

Development Management

North Herts Council

Submitted via the Planning Portal

2nd September

Dear Sir or Madam

Application for full planning permission

'Trees', Gosmore Road, Hitchin, Hertfordshire SG4 9AN

Construction of 3no. detached dwellings with garages, hardstanding and landscaping following demolition of existing house and outbuildings

We act for Judge & Sons Building Services Ltd and enclose the above application for your consideration.

Background

The site was the subject of application 25/00423/FP, refused in 2025. Following that decision we sought pre-application advice, and a meeting was held with Thomas Howe on 9 December 2025 under reference 25/02812/PRE2 to discuss a revised scheme. The application now submitted is the scheme arising from that discussion.

The reasons for refusal, and the way the revised scheme responds to each of them, are set out in full at Sections 3 and 5 of the Design and Access Statement. In summary, the changes made are:

- all three plots reduced from 2.5 storeys with habitable roof accommodation to two storeys with traditional hipped roofs, with no accommodation in the roof space and rear dormers omitted;
- bedrooms reduced from five to four per plot, with substantial reductions in internal floor area on every plot;
- flat crown roofs replaced with full hipped pitched roofs in keeping with the prevailing roof forms of the locality;
- all three dwellings repositioned to provide more comfortable separation from the site boundaries, and the Plot 1 garage detailing revised to remove the previous wrap-around effect against Holmacott;
- the two-storey rear element of Plot 2 reduced in height and its rear dormer omitted, significantly reducing overlooking and overbearing impact on No. 8 Coach Drive; and
- tree removal reduced from six trees to five, with additional native planting and ecological features integrated into the built fabric.

Biodiversity net gain

The application site extends to 1,987 m², which is below the 0.2 hectare threshold. Following the coming into force of the Biodiversity Gain (Town and Country Planning) (Amendments and Transitional Provisions) (England) Regulations 2026 on 6 August 2026, the statutory biodiversity gain condition does not apply to this application. The exemption is recorded on the application form and is explained, with

the supporting habitat evidence, in the enclosed Biodiversity Gain Exemption Statement. The underlying ecological assessment and metric calculation are held by the applicant and will be provided on request.

The scheme nonetheless delivers the biodiversity improvements sought by the Council's Ecologist on the refused application, as set out in that statement and at Section 6.7 of the Design and Access Statement.

Policy context

The site lies within the Hitchin settlement boundary, as the case officer confirmed on the refused application. Section 9 of the Design and Access Statement addresses the application against the adopted Local Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework published in August 2026, which replaced the December 2024 Framework and applies to decisions from 17 August 2026.

Documents submitted

The application comprises:

- completed application form and Certificate A;
- Design and Access Statement and Sustainability Statement, incorporating the drawing register at Section 11;
- Biodiversity Gain Exemption Statement;
- Surface Water Drainage and SuDS Statement;
- Arboricultural Impact Assessment, Tree Protection Plan and Arboricultural Method Statement (Harrison Arboriculture, 23 August 2026);
- Preliminary Roost Assessment (Coyne Environmental Ltd);
- drawings 3707/01C, 02, 03, 04, 05C, 06T, 07F, 08E, 09E, 10E, 11E, 12E, 13B, 22C, 23C and 27; and
- the application fee, paid through the Planning Portal.

We should be grateful if you would confirm validation and let us know the name of the case officer. Please contact the undersigned with any queries, or if any further information would assist your consideration of the application.

Yours faithfully

Jonathan Read

Director

Pentangle Design Group

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