the development plan without delay; or

(d) where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permission unless:

- i. the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a strong reason for refusing the development proposed; or*
- ii. 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, having particular regard to key policies for directing development to sustainable locations, making effective use of land, securing well-designed places and providing affordable homes, individually or in combination.”*

- 5.9 The Local Plan was adopted in November 2022.
- 5.10 The Inspector also confirmed in his letter dated 8 September 2022 that, at the time of adoption, the Council can demonstrate a rolling five-year housing land supply albeit this was on the basis of an early review of the Plan commencing by the end of 2023 at the latest and was based on the application of a stepped housing trajectory whereby the housing requirement (and therefore the 5-year housing land supply (5YHLS) requirement) would increase over time.
- 5.11 The Council is in the very early stages of preparing a new Plan and has not yet undertaken any public consultation. It is considered that the longer the Council take to progress and update the Plan, the less weight that can be attributed to the policies within. The adopted Plan was prepared under the provisions of the now superseded 2012 NPPF whilst its housing requirements clearly fall short of those set out by the new standard methodology.

- 5.12 Furthermore, as discussed in further detail below, as the Council cannot demonstrate a housing land supply of 5 years or more, then paragraph 11(d) is engaged.

Housing Need

- 5.13 Policy SP8 (Housing) states that the Local Plan will release land to deliver at least 11,600 new homes for North Hertfordshire's own housing needs (this equates to approximately 580 dwellings per annum). The Local Plan was examined against the provisions of the 2012 NPPF, and thus the standard methodology (as advocated by recent versions of the NPPF) was not applied.
- 5.14 The adopted Local Plan was prepared under the 2012 NPPF. The Local Plan Review will need to be prepared using the new standard method set out in the NPPF (2024). This notes the housing requirement for North Hertfordshire is 1,018 dwellings per annum which is 438 more dwellings per annum than the current Local Plan makes provision for.
- 5.15 Until a new Local Plan is adopted, or until 8 November 2027 when the adopted Local Plan will be more than 5 years old, it is assumed that North Hertfordshire will continue to calculate its housing land supply using the housing requirement identified in the adopted Local Plan. Nevertheless, the new standard method figures clearly highlight there is a significant need for new housing in the District.

Housing Supply and Delivery

- 5.16 At paragraph 122 of his letter, the North Herts Local Plan Inspector confirmed that upon adoption of the Plan he was of the view that the Council would be able to demonstrate a five-year housing land supply.
- 5.17 In order to achieve this, the Inspector accepted that as 5,560 new homes are to be delivered from six strategic housing sites, a stepped housing trajectory would be appropriate as summarised in the Table below.

2011- 31 March 2020	1 April 2020 – 31 March 2024	1 April 2024 - 2031
350 dpa	500 dpa	1,120 dpa

- 5.18 It is on the basis that the Council has been able to pass the latest Housing Delivery Test (December 2024) achieving a score of 105% as summarised in the table below.

	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
Housing Requirement	313	500	500
Completions	618	335	447

- 5.18 However, in 2024, the Council's annual housing requirement increased to 1,120 dwellings, significantly increasing the Council's 5-year housing land supply requirement and resulting a 5-year housing land supply deficit. The Council's most recent Five-Year Housing Land Supply Update (May 2024) claims a five-year housing land supply of 3.9 years. On this basis, the positive presumption in favour of sustainable development in paragraph 11 (d) of the NPPF is engaged.

- 5.19 Moreover, this change in the Council's annual housing requirement is also likely to adversely affect the Council's position in relation to the Housing Delivery Test in future and it is not anticipated that the Council will pass the 2024 delivery test when this is published in December 2025. This is partly as a result of none of the six strategic sites identified in Policy SP8 have planning permission.

Housing Provision in Reed

- 5.20 As noted in Section 4 of this Statement, Reed is identified as a Category A village and is therefore regarded as one of the larger and more sustainable villages in the District. In accordance with Policy SP2 (Settlement Hierarchy and Spatial Distribution) in Category A villages, general development will be allowed within the defined settlement boundaries.
- 5.21 The site is not allocated in the Local Plan and is outside, but adjacent to, the settlement boundary. The proposals are therefore not in accordance with Policy SP2. However, in the context of Reed, Policy SP2 cannot be considered up to date as its strategy for housing in the village is not deliverable.
- 5.22 The Local Plan identifies one site in the village for development, Land at Blacksmiths Lane, for 22 homes (Policy RD1).
- 5.23 Land at Blacksmiths Lane and the application site were assessed in the SHLAA Update (2016) (Site RD/r01 and Site 81 respectively) and both returned very similar constraints. Both sites were identified as being suitable, available and achievable. An extract from the SHLAA (2016 Update) assessment is contained in Appendix 1.
- 5.24 The two sites were assessed in the Sustainability Appraisal (2022) which again drew comparable conclusions in respect of their sustainability. Indeed, it could be argued that the application site received a slightly more positive assessment as it is not within the setting of a listed building.
- 5.25 Land at Blacksmiths Lane was allocated in the Plan whilst Land at Reed House was not. The evidence base does not set out why Blacksmith Lane was considered more suitable than Land at Reed House but what the evidence base does make clear is that there is very little which separated the two sites in terms of constraints and opportunities.
- 5.26 In 2022, Land at Blacksmiths Lane was put up for sale. It is understood the land was not sold to a developer and remains within the ownership of The Turney Trust.
- 5.27 Despite its allocation, the site has not come forward and there is no evidence to suggest it will come forward in the next five years. Indeed, the Housing Trajectory submitted by the Council to the Inspector during the course of the Local Plan's Examination suggests that the site will not deliver any new homes until 2030-31 (document reference ED191B). In accordance with the NPPF, 'deliverable' is defined as follows (underlined by us):

To be considered deliverable, sites for housing should be available now, offer a suitable location for development now, and be achievable with a realistic prospect that housing will be delivered on the site within five years. In particular:

a) sites which do not involve major development and have planning permission, and all sites with detailed planning permission, should be considered deliverable until permission expires, unless there is clear evidence that homes will not be delivered within five years (for example because they are no longer viable, there is no longer a demand for the type of units or sites have long term phasing plans).

b) where a site has outline planning permission for major development, has been allocated in a development plan, has a grant of permission in principle, or is identified on a brownfield register, it should only be considered deliverable where there is clear evidence that housing completions will begin on site within five years.

- 5.28 Land at Reed House is available now and offers a suitable and deliverable alternative to development (as confirmed in the Local Plan evidence base). The site is not subject to any onerous restrictions and can deliver policy compliant affordable housing helping to meet local market and affordable housing needs in the next five years.

Location

- 5.29 As noted above, Reed is identified as a Category A village and has a good provision of local services which include a primary school, church and village hall. The village is served by regular bus services with buses running between Royston (including the train station) and Buntingford. The identification of the village as a Category A settlement and the allocation of Land at Blacksmith Lane suggest that the Council consider it be a sustainable settlement suitable for accommodating some growth of a similar scale to that proposed on the Application Site.

- 5.30 In accordance with paragraph 83 of the NPPF:

“To promote sustainable development in rural areas, housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities.”

- 5.31 It is considered the delivery of 14 new homes in the village of Reed will not only play a vital role in helping to provide homes for local people, but it will also support the existing village services and its community.

Previously Developed Land

- 5.32 In accordance with the NPPF, previously developed land is defined as:

“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 for minerals extraction or waste disposal by landfill, where provision for restoration has been made through development management procedures; 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.” (emphasis added).

5.33 To confirm, this site is not within a built-up area and thus the exclusion relating to residential gardens in urban areas does not apply. This is confirmed by the Courts in the Dartford case¹.

5.34 Reed House is clearly a permanent structure, and the application site is within its curtilage as confirmed by planning permission 93/00961/1 which was for:

“Change of use of agricultural land to garden within the curtilage of existing dwellinghouse.”

5.35 The SHLAA and Sustainability Appraisal prepared in support of the Local Plan also confirms the site is previously developed land.

5.36 In accordance with Policy SP1 (Sustainable Development in North Hertfordshire), the Plan supports the principles of sustainable development within North Hertfordshire and will:

“Maintain the role of key settlements within and adjoining the District as the main focus for housing, employment and new development making use of previously developed land where possible.”

5.37 Policy SP8 (d) (Housing) also notes that the Council will *“target the completion of 20% of new homes over the plan period on previously developed land.”*

5.38 It is also worth noting paragraph 125 (c) of the new NPPF (2024) which states decisions should:

“give substantial weight to the value of using suitable brownfield land within settlements for homes and other identified needs, proposals for which should be approved unless substantial harm would be caused, and support appropriate opportunities to remediate despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated or unstable land.”

5.39 This proposal will deliver 14 new homes on previously developed land, making an important contribution to the District’s housing needs.

Affordable Housing

5.40 This site will also deliver five affordable dwellings (36%) in accordance with Policy HS2 (Affordable Housing) which requires provision of 35% affordable homes on sites of between 15 and 24 dwellings. This site will deliver much needed affordable housing in a village where the probability of any affordable housing coming forward over the plan period is very slim. Indeed, planning permission 14/02573/1, the most recent development to have been granted planning permission in the village for 12 dwellings (February 2015), did not deliver any affordable housing.

5.41 The North Hertfordshire and Stevenage SHMA Part II Update Including Impact of First Homes (November 2023) provides the most up to date data on affordable housing needs in the District. This estimates there are 1,908 households in North Herts who are currently living in unsuitable housing and are unable to afford their own home and this is only anticipated to rise.

¹ Dartford Borough Council v SSCLG [2016] EWHC 635 (Admin.)

5.42 Although a small site, this proposal will make a valuable contribution towards affordable housing provision, particularly given there has been no recent affordable housing built in the village.

5.43 All affordable homes will be M4(2) compliant.

Housing Mix

5.44 In accordance with Policy HS3 (Housing Mix) an appropriate range of house types and sizes should be provided, taking into account the most up-to-date evidence including the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA). The SHMA was last updated in 2016 and was prepared in support of the Local Plan.

5.45 As this proposal is only for 14 dwellings and in a rural location, it is not considered the provision of flats on this site would be appropriate. A mix of 2-bedroom and 4-bedroom houses are proposed whilst all the affordable housing proposed is single storey.

5.46 All properties are NDSS compliant whilst all affordable are built to M4(2) standards.

Public Open Space

5.47 1,545 sqm of open space is provided. If the proposed SuDS pond and adjacent grass bank are excluded, this extends to 1,492 sqm.

5.48 Employing the Council's broad occupancy figure of 2.4 persons per household the population of this development will be 33.6 persons as shown in the table below.

Dwellings	Average Household Size	Population
14	2.4	33.6

5.49 Applying the Fields in Trusts Standards, this site would be required to provide 800 sqm of amenity green space and natural and semi natural open space, and thus is in compliance with Policy NE6 (New and Improved Open Space).

Heritage

5.50 In support of this planning application, a Heritage Statement has been prepared. This assessment established that there is only one heritage asset which is potentially sensitive to development on the application site: Reed Conservation Area. The assessment concludes that the site can be developed without causing harm to the significance or ability to appreciate said significance of the Conservation Area or its setting.

5.51 The perceived impact the proposals could have on the Conservation Area has been discussed by the Planning Inspectors of two of the appeal decisions (11/02254/1 and 13/01999/1). In respect of application 11/02254/1, the Inspector concluded:

"The proposed development would be screened from the Conservation Area by the existing houses and vegetation along Jacksons Lane. Consequently, any impact upon its appearance would be limited. Also, since the access to the development would be from The Joint, which

effectively skirts the edge of the village, any increase in traffic and associated activity would have very little impact upon the setting of the Conversation Area.”

5.52 This was reiterated by the Planning Inspector for application 13/01999/1, who stated:

“As such, views of the appeal scheme – the appearance and scale of which have yet to be finalised, would be limited. Furthermore, the intended site access would be well separated from the Conservation Area. For these reasons, I consider that the scheme would not adversely affect the Conservation Area’s setting.”

5.53 Proximity and potential impact on the Reed Conservation Area was not listed as a reason for refusal in the 2016 decision notice, and therefore was not discussed in the subsequent appeal decision. The application was refused and appeal dismissed on grounds not relating to the historic environment (discussed in further detail in Section 6).

5.54 Turning to Thatcher’s Cottage, the report concludes that there is very little intervisibility between the site and the Cottage and that the proposals do not contribute to the significance of Thatchers Cottage in its own right nor does it form a part of or facilitate any views of the cottage.

5.55 The proposals will not result in any harm to the village’s heritage assets and the proposal therefore comply with Policies SP13 (Historic Environment), Policy HE1 (Designated Heritage Assets) and Policy HE3 (Non-designated Heritage Assets). Paragraphs 207 and 208 of the NPPF, which require harm to heritage assets to be weighed against the benefits of the scheme, are not engaged.

Archaeology

5.56 As discussed in the Heritage Statement, assessment of the available data on the archaeological and historical context of the study site has established that although a number of undated features were identified during previous trial trench evaluation of the study site, there is no evidence to suggest that it was utilised before the medieval period. Subsequent to this, it is probable that the study site was used for agricultural purposes during the medieval and post-medieval periods considering the noted presence of ridge and furrow; before becoming a residential garden following the construction of Reed House in the 20th century. There is limited archaeological interest in the site and it does not hold any remaining agricultural character to suggest its historic function.

5.57 The proposals therefore comply with Policy HE4 (Archaeology).

Design

5.58 The proposals have sought to provide a high-quality design taking account of the criteria listed in Policy D1 (Sustainable Design) in that they:

- a) Seek to respond positively to the site’s local context – the site is previously developed and new development between Jackson’s Lane and The Joint is not out of character with the area.
- b) The proposals have sought to take reasonable opportunities, consistent with the nature and scale of the scheme, to:
 - a. Create a new area of public open space in the centre of the site to ensure this is easily accessible and adds character to the scheme.
 - b. Incorporate SuDS.

- c. Reduce energy consumption and waste through applying fabric first principles and using air sourced heat pumps.
- d. Retain as much existing high-quality vegetation as possible and propose new sensitive and high-quality planting which can be secured by condition.
- e. Provide a footpath through the site to Jackson's Lane ensuring the site is well integrated with the village and improving connectivity.
- f. Future proofed for changes in technology and lifestyle including the provision of electric vehicle charging points for all dwellings.
- g. Designed out opportunities for crime and anti-social behavior.
- h. Minimise the visual impact of street furniture and parking provision.

5.59 Consideration has also been taken to ensure there will be no impact upon the amenity of surrounding properties.

5.60 All properties also exceed the nationally described space standards and will meet optional water efficiency standards.

5.61 On the basis of the above, it is considered that the proposals deliver a high standard of design and comply with Policy D1.

Access and Transport

5.62 Access will utilise the existing entrance from the Joint and it will not result in the loss of any trees or hedgerows.

5.63 Planning permission was granted for this access in 2002 (reference 02/01213/1HH) and it is notable that no objections have been raised by SCC Highways or appeal inspectors to the previous applications in respect of access.

5.64 A connection is proposed from the main area of the site to Jacksons Lane which is within the settlement boundary. This ensures that the site will better integrate into the village.

5.65 It is considered that the delivery of just 14 dwellings will have a negligible impact on the local highways network and will not have an unacceptable impact upon highways safety. Consequently, the proposals comply with paragraph 116 of the NPPF and Policy T1 (Assessment of transport matters).

5.66 An overview of the site's perceived reliance on private transport is discussed in Section 6.

Ecology and Biodiversity

5.67 There are no statutory designated sites within the development site or within 2km of the site.

5.68 A Preliminary Ecological Assessment has been undertaken in support of the application. This report concluded "an evaluation of the ecological importance of the proposed development site, using recognised ecological criteria, indicated that the site should be considered of 'local' value for its biodiversity. This report did not recommend any further surveys to support the application but did include a series of recommendations to help mitigate the impact of the proposals including

enhanced landscaping which we propose is agreed through a Landscape Strategy to be secured by condition.

- 5.69 A Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment has also been undertaken in support of this application. Using the Biodiversity Metric Calculation Tool and based on the existing site and proposed development and landscaping, the development is calculated to result in a total net change of -26.40% habitat area units and 21.66% hedgerow units. It is anticipated that the deficit in habitat units will be offset by the purchase of units from an offsite provider.
- 5.70 Accordingly, it is considered that the proposals comply with Policy NE4 (Biodiversity and Geological Sites).

Contamination

- 1.6 A Stage 1 Preliminary Contaminated Land Assessment has been undertaken. This report recommends a further Tier 2 Ground Investigation Survey is undertaken which can be conditioned to any planning permission.
- 5.71 The proposals are therefore considered to comply with Policy NE11 (Contaminated Land).

Flood Risk and Surface Water Drainage

- 5.72 In accordance with Government mapping, the site is located in Flood Zone 1 and has a very low risk of surface water flooding.
- 5.73 In support of this application, a Surface and Foul Water Drainage Strategy has been prepared. Infiltration testing has ruled out infiltration discharge of surface water and therefore the Report proposes permeable paving, detention basins and swales.
- 5.74 The proposals are considered to comply with Policy SP11 (Natural Resources and Sustainability), Policy D1 (Sustainable Design) and NE8 (Sustainable Drainage Systems) and relevant policies within the NPPF.

Foul Drainage

- 5.75 It is proposed all foul water flows from the proposals will utilise the existing Thames Water foul drainage system as set out in the Drainage Strategy and in accordance with Policy NE10 (Water Conservation and Wastewater Infrastructure).

Trees

- 5.76 The site is a relatively large residential garden which is predominantly laid to lawn with a number of garden trees and hedges providing screening around the perimeter.
- 5.77 The layout has sought to retain the majority of trees on site. An Arboricultural Impact Assessment has been undertaken in support of this application and those trees to be removed are shown on its accompanying drawing. There are no TPOs or Category A trees on the site.

5.78 All trees and hedgerows will be retained around the periphery of the site and a 12m buffer has been incorporated in accordance with Policy NE4 (Biodiversity and Geological Sites). No trees and hedgerows need to be removed to accommodate the access from The Joint. The retained trees will be supplemented by replacement planting that will help enhance the setting of the Site and provide biodiversity enhancements.

5.79 The proposals therefore comply with Policy NE4 (Biodiversity and Geological Sites).

Sustainability and Energy Statement

5.80 The National Planning Policy Framework requires developments to adopt pro-active strategies to mitigate and adapt to climate change. With the transition to National Housing Standards, only energy performance and water efficiency will be assessed as part of any planning application.

5.81 The design of the dwellings will seek compliance with the current Building Regulations Part L1A; Conservation of fuel and power in new dwellings, which states:

Reasonable provision shall be made for the conservation of fuel and power in buildings by:

- a) Limiting heat gains and losses.
- b) Providing and commissioning energy efficient fixed building services with effective controls, and
- c) Providing sufficient information on maintenance requirements so that the building can operate in such a manner as to use no more fuel and power than is reasonable in the circumstances.

5.82 A 'fabric-first' design principle is to be adopted whereby the fabric of the proposed new houses will be designed towards keeping the energy requirements to an efficient level and the envelope; external walls, floors and roof etc., effectively retain heat. The overall level of energy consumption will be reduced to an effective minimum and this also includes fittings lighting and heat producing appliances etc.

5.83 Substantial insulation levels will be significantly better than the current Building Regulations. These will be provided in accordance with the U-value requirements to the current Building Regulations Part L1A with appropriate combinations of high specification window types and ventilation, fittings to control thermal overheating and cooling when required.

5.84 Air source heating systems shall be used to give energy efficiency, which also reduces carbon emissions. Sustainable materials will also be considered as far as possible regarding the structure and finishes of the buildings. This is particularly relevant to fit in with the original agricultural character of the village, as materials would no doubt all have been sustainable at the time and sourced from the local area.

5.85 An Energy Statement has been submitted in support of this application.

Draft Heads of Terms

5.86 As part of pre-application discussions in 2023, it was identified that Heads of Terms will need to be agreed with the Local Planning Authority prior to any application being considered for decision.

5.87 It is anticipated developer contributions will be made towards:

- X5 Affordable Houses
- Active Travel Contribution - £95,564 (£6,826 per dwelling)
- Biodiversity Net Gain Financial Contribution

5.88 Until all consultation responses have been received, it is unknown whether further contributions will be required, which parties will need to be party to the agreement and therefore whether a S106 Agreement or Unilateral Undertaking will need be prepared. The appropriate legal agreement will be prepared prior to the determination of the application.

5.89 The applicant is yet to formally instruct a solicitor but if required, it is anticipated services will be employed from: Howes Percival, Terrington House, 13-15 Hills Road, Cambridge, Cambridgeshire, CB2 1NL.

5.90 The applicant's title and title plan are enclosed at Appendix 2 of this Planning Statement.

6. ASSESSMENT AGAINST PREVIOUS DECISIONS

- 6.1 In 2016, an application for the erection of 12 dwellings (15/02724/1) was dismissed at appeal (APP/X1925/W/16/3147753). The primary reasons for refusal listed by the Council on the decision notice were:
- The proposal may give rise to significant reliance on private transport;
 - Planning obligations, with particular regard to local infrastructure and affordable housing provision; and
 - The effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area and its landscape setting.
- 6.2 An assessment of the revised proposals against these reasons is set out below.
1. Reliance on private transport
- 6.3 Previous appeal decisions have all commented that the proposal would be likely to give rise to significant reliance on public transport.
- 6.4 Reed is identified as a Category A village which effectively the third tier of settlement in the hierarchy. In accordance with Policy SP2 (Settlement Hierarchy and Spatial Distribution). In Category A villages development will be allowed in defined settlement boundaries. This suggests that the Council consider the village a sustainable location for some new development. If it did not, the village would have been identified as a Category B or Category C village which only support infill development and limited affordable housing respectively.
- 6.5 As noted in Section 5, the Local Plan identified Land at Blacksmiths Lane (Policy RD1) for 22 dwellings. This is a greenfield site which was previously outside the settlement boundary and, as discussed, the two sites drew comparable conclusions in the evidence base of the Local Plan.
- 6.6 It is worth noting that the previous Local Plan (1996) which was the Local Plan in place when the previous applications and appeals were determined, did not identify Reed as a 'Selected Village Beyond the Green Belt' (the equivalent of a Category A village in the adopted Local Plan). The village had no status in the previous Local Plan.
- 6.7 On the basis of the above, in the context of the new Local Plan, it is clear that the Council consider the village to be a sustainable location for new housing.
- 6.8 The village has a good provision of local services which include a primary school, church and village hall, recreation ground, takeaway and cafe.
- 6.9 The village is also within relatively close proximity and well connected to the larger settlements of Royston and Buntingford and the wider services and facilities provided. In particular, Reed lies only 2.5 miles south of Royston Town Centre and 3 miles from the train station which are both within cycling distance from the Site.

- 6.10 The village is also served by the number 18 bus which runs between Royston (including the train station and Tesco) and Buntingford four times a day (Monday to Saturday). The number 889 also provides a school bus service between the village and Edwinstree Middle School and Freeman College in Buntingford.
- 6.11 The adjacent village of Barkway is only served by the number 18 bus and not the 889 service to the Buntingford Schools. Whilst a larger village, the services offered are not dissimilar to Reed – notably it does not include middle and secondary schools - and the Plan makes provision for 208 homes here. Again, this would suggest the village of Reed is considered to be a sustainable location for modest new housing development.
- 6.12 Since the determination of previous applications, Hertfordshire County Council has also set up Hertslynx an on-demand bus service which has served the village since December 2023. The service operates across a number of villages in North and East Herts and Dacorum. The service is available between 07:00 and 19:00 on weekdays (including Saturday) whilst also operating an evening service on Fridays and Saturdays between 20:00 and 23:30. The service is also available on a Sunday between 10:00 and 16:00. The service operates from over 300 virtual bus stops including one on Jacksons Lane immediately south of the site.
- 6.13 Furthermore, since the previous application in 2016, there has been a move towards home working resulting in fewer trips on the highways network.
- 6.14 Nevertheless, it is acknowledged that the development will likely give rise to an increase in the use of the private vehicle which is inevitable for all new development outside of the main towns and cities.
- 6.15 The harm arising from the likely increase needs to be balanced against the provision of much needed market and affordable housing on a previously developed site.

2. Planning obligations, with particular regard to local infrastructure and affordable housing provision

- 6.16 It is not considered that this reason for refusal is relevant to this application.
- 6.17 Policy compliant affordable housing is proposed and financial contributions will be made where these are considered necessary and justified to make the development acceptable in planning terms.

3. Character, appearance and landscape setting

- 6.18 The Council contended that the previous proposals would fail to positively enhance the wider landscape setting of the village and would afford harm to the intrinsic value of the rural area. The impact on the landscape was also identified as a reason for refusal for planning application 13/01999/1. The perceived impact was considered by both Inspectors.
- 6.19 The 2015 Inspector concluded:

“The appeal scheme proposes three groups of buildings around the edge of the site with amenity space in the middle and on The Joint frontage. To my mind, this arrangement would be broadly

consistent with the pattern of tight-knit building groups separated by more open areas described above. The screening along the site's northern boundary remains in place, limiting views towards (or from) the land to the north. I see no reason in principle why appropriate building designs and sympathetic landscaping within the site could not be achieved...I am satisfied that the area's character, appearance and landscape setting would not be materially harmed."

6.20 The Inspector also noted:

"that no harm would be done to the conservation area setting and the landscape would not be materially harmed by this proposed development." And that "the site access is well separated from the conservation area and considers that the development scheme would not adversely affect the conservation area."

6.21 The 2016 Inspector agreed with the above conclusions noting:

"I also agree with the later Inspector that the appeal site is screened from the Conservation Area by the existing houses and vegetation along Jacksons Lane. As such, views of the appeal scheme – the appearance and scale of which have yet to be finalized – would be limited. Furthermore, the intended site access would be well separated from the Conservation Area. For these reasons, I consider that the scheme would not adversely affect the Conservation Area's setting"

6.22 The current proposals largely follow the same arrangement of the previous schemes, and it is considered the same conclusions in respect of impact on the landscape can be drawn.

Appeal Decisions

6.23 The 2016 identified the following harms which weighed against the proposal and ultimately outweighed the benefits:

1. Reliance on public transport.
2. Failure to secure local infrastructure contributions in terms of sustainable transport measures.
3. No meaningful evidence that the proposal would enhance or maintain the vitality of the rural community.

6.24 Points 1 and 2 are discussed in detail above.

6.25 In terms of the social impact of the development, the Inspector concluded that they could find *"no meaningful evidence that the proposal would enhance or maintain the vitality of the rural community and therefore I am not satisfied that the proposal would fulfil the social role."*

6.26 This is partly due to the fact that a completed legal agreement was not submitted as part of the Appeal, and therefore the Inspector was unable to be sure that financial contributions to social infrastructure (such as contributions towards childcare, library, education and youth contributions) was not submitted. For this application, to confirm, the applicant is willing to enter into a legal agreement to secure appropriate financial contributions in compliance with Reg 122 CIL Regulations (2010).

- 6.27 It is also worth noting that the previous application proposed just three affordable dwellings, whereas this proposal seeks to provide 6 affordable dwellings.
- 6.28 A footway connecting the site to Jackson's Lane is also proposed which was not included in the previous applications. This will ensure the site is better integrated with the village and maximising opportunities to access local facilities by foot. It is worth noting this proposed footway connection is only 70 metres from the primary school.

7. CONCLUSIONS

7.1 This full planning application is submitted on behalf of David Tait for:

“Full planning application for 14 dwellings and associated infrastructure.”

7.2 This Statement has comprehensively assessed the proposals against national and local planning policy. It demonstrates that this previously developed site is located in a sustainable location and its development will provide much needed new homes in North Hertfordshire. There are no technical reasons that prevent the delivery of the site.

7.3 The Council cannot currently demonstrate a five-year housing supply and so the most important policies in the determination of this application cannot be considered up to date and paragraph 11 (d) of the NPPF applies.

7.4 The previously developed site is located in a sustainable location, in a Category A village which the Local Plan dictates are suitable for accommodating new housing. Benefits of this proposal include:

- New housing in a sustainable village location adjacent to the existing settlement boundary
- Delivery of new homes on a previously developed site
- Proximity of the site to local village services including the primary school which is only 100 meters west of the site
- The site is not subject to any environmental or heritage planning constraints
- The site will deliver much needed new housing in a District which has a housing land supply deficit
- The delivery of 5 affordable houses in a village which has seen the provision of no new affordable housing in recent years.
- Provision of bungalows for which there is always high demand.

7.5 It is acknowledged that this proposal will result in the loss of some trees, however, none of these are subject to tree preservation orders and it is not considered that their loss is enough to outweigh the benefits of the proposal.

Concerns surrounding the impact on the Conservation Area and reliance on the private car have also previously been raised. However, the Heritage Assessment and previous planning inspectors have concluded the development of this site will not cause any harm to any heritage assets whilst the village is served by a daily bus, cycle connections to Royston are good whilst a precedence has also been set for development through the allocation of Land at Blacksmiths Lane. An on-demand bus service has also served the village since December 2023.

7.6 In accordance with national policy, it is therefore requested that the application is approved without delay.

Appendix 1 – SHLAA Assessment (2016)

SHLAA ref	Pref. Options ref	Address	Town / parish	Agriculture	AQMA	AONB	Archeology	Common / CROW	Cons. Area	Contaminated	Flood - river (EA)	Flood - surface	Green Belt	Habitats	Listed	Local Nature Reserve	PROW	Reg. P&G	SAM	SPZ	SSSI	Wildlife	
B1	n/a	Reed House, Jacksons Lane	Reed	2	No	No	Adjacent	No	Yes (part)	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	3	No	No
RD01	RD1	Land at Blacksmiths Lane	Reed	2	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	Adjacent	Setting	No	Yes	No	No	3	No	No

SHLAA ref	Pref. Options ref	Address	Town / parish	Source	Site type	Suitable?	Summary reasons	Available?	Achievable	Refined site area	Refined dwelling estimate
RD\01	RD1	Land at Blacksmiths Lane	Reed	2014 SHLAA	Beyond settlement boundary ex GB	Yes	Rectangular site at west of village. Frontage to Blacksmiths Lane. Residential development to east and south and opportunity to continue pattern of frontage development to junction with A10. Reed currently in area of rural restraint and site needs to be considered in wider context of potential village boundaries.	Yes	Yes	1.08	22

81	n/a	Reed House, Jacksons Lane	Reed	2014 SHLAA	Beyond settlement boundary ex GB	Yes	Large house and curtilage. Frontage to both Jacksons Lane and The Joint though Reed 'faces in' towards the former and development orientated in the opposite direction would not be appropriate. Would need to consider relationship with surrounding buildings and impact upon Conservation Area, including suitability of development to rear of existing plots. Lower density assumption to take these issues into account. Reed currently in area of rural restraint and site needs to be considered in wider context of potential village boundaries.	Yes	Yes	1.92	13
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Title register for:

Reed House, Jacksons Lane, Reed, Royston, SG8 8AB (Freehold)

Title number: HD303855

Accessed on 31 January 2023 at 11:33:54

This information can change if we receive an application. This service can not tell you if HM Land Registry are dealing with an application.



This is not an official copy. It does not take into account if there's a pending application with HM Land Registry. If you need to prove property ownership, for example, for a court case, you'll need to order an official copy of the register.

Register summary

Title number	HD303855
Registered owners	DAVID MALCOLM TAIT Reed House, Jacksons Lane, Reed, Royston SG8 8AB SALLY ANNABEL TAIT Reed House, Jacksons Lane, Reed, Royston SG8 8AB
Last sold for	No price recorded

A: Property Register

This register describes the land and estates comprised in this title.

Entry number	Entry date	
1	1993-02-11	HERTFORDSHIRE : NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE

The Freehold land shown edged with red on the plan of the above Title filed at the Registry and being Reed House, Jacksons Lane, Reed, Royston (SG8 8AB).

B: Proprietorship Register

This register specifies the class of title and identifies the owner. It contains any entries that affect the right of disposal.

Class of Title: Title absolute

Entry number	Entry date	
1	1993-02-11	PROPRIETOR: DAVID MALCOLM TAIT and SALLY ANNABEL TAIT of Reed House, Jacksons Lane, Reed, Royston SG8 8AB.
2	1993-02-11	RESTRICTION: No disposition by a sole proprietor of the land (not being a trust corporation) under which capital money arises is to be registered except under an order of the registrar or of the Court.
3	1993-02-11	The Transfer to the proprietor contains a covenant to observe and perform the covenants referred to in the Charges Register and of indemnity in respect thereof.
4	2016-05-26	RESTRICTION: No disposition of the registered estate by the proprietor of the registered estate is to be registered without a written consent signed by the proprietor for the time being of the Charge dated 19 May 2016 in favour of LV Equity Release Limited referred to in the Charges Register.

C: Charges Register

This register contains any charges and other matters that affect the land.

Class of Title: Title absolute

Entry number	Entry date	
1		A Conveyance of the land tinted pink on the filed plan and other land dated 30 May 1960 made between (1) Michael Henry Piercy (Vendor) and (2) Louis Valentine and Gladys Margaret Jones Valentine (Purchasers) contains covenants details of which are set out in the schedule of restrictive covenants hereto.
2		A Conveyance of the land tinted yellow on the filed plan and other land dated 10 November 1964 made between (1) Michael Henry Piercy and (2) Kenneth Douglas Duke contains covenants details of which are set out in the schedule of restrictive covenants hereto.
3	2016-05-26	REGISTERED CHARGE dated 19 May 2016.
4	2016-05-26	Proprietor: LV EQUITY RELEASE LIMITED (Co. Regn. No. 1951289) of County Gates, Bournemouth BH1 2NF and of Keynes House, Hitchin, Hertfordshire SG5 2DX.
5		The following are details of the covenants contained in the Conveyance dated 30 May 1960 referred to in the Charges Register:- "THE Purchasers for the benefit and protection of the Vendors Estate at Hertfordshire or any part or parts thereof and so as to bind so far as may be the land hereby conveyed into whosoever hands the same may come hereby jointly and severally covenant as follows:- The Purchasers and the persons deriving title under them :-

(a) Will not carry on or permit to be carried on upon the land or any part thereof any trade business or manufacture whatsoever but will keep and use the land for private purposes only and will not do or suffer to be done in or upon the land or any part thereof any act or thing which might spoil the amenities of the neighbourhood or which might be or become a nuisance damage annoyance or inconvenience to the Vendor or the occupier or occupiers of any adjoining or neighbouring property.

(b) Will not permit caravans camps or temporary buildings of any kind on the property.

(c) Except as regards temporary notices advertising property of the Purchasers for letting or sale will not without the prior written consent of the Vendor permit the erection of hoardings on any part of the property for the purpose of exhibiting any advertisement on any part of the property.

(d) Will not permit any stone gravel loam clay sand or other substance to be dug out and carried away from the land or any part thereof except for the laying of foundations of the building to be erected on the land or for use in erecting such building or in the garden thereof.

(e) Subject to the obtaining of all requisite consent of the local planning or any other Authority not to erect on the said land more than two detached private dwellinghouses and no other buildings (including temporary buildings and caravans) shall be erected or placed on any part of the land other than a garage and usual offices. It is agreed that the Purchasers shall on request produce all such plans for the Vendor's inspection.

(f) Will erect and maintain good and sufficient post

and three stand wire fences along the boundaries of the property the cost of erecting such fences being borne by the Vendor and Purchasers in equal proportions Provided always that any fence or hedge along the frontage of the said plot shall not exceed Five feet in height from the surface of the road running parallel to the said boundary.

(g) Notwithstanding anything contained in the Conditions or in the Conveyance to the Purchasers the Vendor may deal with his other lands free from all restrictions and may sell or demise such other lands in such parcels or upon such terms and conditions and subject to or free from any restrictions as he may think fit and the Purchasers shall not be released from any of the covenants in such Conveyance contained nor shall the right of the Vendor to enforce such covenants be affected by reason that other lands of the Vendor shall have been sold or demised or contracted to be sold or demised without similar restrictions or that such other lands are being used in a manner or for purposes inconsistent with the restrictions aforesaid."

NOTE: The road boundary and the eastern boundary of the land tinted pink on the filed plan are the only external boundaries affected by the covenant in paragraph (f) above.

The following are details of the covenants contained in the Conveyance dated 10 November 1964 referred to in the Charges Register:-

THE Purchaser to the intent that the covenant in this Clause contained may so far as possible bind all persons who now are or shall hereafter become entitled to any estate or interest in the property hereinbefore conveyed or any part thereof but not so as to bind the Purchaser or any such person after

he or they shall have disposed of all his or their estate or interest therein hereby covenants with the Vendor to the intent that this covenant shall be for the benefit and protection of the Vendor's Estate in Hertfordshire or any part or parts thereof that the Purchaser and all persons intended to be so bound as aforesaid will duly observe and perform the stipulations set out in the Second Schedule hereto

THE SECOND SCHEDULE before referred to

The Purchaser and the persons deriving title under him

(a) Will not carry on or permit to be carried on or upon the property or any part thereof any trade or business of manufacture other than that of a Farmer and will not do or suffer to be done in or upon the property or any part thereof any act or thing which might spoil the amenities of the neighbourhood or which might be or become a nuisance damage annoyance or inconvenience to the Vendor or the occupier or occupiers of any adjoining or neighbouring property.

(b) Will not permit caravans or temporary buildings of any kind on the property other than caravans required for temporary accommodation for employees.

(c) Except as regards temporary notices advertising property of the Purchaser for letting or sale will not without the prior written consent of the Vendor permit the erection of hoardings on any part of the property for the purpose of exhibiting any advertisements or notices or affix or exhibit any notices or advertisement on any part of the property.

(d) Will not permit any stone gravel lime clay sand

or other substance to be dug out and carried away from the property or any part thereof.

(e) Notwithstanding anything contained in the conditions or in the Conveyance to the Purchaser the Vendor may deal with his other lands free from all restrictions and may sell or demise such other lands in such parcels or upon such terms and conditions and subject to or perform any restrictions as he may think fit and the Purchaser shall not be released from any of the covenants in such Conveyance contained nor shall the right of the Vendor to enforce such covenants be affected by reason that other lands of the Vendor shall have been sold or demised or contracted to be sold or demised without similar restrictions or that such other lands are being used in a manner or for purposes inconsistent with the restrictions aforesaid.