

PLANNING, DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

IN SUPPORT OF

**FULL PLANNING APPLICATION
FOR THE DEMOLITION OF 2
EQUESTRIAN BUILDINGS AND
THE ERECTION OF 5 NEW
DETACHED DWELLINGS (USE
CLASS C3) TOGETHER WITH
ASSOCIATED CARPORTS,
ACCESS, PARKING AND
LANDSCAPING,**

AT

**GLEBE HOUSE STABLES
HINXWORTH ROAD
HINXWORTH
BALDOCK
HERTFORDSHIRE
SG7 5HB**



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APPENDICES

Appendix 1	Decision Notice from Application Ref: 25/02408/FP
Appendix 2	Officers Report from Application Ref: 25/02408/FP
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1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This statement has been prepared by Sworders on behalf of Mr Anthony Smyth (hereafter referred to as the 'Applicant') in support of an application for full planning permission for the demolition of 2 equestrian buildings and associated structures (ménage, etc.) and the erection of 5 new detached dwellings (use class C3) together with associated carports, access, parking and landscaping, at Glebe House Stables, Hinxworth Road, Hinxworth, Baldock, Hertfordshire, SG7 5HB.



Photo 1 – Smaller Stable, West and Northern Elevations



Photo 2 – Larger Stable, South and Western elevations

- 1.2 The application site comprises a large stables building, which also includes hay storage and an indoor training arena, a smaller stables building, the central yard, a ménage and surrounding paddocks. The site currently forms part of Title HD408150 and sits approximately 600 metres south southeast of the settlement boundary of Hinxworth, a category B village in the NHDC Local Plan. The site is situated to the rear of Glebe House and has been used for at least 30 years for stabling and equestrian use (Application Refs 86/00051/1 and 91/00307/1).

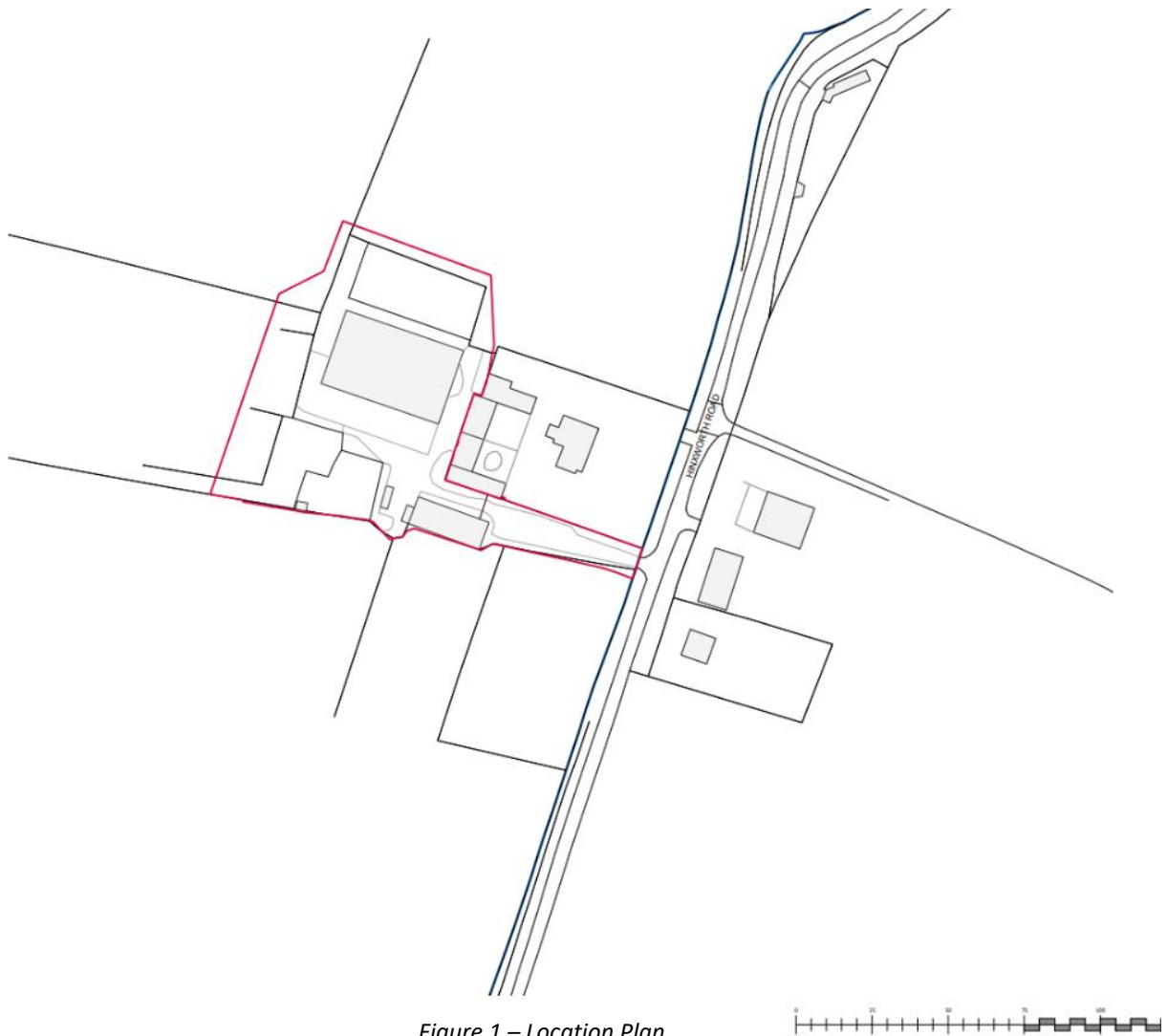


Figure 1 – Location Plan
For scale version, please see drawing
ref: 224420-3-PL-00-001 REV A

- 1.3 This statement is accompanied by an Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA) by Ecology by Design and a Transport Technical Note prepared by EAS. These third-party reports and statements have been prepared to ensure that this proposal is suitable regarding its ecological, environmental and transportation impacts, and as such is sustainable.



2.0 RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

2.1 The planning history for the site is set out in the below table:

REFERENCE	DESCRIPTION	DECISION	DATE
25/02408/FP	Four dwellings (use class c3) together with associated car ports, access, parking and landscaping following demolition of No.2 equestrian buildings. (Amended plans received 17/11/25). - Glebe House New Inn Road Hinxworth Baldock Hertfordshire SG7 5HB	Approved	26 November 2025
03/01206/1HH	Part two storey and part single storey rear extension - Glebe House New Inn Road Hinxworth Baldock SG7	Approved	11 September 2003
91/00307/1	Retention of use of agricultural land for stabling and grazing of horses and use of part of barn for indoor exercise area. - Glebe House New Inn Road Hinxworth SG7	Approved	25 April 1991
86/00051/1	Conversion and adaptation of part of existing stable block into residential use, to be occupied by agricultural students associated with Glebe Farm. - Glebe Farm Hinxworth SG7	Approved	20 March 1986
81/00265/1	Erection of two storey and single storey extension and bay window on side elevation. – at Glebe Farm Hinxworth SG7	Approved	20 March 1981



3.0 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

- 3.1 This application proposes the demolition of a large stables and hay store building, a smaller stables building, a ménage and surrounding paddocks, and the erection of five dwellings (one with 3 bedrooms and four with 4 bedrooms), along with two detached carports and the provision of suitable parking and amenity space. One of the dwellings will be single storey. The other four dwellings will be one-and-a-half storeys.
- 3.2 The existing stables buildings to be demolished can be seen on the existing Site Location Plan (Ref: 224420-3-PL-00-001 REV A). Elevations of the larger barn can be found in plan ref: 224420-PL-EX-300. Elevations for the smaller barn can be found in plan ref: 224420-PL-EX-301.
- 3.3 The smaller stables building has a footprint of 244.8sqm and a volume of 758m³.
- 3.4 The larger stables building has a footprint of 1070.9sqm and has a volume of 5212.5m³.
- 3.5 The proposed layout of the site can be seen in Drawing Nos. 224420-3-PL-S-00-100 Rev B, 224420-3-PL-S-00-101 Rev A and 224420-3-PL-S-00-102 Rev A.
- 3.6 The proposed development will utilise the existing access off the public highway, widening it slightly to accommodate the movements of refuse collection vehicles and fire tenders. A transport note has been prepared on behalf of the applicant by EAS, which has informed the layout of the proposal and demonstrates that the site may be safely accessed.
- 3.7 The proposed development will provide a 82.93% and 440.84% net gain in Habitat Units and Hedgerow Units, respectively. This will be achieved by planting areas of neutral grassland and small trees within common areas of the site, along with creating a habitat area in the southwest of the site, which will be planted with neutral grassland, small trees, and a small replacement area of mixed scrub in its northwest corner. In addition to this, a band of individual trees and other neutral grassland shall be planted along the eastern and northern sides of the site. For more details, please see the EclA report prepared on behalf of the applicant by Ecology by Design.



3.8 In November 2025, permission was granted on the same site for the construction of four dwellings (use class c3) together with associated car ports, access, parking and landscaping following demolition of No.2 equestrian building. The decision notice and Officer's Report for this approval (Ref: 25/02408/FP) may be seen in Appendix 1 and 2 respectively. A layout plan for this approval may be seen in Appendix 3.

3.9 The key issues for consideration included:

- Principle of residential development in this location
- Sustainability
- Layout and Design Considerations
- Impact on Neighbouring Dwellings/Future Occupiers
- Highways and Parking
- Biodiversity and landscaping

3.10 The proposal was not considered to harm the openness of the site when compared against the existing buildings. This was due to the proposed dwellings being located to sit closely as possible to the footprint of existing buildings, thereby minimizing their impact upon the openness of the Rural Area Beyond the Green Belt. Although Plots 2-4 would have ridge heights exceeding that of the existing barn by approximately 1m, it was decided that, taken together, the proposal would have a lesser bulk than the existing barn. As such, the proposal was deemed to comply with Policy CGB4 of the local plan.

3.11 The proposal was also considered to be sustainable, due to the build process providing local jobs and contributing to the local economy, the development being likely to provide social benefits for future and current residents, and the new houses having to meet high environmental standards set out in current building regulations.



- 3.12 Prior to this application, in February 2025 pre-application advice was sought from North Hertfordshire Council, under Ref: 24/02898/PRE, regarding the proposed demolition of the existing stable buildings on site and the subsequent erection of one four bed dwelling and two five bed dwellings. This pre-application advice may be seen in Appendix 4 of this statement. The proposed site plan submitted with the request for pre-application advice may be seen in Appendix 5.
- 3.13 The application for which this Planning Statement has been prepared has taken the comments found in Appendices 2 and 4, regarding the impact on highways, biodiversity, landscaping, amenity impacts and parking provision, into account.



4.0 PLANNING POLICY

NATIONAL POLICY

- 4.1 National planning policy is contained within the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) adopted in 2012 (As Amended December 2024). At the core of the NPPF is the principle of sustainable development, which is defined in Paragraph 8 as development that meets, on balance, three objectives: economic, social and environmental.
- 4.2 Paragraph 11(d) sets out that a presumption should be made in favour of sustainable development where the local policies most relevant for determining the application are out-of-date, including situations where the Local Authority cannot demonstrate a 5 year supply of deliverable housing.
- 4.3 In the case of North Hertfordshire, its November 2025 Five-Year Housing Land Supply Update stated a deliverable housing supply, when measured against North Hertfordshire's identified housing need, of 2.6 years, with a deficit of 3,347 dwellings from 1 Apr 2024 – 31 Mar 2029. When assessed against the New Standard Method set out in the NPPF, North Hertfordshire can demonstrate a 5 year supply of 3.3 years, with a deficit of 1,586 dwellings. Under either figure, the presumption in favour of sustainable development should be made and the tilted balance in favour of sustainable development should be applied in this instance.
- 4.4 Paragraph 73 of the NPPF encourages local planning authorities to promote the development of a good mix of sites. One of the ways in which they are encouraged to do so is to *"d) support the development of windfall sites through their policies and decisions"*. Windfall sites are defined in the NPPF as *"Sites not specifically identified in the development plan"*.
- 4.5 Local authorities are also encouraged, at part c), to *"use tools such as area-wide design assessments, permission in principle and Local Development Orders to help bring small and medium sized sites forward"*. Although this application does not fall under any of these approaches, this policy nevertheless encourages local authorities to look favourably upon small and medium sites, such as the one subject to this application.



- 4.6 Paragraph 39 broadly encourages local authorities to *“work proactively with applicants to secure developments that will improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area”*, and decision-makers, at all levels, to seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible, while paragraph 61 again encourages a variety of land to come forward and sets out the goal of meeting an area’s identified housing need.
- 4.7 Paragraph 89 sets out the national policy approach to development in rural areas outside of settlements and on previously developed land, stating that *“Planning policies and decisions should recognise that sites to meet local business and community needs in rural areas may have to be found adjacent to or beyond existing settlements, and in locations that are not well served by public transport. In these circumstances, it will be important to ensure that development is sensitive to its surroundings, does not have an unacceptable impact on local roads and exploits any opportunities to make a location more sustainable (for example, by improving the scope for access on foot, by cycling or by public transport). The use of previously developed land, and sites that are physically well-related to existing settlements, should be encouraged where suitable opportunities exist”*.
- 4.8 Section 12 of the NPPF is also relevant as it seeks to achieve well-designed places, and includes a number of criteria for new developments, including buildings being visually attractive, sympathetic to local character and history, and establishing a strong sense of place.
- 4.9 Regard should also be had to Paragraph 116, which states 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.”*
- 4.10 While it has not yet been finalised, some regard should also be had to provisions set out in the December 2025 consultation draft of the new NPPF. Policies of relevance to this application within this draft document include:
- S3: Presumption in favour of sustainable development
 - S5: Principle of development outside settlements
 - HO7: Meeting the need for homes



LOCAL POLICY

4.11 Local planning policy is contained within the North Hertfordshire Local Plan, 2011-2031 – Adopted 8 November 2022.

4.12 Policy SP1: ‘Sustainable development in North Hertfordshire’ mirrors the sustainability focus underlying the NPPF, and states that planning permission will be granted to proposals that, individually or cumulatively;

“i. deliver an appropriate mix of homes, jobs and facilities that contribute towards the targets and aspirations in this Plan;

ii. create high-quality developments that respect and improve their surroundings and provide opportunities for healthy lifestyle choices;

iii. provide the necessary infrastructure required to support an increasing population;

iv. protect key elements of North Hertfordshire’s environment including biodiversity, important landscapes, heritage assets and green infrastructure (including the water environment); and

v. secure any necessary mitigation measures that reduce the impact of development, including on climate change; and

d) Support neighbourhood plans and other local planning initiatives where they are in general conformity with the strategic policies of this Local Plan.”

4.13 Policy SP5: ‘Countryside and Green Belt’ identifies the site as lying within the Rural Area beyond the Green Belt, and states that North Herts *“Will operate a general policy of restraint in Rural Areas beyond the Green Belt through the application of our detailed policies”*.

4.14 These detailed policies may be found within Policies CGB1: Rural Areas beyond the Green Belt and CGB4: Existing buildings in the Rural Area Beyond the Green Belt. CGB4 states that *“Planning permission for the re-use, replacement or extension of buildings in the Rural Area beyond the Green Belt will be granted provided that:*

[...]

c) The resultant building(s) do not have a materially greater impact on the openness, purposes



or general policy aims of the Rural Area beyond the Green Belt than the original building(s)".

4.15 Under paragraph 6.21, which is in support of Policy CGB4, it is stated that *"National policy provides clear guidance on proposals for the re-use, replacement or extension of buildings in the Green Belt which will be used, alongside the detailed design policies of this plan for relevant applications."* Paragraph 6.22 adds *"We consider that a broadly consistent approach is also justified in the Rural Area Beyond the Green Belt to ensure that similar proposals do not cause harm"*.

4.16 Additional relevant policies within this plan include:

- Policy SP2: Settlement Hierarchy and Spatial Distribution
- Policy SP6: Sustainable transport
- Policy SP9: Design and Sustainability
- Policy T1: Assessment of transport matters
- Policy T2: Parking
- Policy D1: Sustainable design
- Policy NE2: Landscape
- Policy NE4: Biodiversity and geological sites
- Appendix 4: Car Parking Standards

4.17 The following adopted Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) also form part of the Development Plan and have been taken into consideration:

- Sustainability Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) 23 September 2024
- Design Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) 15 January 2015
- Vehicle parking at new developments SPD 10 November 2011



5.0 MATERIAL PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

PRINCIPLE OF DEVELOPMENT:

- 5.1 The proposal is for the development of housing in the Rural Area beyond the Green Belt, via the replacement of two existing rural buildings. As such the development is compliant with Policy CGB1, part d), in that it relates to an existing rural building. Whether this proposal is acceptable in principle, therefore, depends upon the degree to which it is considered to be sustainable development that also meets the requirements Policy CGB4. This approach to the consideration of the development is set out in the pre-application advice received under Ref: 24/02898/PRE, and the same approach was followed in the Officer's Report to Decision Ref: 25/02408/FP.
- 5.2 This policy, relating to existing buildings in the Rural Area Beyond the Green Belt, states that:
- a) Planning permission for the re-use, replacement or extension of buildings in the Rural Area beyond the Green Belt will be granted provided that:*
 - b) Any existing building to be converted for re-use does not require major extension or reconstruction;*
 - c) The resultant building(s) do not have a materially greater impact on the openness, purposes or general policy aims of the Rural Area beyond the Green Belt than the original building(s); and*
 - d) Any outbuilding(s) are sited as close as possible to the main building(s) and visually subordinate to them.*
- 5.3 The purposes of the Rural Area beyond the Green Belt, while not explicitly defined, are broadly set out in paragraphs 4.64, 6.1 and 6.22 of the Local Plan. This designation appears to mostly be focused on encouraging development to be focused closer to key services and protecting high quality countryside.



- 5.4 The pre-application advice received for this site considered the scheme submitted under said pre-app to fall short of the requirements set out in Policy CGB4, part c), stating that the proposal would create an overly suburban layout and would not be sited near the footprint of the existing barn, so therefore would harm the openness of the site. The proposal subject to this application has taken these comments into consideration, adjusting the layout to more closely match a typical rural farmyard, and endeavouring to keep the proposed built form within the bounds of the existing built footprint wherever possible.
- 5.5 The Officer's Report for application ref: 25/02408/FP (Appendix 2) considered the previous application for 4 houses on the site to meet the requirements set out in Policy CGB4, stating as follows:
- "4.3.6 The proposal seeks a floorspace trade off with the existing equestrian buildings. The dwellings have been located to sit as closely to the footprint of existing buildings and thus minimizes their impact upon the openness of the Rural Area Beyond the Green Belt. Plot 1 is a bungalow designed to mimic the existing stables, plots 2-4 are two storey dwellings, although they would exceed the ridge of the existing barn by approximately 1m, the three dwellings in cumulation would not be as bulky as the existing barn.*
- 4.3.7 The proposal is therefore not considered to harm the openness of the site when compared against the existing buildings. The proposal is compliant with policies SP2, CGB1 and CGB4 of the Local Plan."*
- 5.6 This proposal would similarly replace two existing equestrian buildings, along with a large area of associated hardstanding and a menage, with a well landscaped development. The difference in this case is that this development would comprise 5 dwelling houses and 2 detached carports. As shall be elaborated in later sections, the layout of this proposal has been inspired by traditional farmyard layouts common in the area.
- 5.7 The below table sets out the volumes, footprints and gross internal areas of the proposed 5 plots and 2 detached car ports:



	Volume	Footprint	GIA GF	GIA FF	GIA Total
Plot 1 - inc Car Port	812.45 m ³	215.29 m ²	146.16 m ²		146.16 m ²
Plot 2 – inc Car Port	1045.40 m ³	173.41 m ²	111.39 m ²	111.39 m ²	222.78 m ²
Plot 3 – inc Car Port	1142.77 m ³	191.24 m ²	127.60 m ²	127.60 m ²	255.20 m ²
Plot 4	965.75 m ³	157.24 m ²	135.61 m ²	117.30 m ²	252.91 m ²
Plot 4 Car Port	287.75 m ³	64.99 m ²			64.99 m ²
Plot 5	967.46 m ³	156.18 m ²	135.25 m ²	118.44 m ²	253.69 m ²
Plot 5 Car Port	198.76 m ³	44.89 m ²			48.89 m ²

- 5.8 When compared with existing, the proposed development would result in a 23.75% decrease in built footprint and a 9.21% decrease in built volume, has sought to keep the built development within the footprint of the existing buildings where feasible, and has taken care to make the two detached carports clearly visually subordinate to the dwelling-houses. This proposal thus would clearly still result in a reduced impact to the countryside, when compared to the existing built form onsite.
- 5.9 As set out later in this statement, the proposed buildings have also been designed to be in keeping with nearby properties and the rural character of the area. The proposal includes a large area set aside for Biodiversity enhancements.
- 5.10 The proposal is therefore in line with the provisions of policies CGB1 and CGB4, is appropriate development in the Rural Area beyond the Green Belt, and as such should be considered acceptable in principle, when examined against local policy.
- 5.11 Should the proposal not be considered acceptable when compared against local policy, it should also be noted that the site constitutes previously developed land. Under Paragraph 154 g) of the NPPF, development on such land, were it to be in the Green Belt, would be appropriate, provided that the development does not have a substantial impact on the openness of the Green Belt than the existing development. Paragraph 6.22 of the local plan states that a broadly consistent approach to the redevelopment of buildings in the Green Belt is to be taken when considering such developments in the Rural Area beyond the Green Belt. It is proposed that, in this case, a consistent approach to the redevelopment of previously developed land should also be taken.



5.12 Additionally, regard should be had to Paragraph 11 d), part ii) of the NPPF. As has already been set out in paragraph 4.3 of this statement, North Herts has only a 2.6-3.3-year supply of land available for housing, which is a significant short-fall. Accordingly, the policies most important for determining the application are considered out-of-date, and the presumption in favour of sustainable development applies. In such circumstances, planning permission should be granted unless the adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against the policies in the Framework taken as a whole (the "tilted balance"). Therefore, this application should be assessed under this tilted balance, recognising the urgent need to boost housing supply and the strong presumption in favour of sustainable development embedded within national policy.

DESIGN, LAYOUT, AND SCALE

- 5.13 The proposed development consists of the construction of 5 houses (1 with 3 bedrooms and 4 with 4 bedrooms), 2 detached carports and the provision of suitable parking and amenity space.
- 5.14 This proposal shall result in an overall reduction in built form onsite.
- 5.15 The existing barns onsite have a cumulative footprint of 1,315.7 sqm, and a cumulative volume of 5,970.5m³. The proposed demolition of the barns and their replacement with 5 houses and two cart lodges will result in a cumulative built footprint of 1003.24 sqm and a cumulative built volume of 5420.34m³. This represents a 23.8% decrease in footprint and a 9.2% decrease in volume. The existing barns' elevations may be seen in attached drawing refs: 224420-PL-EX-300 and 224420-PL-EX-301. Barn one is the larger barn on the existing site location plan (ref: 224420-3-PL-00-001 REV A), whereas Barn 2 is the smaller barn on the south boundary of the site. The outlines of the existing footprints of the barns may be seen marked in red on the proposed site layout plans refs: 224420-3-PL-S-00-100 REV B, 224420-3-PL-S-00-101 REV A and 224420-3-PL-S-00-102 REV A.

5.16 The proposed site layout draws inspiration from traditional farmyard layouts and farm courtyards and seeks, where possible, to keep the proposed dwellings and carports within or close to the footprint and location of the existing barns. Plot 5 is the only proposed dwelling entirely outside of the footprint of existing buildings. However, it would be located on a large area of existing hardstanding and would remain part of a close-knit grouping of dwellings. The layout therefore serves to reduce the impact of the proposal upon the surrounding landscape and countryside, when compared with the existing site, while maintaining the sites rural aesthetic.



Figure 2 – Proposed Site Layout Roof Plan – for scaled version please see ref: 224420-3-PL-S-00-102 REV A

- 5.17 The layout above also serves to create several areas of shared green space on the site. These provide multiple benefits, including serving as communal focal points, encouraging social interaction, facilitating outdoor recreation, and enhancing biodiversity. The farmyard-style layout of the site also promotes passive surveillance and a strong sense of place, thereby fostering a safe and sociable environment for residents to enjoy.
- 5.18 The site is set back from the road and existing vegetation along the roadside will be left in place to ensure the site remains well screened in relation to the public highway.
- 5.19 Consideration should also be given to the approval already granted for 4 houses on this site, under Application Ref: 25/02408/FP. The site layout plan approved for this scheme may be viewed at Appendix 3, and a copy of this is seen below:



Figure 3 – Proposed Site Layout Roof Plan, Approved under Application Ref: 25/02408/FP – for scaled version please see Appendix 3

5.20 The previously approved layout constitutes a legitimate fallback position and as such is a material consideration in this planning decision. The layout proposed in this application is similar to that already approved for the site, in terms of the inspiration drawn from traditional farmyard layouts.

Plot 1:

5.21 Plans, elevations and sections for Plot 1 can be seen in Drawing Refs: 224420-PL-01-100, 224420-PL-01-200, 224420-PL-01-300 and 224420-PL-01-301.

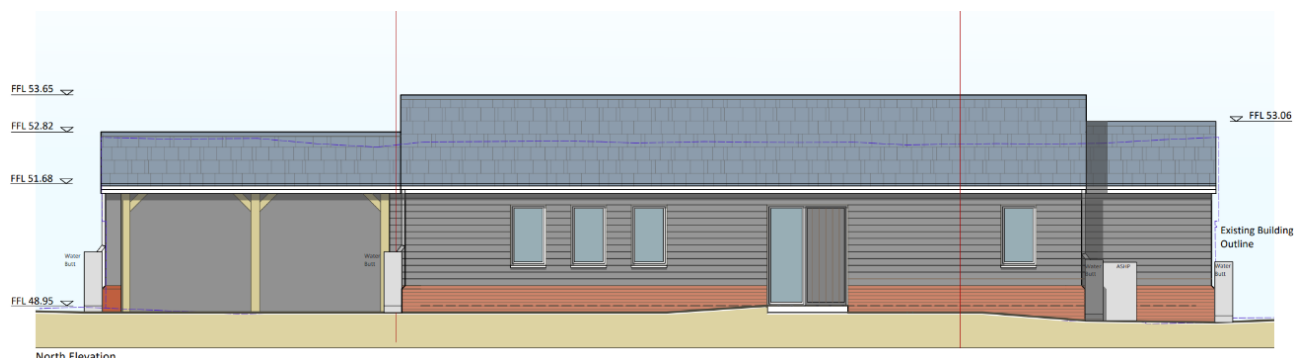


Figure 4 – Plot 1 Proposed Northern Elevation – for scaled version please see ref: 224420-PL-01-301

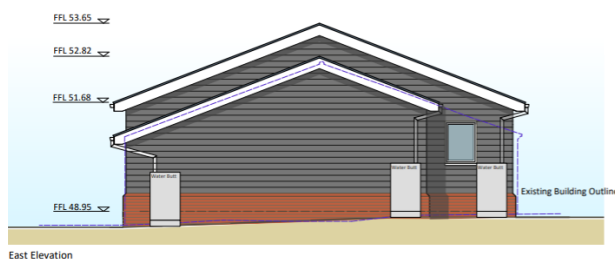


Figure 5 – Plot 1 Proposed Eastern Elevation – for scaled version please see ref: 224420-PL-01-301

5.22 Plot 1's dwelling-house shall appear 24.725m long when viewed from its northern and southern elevations and shall appear 9.65m wide when viewed from its eastern and western elevations. The stepped nature of the design means that the dwelling-house shall have a total external footprint of 215.29m². The dwelling-house, not including the cart lodge, shall have a Gross Internal Floorspace of 146.16m².

5.23 Plot 1 shall be single storey, with the eaves, when measured from the level of the ground at the front door (which also constitutes the floor level of the house), 2.73m high and the ridge heights ranging from 3.87m to 4.7m high.

- 5.24 Windows shall be framed in white aluminium. The base of the walls shall be clad in red brick, rising from ground level to 90cm above the internal floor level. Above this level until the walls meet the roof the walls shall be clad in weatherproof horizontal timber cladding. The barge board on the gables shall be painted white.
- 5.25 The internal layout can be seen in Drawing No. 224420-PL-01-100. As can be seen, the dwelling shall contain 3 bedrooms, 2 of which have en-suite bathrooms, a shower room, a combined Kitchen/Dining Area and Living Area, a Home Office, Entrance Hall and Utility Room. The eastern portion of the building will form a carport sufficient for 2 vehicles. The carport shall also be fitted with an EV charging point. The carport is open to the north, with the opening subdivided by timber beams. Plot 1 shall have a Gross Internal Area of 146sqm.

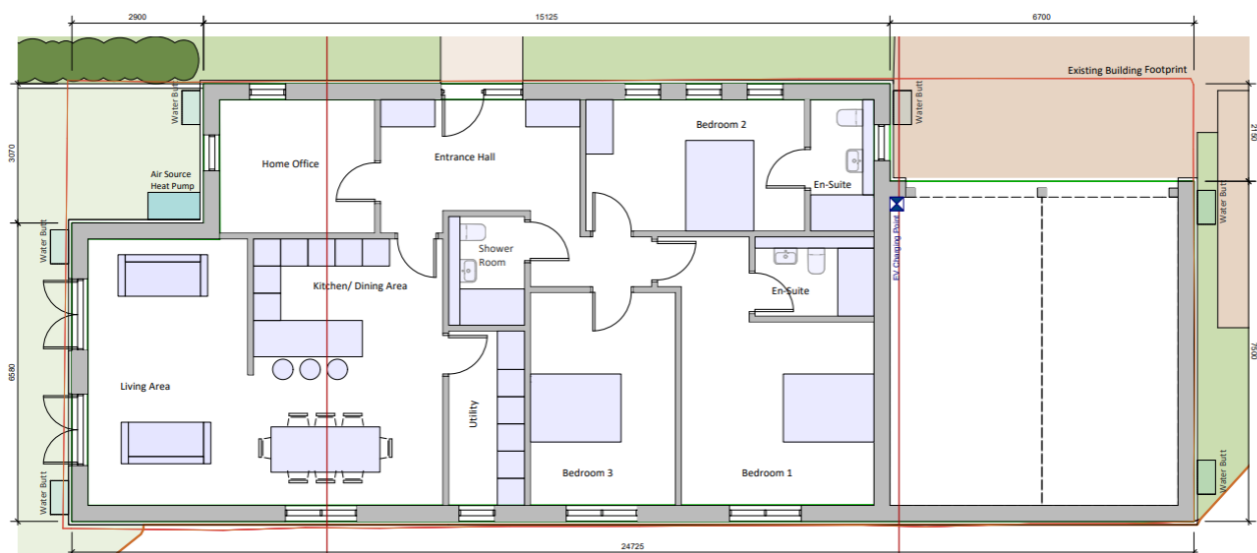


Figure 6 – Plot 1 Floor Plan – for scaled version please see ref: 224420-PL-01-100

- 5.26 The roof shall be dual pitched and finished in Grey Slate to match nearby buildings. The guttering shall be constructed of white plastic to match the barge board. Downspouts shall be painted to match the walls and shall drain into Water Butts around the building.
- 5.27 To the west of the dwelling, a small area of garden shall be provided.

5.28 The design, height and scale of the proposed Plot 1 are therefore in keeping with the rural location and have been designed to respect the form and scale of the smaller of the two existing stable buildings. The footprint of the proposed Plot 1 dwelling-house would be 215m², in comparison to the existing 244.8m² of the smaller stable. As can be seen on the Proposed Site Layout plans (Refs: 224420-3-PL-S-00-100, 224420-3-PL-S-00-101, and 224420-3-PL-S-00-102), Plot 1 is sited broadly within the footprint of the smaller stable (indicated on the plans by a red outline). Plot 1 will consequently not have a materially greater impact on the openness, purposes or general policy aims of the Rural Area beyond the Green Belt than the original building and should, therefore, be considered as complying with Policy CGB4 and other relevant policies.

Plot 2:

5.29 Plans, sections and elevations for Plot 2 can be seen in Drawing Refs: 224420-3-PL-02-300, 224420-3-PL-02-301, 224420-3-PL-02-100 and 224420-3-PL-02-101.



Figure 7 – Plot 2 Eastern Elevation – for scaled version please see ref: 224420-PL-02-300

5.30 Plot 2's dwelling-house shall appear 9.575m wide when viewed from its northern elevations and shall appear 23.2m long when viewed from its eastern and western elevations. The stepped nature of the design means that the dwelling-house shall have a total external footprint of 173.41m². The dwelling-house shall have a Gross Internal Floor Space of 222.78m² and shall be fully detached.

5.31 Plot 2 shall be one-and-a-half storeys. The internal floor level of the house is set slightly higher than that of the garage. Accordingly with the eaves, when measured from the level of the ground at the front door (in the case the house), ranging between 2.67m to 4.06m high and the ridge heights ranging from 6.1m to 8.0m high.

- 5.32 Windows shall be framed in black aluminium. The base of the walls shall be clad in red brick, rising from ground level to 1.07 above the internal floor level. Above this level until the walls meet the roof the walls shall be clad in weatherproof horizontal timber cladding. The barge board on the gables shall be painted white.
- 5.33 The internal layout can be seen in Drawing Nos. 224420-3-PL-02-100 and 224420-3-PL-02-101. As can be seen, the ground floor of the dwelling shall contain an Entrance Hall, Kitchen/Dining Room, Utility Room, WC, Living Room, Home Office/Snug, Utility Room and integral Carport. The first floor of the dwelling shall contain 4 bedrooms, 2 of which contain en-suite bathrooms, and one common bathroom.

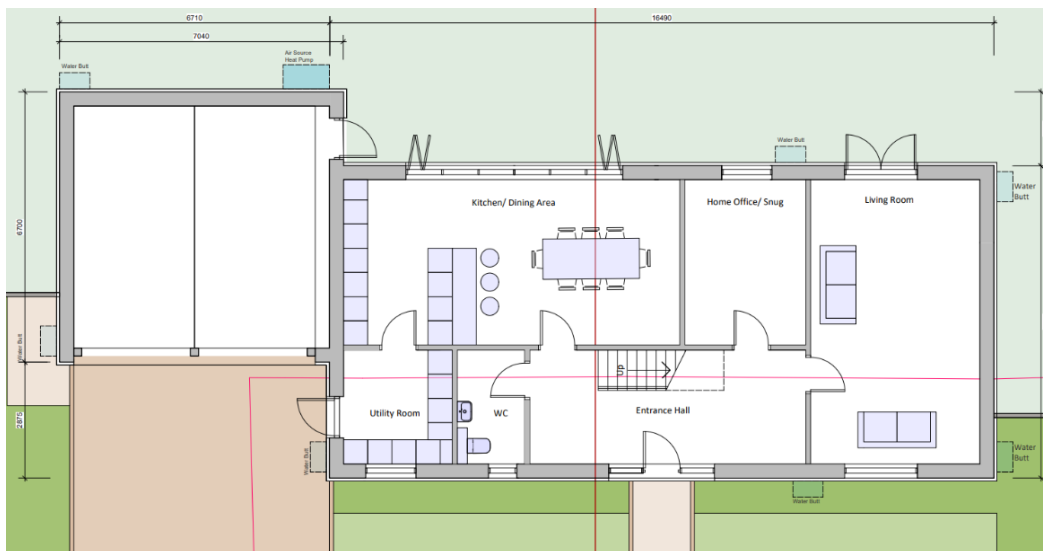


Figure 8 – Plot 2 Floor Plan – Ground Floor - for scaled version please see ref: 224420-3-PL-02-100

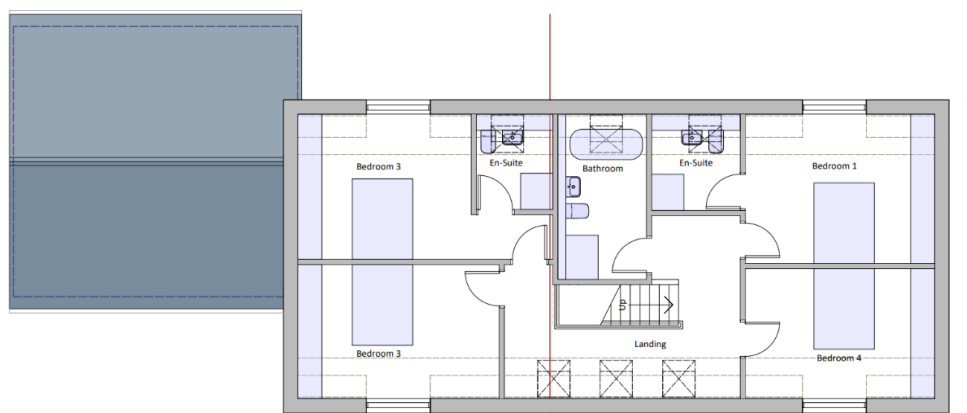


Figure 9 – Plot 2 Floor Plan – First Floor- for scaled version please see ref: 24420-3-PL-02-101

- 5.34 The roof shall be dual pitched and finished in Grey Slate to match nearby buildings. Natural lighting for the first floor shall be accommodated through a mix of ordinary windows, hip to gable dormer windows and skylights. The guttering shall be constructed of white plastic, shall be painted to match the walls and shall drain into Water Butts around the building.
- 5.35 To the west of the dwelling, an area of garden shall be provided.

Plot 3:

- 5.36 Plans and elevations for Plot 3 can be seen in Drawing Refs: 224420-3-PL-03-100, 224420-3-PL-03-101, 224420-3-PL-03-300 and 224420-3-PL-03-301.



Figure 10 – Plot 3 Southern Elevation – for scaled version please see ref: 224420-3-PL-02-300

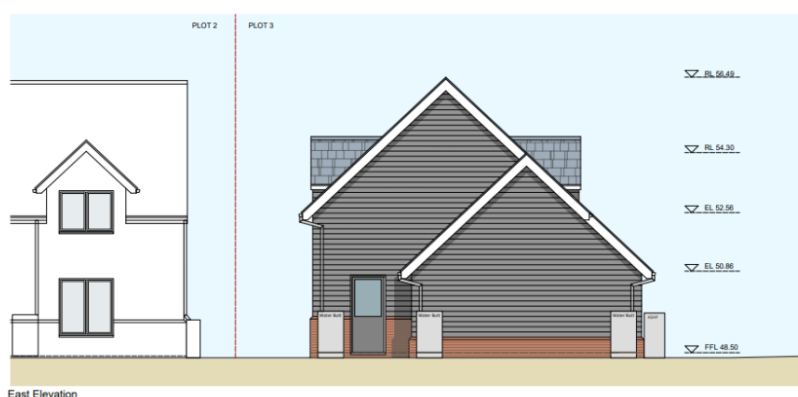


Figure 11 – Plot 3 Eastern Elevation – for scaled version please see ref: 224420-PL-03-302

- 5.37 Plot 3's dwelling-house shall appear 25.5m long when viewed from its northern and southern elevations and shall appear 9.58m wide when viewed from its eastern and western elevations. The layout of the building shall be divided into the main dwelling-house with a two-vehicle carport attached to its east, set back northwards. The stepped nature of the design means that the dwelling-house shall have a total external footprint of 191.24m². The dwelling-house, not including the cart lodge, shall have a Gross Internal Floorspace of 255.2m².

- 5.38 Plot 3 shall be one-and-a-half storeys, with the eaves of the dwelling-house, when measured from the level of the ground at the front door (which also constitutes the floor level of the house), 4.06m high, eaves of the carport 2.36m high, and the ridge heights ranging from 7.99m (dwelling-house) to 5.8m (carport) high.
- 5.39 Windows shall be framed in black aluminium. The base of the walls shall be clad in red brick, rising from ground level to 1.225m above the internal floor level on the dwelling-house, and up to 0.6m high on the attached cart lodge. Above this level until the walls meet the roof the walls shall be clad in weatherproof horizontal timber cladding. The barge board on the gables shall be painted white.
- 5.40 The internal layout can be seen in Drawing Nos. 224420-3-PL-03-100 and 224420-3-PL-03-101. As can be seen, the ground floor of the dwelling shall contain an Entrance Hall, Kitchen/Dining Room, Utility Room, WC, Living Room and Home Office/Snug. The first floor of the dwelling shall contain 4 bedrooms, 2 of which contain en-suite bathrooms, and one common bathroom.

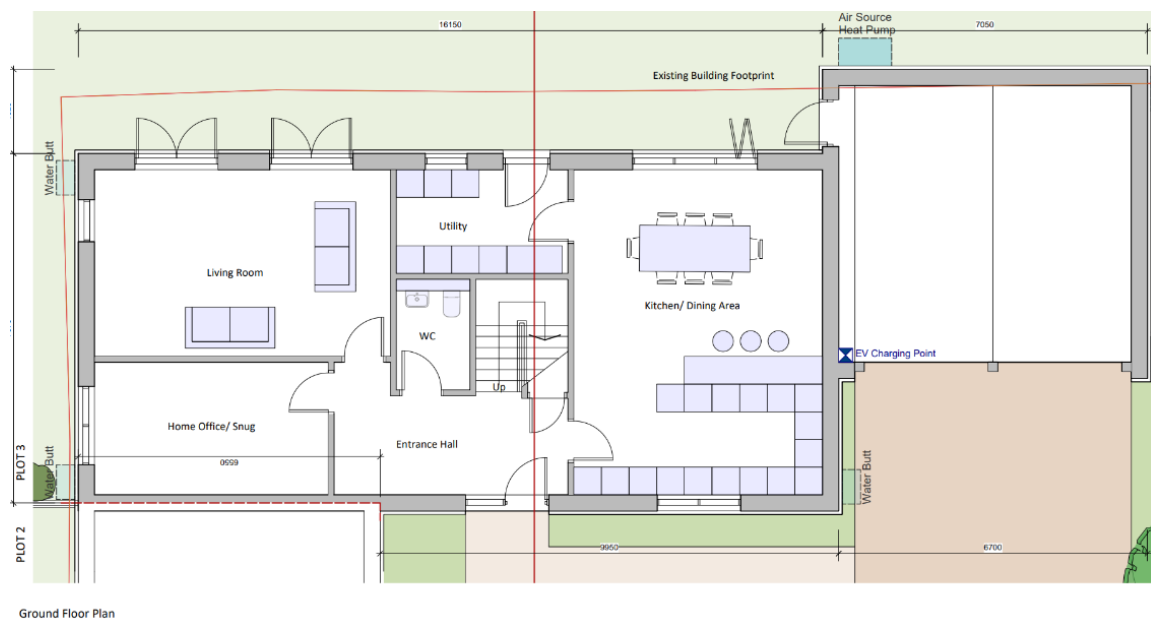


Figure 12 – Plot 3 Floor Plan – Ground Floor – for scaled version please see ref: 224420-3-PL-03-100

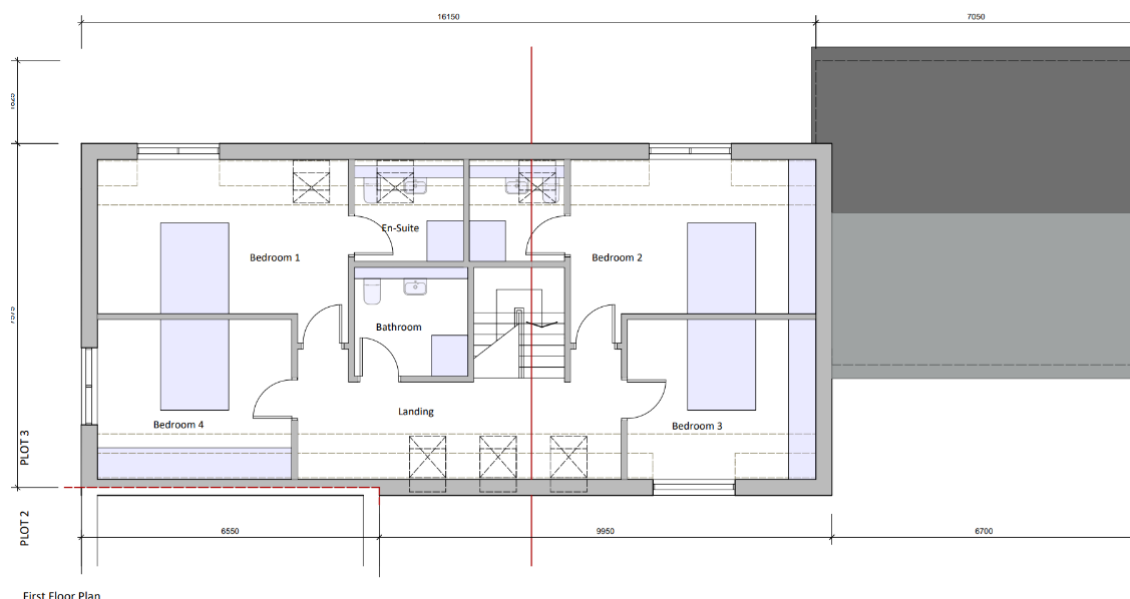


Figure 13 – Plot 3 Floor Plan – First Floor – for scaled version please see ref: 224420-3-PL-03-101

- 5.41 The roof shall be dual pitched and finished in Grey Slate to match nearby buildings. Natural lighting for the first floor shall be accommodated through a mix of ordinary windows, hip to gable dormer windows and skylights. The guttering shall be constructed of white plastic, shall be painted to match the walls and shall drain into Water Butts around the building. On the northern side of the carport, an Air Source Heat Pump shall be fitted. The carport shall also be fitted with an EV charging point. The carport is open to the south, with the opening subdivided by timber beams.
- 5.42 A large garden shall be provided to the north of the dwelling.

Plot 4:

5.43 Plans, sections and elevations for Plot 4 can be seen in Drawing Refs: 224420-PL-04-100, 224420-PL-04-101, 224420-PL-04-200, 224420-PL-04-300 and 224420-PL-04-301.

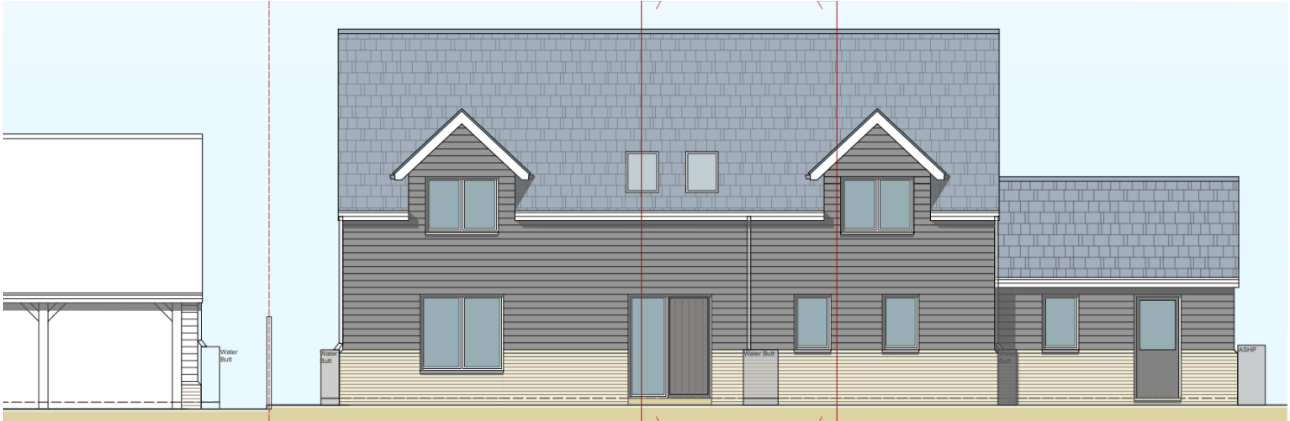


Figure 14 – Plot 4 Southern Elevation – for scaled version please see ref: 224420-3-PL-04-300



Figure 15 – Plot 4 Western Elevation – for scaled version please see ref: 224420-3-PL-04-300

West Elevation 1:50

- 5.44 Plot 4's dwelling-house shall appear 19.35m long when viewed from its northern and southern elevations and shall appear 13.1m wide when viewed from its eastern and western elevations. The building shall have a total external footprint of 157.24m² and a Gross Internal Floorspace of 252.91m².
- 5.45 Plot 4 shall be one-and-a-half storeys, with the eaves of the dwelling-house, when measured from the level of the ground at the front door (which also constitutes the floor level of the house), ranging from 2.61m - 4.07m high, and a ridge height ranging from 4.81 - 8.01m.
- 5.46 Windows shall be framed in black aluminium. The base of the walls shall be clad in yellow brick. This colour brick has been chosen to more closely resemble the nearby existing wall, running down the eastern edge of the site, and to prevent the proposed group of dwellings from becoming overly uniform. Above this, until the walls meet the roof the walls shall be clad in weatherproof horizontal timber cladding. The barge board on the gables shall be painted white.
- 5.47 The internal layout can be seen in Drawing Nos. 224420-3-PL-04-100 and 224420-3-PL-04-101. As can be seen, the ground floor of the dwelling shall contain an Entrance Hall, Kitchen/Dining Area, Utility Room, Boot Room, WC, Living Room and Home Office. The first floor of the dwelling shall contain 4 bedrooms, 2 of which contain en-suite bathrooms, and one common bathroom.

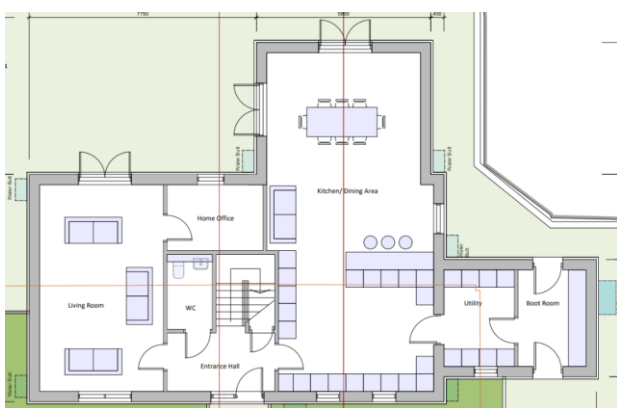


Figure 16 – Plot 4 Floor Plan – Ground Floor – for scaled version please see plan ref: 224420-3-PL-04-100

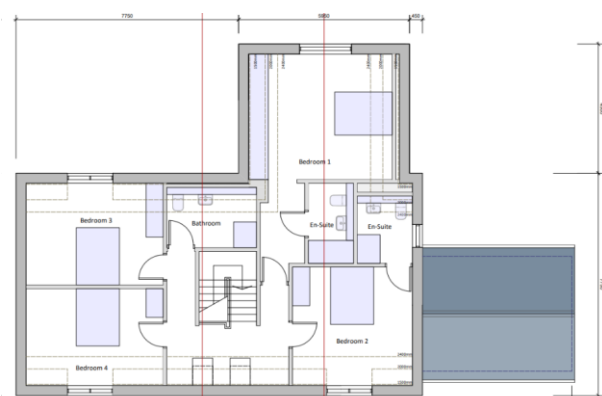


Figure 17 – Plot 4 Floor Plan – Ground Floor – for scaled version please see plan ref: 224420-3-PL-04-101



5.48 The roof shall be dual pitched and finished in Grey Slate to match nearby buildings. Natural lighting for the first floor shall be accommodated through a mix of ordinary windows, hip to gable dormer windows and skylights. The guttering shall be constructed of white plastic, shall be painted to match the walls and shall drain into Water Butts around the building. On the eastern side of the dwelling-house an Air Source Heat Pump shall be fitted. The carport is open to the north, with the opening subdivided by timber beams.

5.49 To the north and west of the dwelling an area of garden shall be provided.

Plot 5:

5.50 Plans, sections and elevations for Plot 5 can be seen in Drawing Refs: 224420-3-PL-05-100, 224420-3-PL-05-101, 224420-3-PL-05-200, 224420-3-PL-05-300 and 224420-3-PL-05-301.

5.51 Plot 5's dwelling-house shall appear 18.35m long when viewed from its eastern and western elevations and shall appear 12.2m wide when viewed from its northern and southern elevations. The building shall have a total external footprint of 156.18m² and a Gross Internal Floorspace of 253.69m².

5.52 Plot 5 shall be one-and-a-half storeys, with the eaves of the dwelling-house, when measured from the level of the ground at the front door (which also constitutes the floor level of the house), ranging from 2.61m - 4.07m high, and a ridge height ranging from 4.81 - 8.01m.

5.53 Windows shall be constructed of framed in white aluminium. The base of the walls shall be clad in red brick. Above this, until the walls meet the roof the walls shall be clad in weatherproof horizontal timber cladding. The barge board on the gables shall be painted white.

5.54 The internal layout can be seen in Drawing Nos. 224420-3-PL-05-100 and 224420-3-PL-05-101. As can be seen, the ground floor of the dwelling shall contain an Entrance Hall, Kitchen/Dining Area, Utility Room, Boot Room, WC, Living Room and Home Office. The first floor of the dwelling shall contain 5 bedrooms, 3 of which contain en-suite bathrooms, and one common bathroom.

5.55 In summary, the design, height and scale of Plots 2, 3, 4 and 5 are in keeping with the rural location. The cumulative volume of Plots 2, 3, 4 and 5 along with the carports for Plot 2 and 4 (see described below) totals 4,606.72m³, in comparison to the existing larger barn's 5212.5m³.



- 5.56 The dwelling-houses have been designed to respect the form and scale of the larger of the two existing stable buildings. As can be seen on the Proposed Site Layout plans (Refs: 224420-3-PL-S-00-100 REV B, 224420-3-PL-S-00-101 REV A, and 224420-3-PL-S-00-102 REV A), Plots 2, 3 and 4 are sited close to the footprint of the larger stable (indicated on the plans by a red outline). Considering this siting, the agrarian form of the sites layout and the comparative reduction in built form onsite, Plots 2, 3, 4 and 5 will consequently not have a materially greater impact on the openness, purposes or general policy aims of the Rural Area beyond the Green Belt than the original building. They should therefore be considered as complying with Policy CGB4.
- 5.57 The buildings have also been designed with the prevailing agrarian style, character and appearance of buildings, both within the locality and the Rural Area, in mind. An example of this local character of building can be seen below.
- 5.58 Directly to the east of the development sit two dwelling-houses at Place Farm, New Inn Road, Hinxworth, Baldock, Hertfordshire, SG7 5HB, approved under decision ref: 23/01232/FP. These houses, as seen below, have also been designed to suit the rural character of the area, with their form, scale and materials of construction inspired by the barns that previously stood in their place.



Figure 18: Image, taken from Google Maps Street View, or two houses across Hinxworth Road from the site subject to this application

- 5.59 The choice of materials for this application (horizontal timber weatherboarding) reflects the external material treatment of rural buildings, while the variation in roof heights and the stepped placement of the integral carports of Plots 2 and 3 serves both to break up the massing of built form onsite and to demonstrate that the carports are subservient to the dwelling-houses.
- 5.60 Dwelling-houses in the locality tend to be 1 and a half storeys high or lower. The dwelling-houses for this proposal have therefore been designed accordingly, with the added benefit that the more limited height serves to minimise their massing. Grey Slate roofing has been chosen due to the widespread use of the material, both in the locality and in rural areas more widely.

Carports

5.61 As mentioned above, Plots 4 and 5 are each to be provided with a fully detached carport, located on the east side of the site. The plans and elevations of these carports may be seen In Drawing Nos. 224420-3-PL-05-110 and 224420-PL-04-110.

5.62 Each carport shall be fitted with an EV charging point.

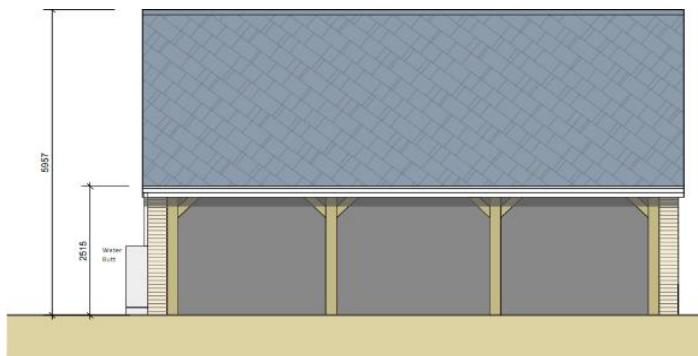


Figure 19 – Plot 4 Car Port – Western Elevation – for scaled version please see ref: 224420-3-PL-04-110



Figure 20 – Plot 4 Car Port – Northern Elevation – for scaled version please see ref: 224420-3-PL-04-110

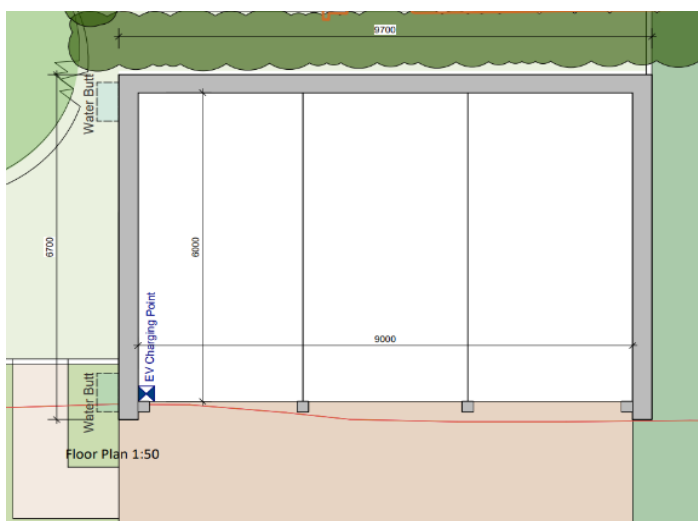


Figure 21 – Plot 4 Car Port – Floor Plan – for scaled version please see ref: 224420-3-PL-04-110

5.63 The carport for Plot 4 shall appear 6.7m long when viewed from its northern and southern elevations and shall appear 9.7m wide when viewed from its eastern and western elevations. The building shall be rectangular, with a total external footprint of 64.99m², and a Gross Internal Area of 54m², providing sufficient parking space for three cars.

5.64 It shall be 2.515m high at the eaves and 5.957m high at the ridge. It shall be a single storey.

5.65 The walls shall be clad in yellow buff brick, to match the plinth of its corresponding dwellinghouse. The barge board on the gables shall be painted white.

5.66 The roof shall be dual pitched and finished in Grey Slate to match nearby buildings. The guttering shall be constructed of white plastic, shall be painted to match the walls and shall drain into Water Butts around the building. The carport is open to the west, with the opening subdivided by timber beams.

5.67 The carport for Plot 5 shall appear 6.7m long when viewed from its northern and southern elevations and shall appear 6.7m wide when viewed from its eastern and western elevations. The building shall be square, with a total external footprint of 44.89m², a Gross Internal Area of 36m², providing sufficient parking space for two cars.

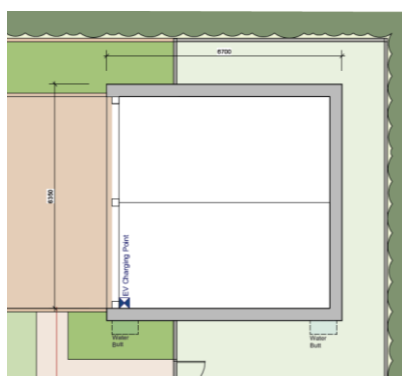


Figure 22 – Plot 5 Car Port – Floor Plan – for scaled version please see ref: 224420-3-PL-05-110

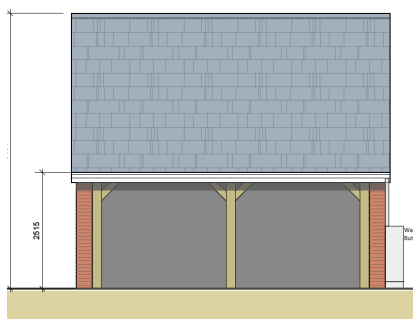


Figure 23 – Plot 5 Car Port – Northern Elevation – for scaled version please see ref: 224420-3-PL-05-110

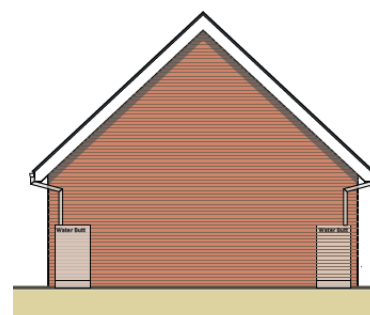


Figure 24 – Plot 5 Car Port – Western Elevation – for scaled version please see ref: 224420-3-PL-05-110

5.68 It shall be 2.515m high at the eaves and 5.957m high at the ridge. It shall be a single storey.

5.69 The walls shall be clad in red brick, to match the plinth of its corresponding dwellinghouse. The barge board on the gables shall be painted white.

5.70 The roof shall be dual pitched and finished in Grey Slate to match nearby buildings. The guttering shall be constructed of white plastic, shall be painted to match the walls and shall drain into Water Butts around the building. The carport is open to the west, with the opening subdivided by timber beams.



5.71 The carports have been designed to ensure that their appearance, positioning and scale is in keeping both with the existing equestrian character of the site, and the intended agrarian farm-yard character of the proposed scheme. The weatherproof timber board and brick exteriors and grey slating on the rooves will ensure that their appearance relates clearly to the dwelling- houses, and the lower ridge height should ensure that the carports appear subservient to the dwelling-house, while also breaking up the massing onsite.

SCALE, APPEARANCE AND LAYOUT

- 5.72 As set out above, the site has been laid out in a manner inspired by traditional farmyard layouts. The replacement of the two barns will result in a substantial reduction and breaking up of built form onsite, thus reducing the impact of the site upon the wider landscape. The design, layout and landscaping of the site have taken the Hinxworth Lowlands Landscape Character Assessment into account and therefore has sought to reduce the impact of the site upon the surrounding landscape (characterised as low lying, gently undulating landform, with large arable fields, smaller parcels of grazing land adjacent to settlements, and interspersed with frequent shelter belts). The Landscape Character has two distinctive features, neither of which the proposed development will impact: the A1M running along the western boundary of the area, and pylons crossing the area (west of Hinxworth).
- 5.73 The design and layout of the proposed development, as set out above, seeks to replicate traditional farmyards found in the area. The materials chosen are of high quality and seek to preserve the traditional agricultural appearance of the built form on site. The soft landscaping set out below, meanwhile, should contribute to screening the site and breaking up its visual impact still further.
- 5.74 Native hedgerow shall be preserved, planted and enhanced alongside the boundary between the site and Glebe House to its east. While there already exists a wall between the two plots, the hedgerow shall serve to better screen the site and soften the boundary between the two.



- 5.75 Native hedgerow/Ornamental hedgerow shall also be planted along the boundaries of the gardens of the houses, and grass shall be planted in the gardens and verges of the houses as set out in the site plans.
- 5.76 In addition, in the centre of the site and to the south of the cart lodge for Plot 2 two areas of mixed native grass and trees shall be planted, to provide amenity green space. A mixture of trees shall be planted, and additional trees shall be planted around the site to provide shading and green space.
- 5.77 To the south of Plot 2 and west of Plot 1 a Wildlife Area shall be set aside and fenced off, for the purpose of meeting the site's Biodiversity Net Gain requirements. In addition to this, a band of individual trees and other neutral grassland shall be planted along the eastern and northern sides of the site, for the purpose of meeting the required BNG. This band shall also serve to partially screen the site from view, thereby softening its impact upon the wider landscape. Details of the Wildlife area and the bordering habitats are set out in the Ecological Impact Assessment prepared by Ecology by Design, April 2026 (submitted alongside this Statement).
- 5.78 It is intended that post and rail fencing should be constructed at the boundaries of the gardens and the Wildlife Area, where not shown otherwise on the plans, to delineate the different sections of the site. Along some of these fences, hedgerow shall also be planted.
- 5.79 The entrance to the site and main turning head will be surfaced in fixed bound material to provide a stable surface for refuse collection vehicles and fire tenders to access the site.
- 5.80 Further details of landscaping may be agreed by suitable conditions should the officer deem necessary.



RESIDENTIAL AMENITY

- 5.81 The nearest dwelling is the host dwelling at Glebe House, located to the east. At its closest point, the new dwelling will be at a distance of approximately 28m, and at an obscure angle to ensure that the position of windows, and arrangement of parking areas would not cause any harm to the amenity area of this property. In addition, mature vegetation shall be retained on the eastern boundary of the site, screening it from view, and preventing any overlooking or loss of light between properties. Additional planting is also proposed to provide further mitigation.
- 5.82 The proposal will not cause any harm by way of noise disturbance, and any noise associated with construction would be temporary.
- 5.83 The scheme will comply with the Nationally Described Space Standards, with adequate room sizes, and windows serving all habitable rooms.
- 5.84 Private external amenity space will be provided for the dwelling in accordance with the North Hertfordshire Design Guide SPD. Each house will be provided with ample garden space, with a mixture of fences and hedge and tree planting on the boundaries to provide a screening boundary to the properties. The precise arrangements for the outdoor amenity space may be seen in the attached drawings.
- 5.85 A bin storage area is also set out within the plans in accordance with local requirements.

ACCESS

- 5.86 The site is located approximately 600 metres south southeast of the settlement boundary of Hinxworth, a category B village in the NHDC Local Plan.
- 5.87 The site will be accessible via an improved access from Hinxworth Road.
- 5.88 When considering highway impacts, Policy T1 of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan requires proof 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;

5.89 Policy SP7 requires developers to provide, finance and/or contribute towards provision which is fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development.

5.90 Paragraph 115 of the NPPF (December 2023) meanwhile, merely states 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 would be severe.*” Paragraph 109 is also relevant, where it states that “*opportunities to maximise sustainable transport solutions will vary between urban and rural areas*”.

5.91 To ensure that the proposal meets the policy requirements set out above, a Transport Technical Note (TTN) was prepared by EAS in February 2026.

5.92 This note has informed the layout of the proposal, to ensure that the site may be safely accessed by cars, bin lorries and fire tenders.

5.93 The site is already in use as commercial stables. There are up to 22 stables available, though the yard is not currently full to capacity. At the time of writing, there are roughly 15 horses on site. As such, significant flows of traffic already move to and from the site. The removal of the stables and the erection of housing will, therefore, result in a decrease in overall traffic levels in the area, as set out in the submitted TTN.

5.94 The access is in a safe location, with no traffic incidents in the past 5 years. The road is subject to national speed limits, but the ATC survey carried out as part of the preparation of the Transport Technical Note demonstrated that prevailing 85th percentile speeds are 46.9mph going north and 34mph going south.

5.95 Use of this access by 5 dwellings will have minimal impact on the highway network and existing traffic flows, when compared to its existing equestrian use. There would certainly be no severe impact on the highway network and so the proposal therefore complies with the NPPF.



- 5.96 The proposal would provide ample off-road parking in accordance with Appendix 4 of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan.
- 5.97 Further, each dwelling will be served with an EV charging point, as well as bicycle space, to encourage the use of sustainable modes of transport and mitigate potential increases in traffic-related air or noise pollution.
- 5.98 As such, in terms of access, the proposed development is both safe and sustainable, would overall reduce traffic volumes in the area, and meets the relevant requirements of local and national planning policy.

BIODIVERSITY

- 5.99 The application site is currently brownfield in nature, consisting of equestrian buildings and large areas of hardstanding. As such it starts from a low baseline of Biodiversity and habitats. This proposal, informed by the EcIA that is summarised below, will introduce a great deal of green landscaping in place of this hardstanding and shall substantially improve biodiversity.
- 5.100 The site is not close to any sites or features of national or local nature conservation interest. However, Local Plan Policy NE4 Biodiversity and Geological Sites requires development proposals to demonstrate that there would be no harm to protected species, designations or features, and that biodiversity would be enhanced, within the site. A Preliminary Ecological Assessment (PEA) was therefore undertaken by Ecology by Design in May 2025. This PEA concluded that the proposed development of the site had potential to impact Bats and Nesting Birds.
- 5.101 The PEA recommended a Bat Emergence survey be undertaken, alongside Biodiversity Net Gain assessment and Ecological Impact Assessment (EcIA). This EcIA is submitted alongside this statement as part of this application.
- 5.102 The Ecological Impact Assessment includes the results of a Dusk emergence survey, undertaken 30th July 2025, which found no Bat roosts on site, and with a low number of Bats foraging or commuting around the site.



- 5.103 Recommendations for the preservation of species and habitats, both during and following construction, are set out in the EclA, and include the proposal containing 1 integrated Bird Box and 1 integrated Bat Box, per new residential building, any fences or walls including hedgehog friendly gravel boards with holes 13 cm x 13 cm in the base to prevent habitat fragmentation. These measures may be secured by condition, should the planning officer wish.
- 5.104 Recommendations for the management of the site during construction are set out in section 5 of the EclA (Pg 20-25). Recommendations for the management of the site, so that species are retained and safeguarded, shall be followed where possible, and may be secured by condition, should the planning officer require.
- 5.105 In terms of Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) requirements, the site is considered previously developed land, being mostly covered by buildings and hardstanding. As such, in its present form the site has very little biodiversity and the corresponding baseline for required Biodiversity Net Gain is relatively low.
- 5.106 This proposal meets and significantly exceeds the statutory requirements for Biodiversity Net Gain by planting areas of neutral grassland, small trees and a small replacement area of mixed scrub within common areas of the site. In addition to this, a band of individual trees and other neutral grassland shall be planted along the western and northern sides of the site. These measures combined shall result in a habitat unit gain of +82.93% and a hedgerow unit gain of +440.84% (according to the EclA, the Statutory Condition Assessment and the Statutory Biodiversity Metric submitted alongside this Planning Statement). Such planting that takes place shall comprise a mixture of native and formal landscaping species that simultaneously provide resources to local wildlife and remain appropriate to amenity or residential settings. Additionally, large areas covered by hardstanding or buildings will be uncovered and converted into green space.
- 5.107 The layout of the Biodiversity Net Gain enhancements may be seen in the Proposed Layout Plan (Appendix 2) within the EclA report. The long-term management of these enhancements will be undertaken by a third-party management company and may be secured by condition.



5.108 The above surveys and measures, including those recommended by the EclA report, are considered sufficient to ensure that this proposal complies with the provisions set out in Policy NE4; Biodiversity and Geological Sites, and with Paragraphs 187 and 193 of the NPPF.

5.109 In addition, the very substantial uplift in Biodiversity that would result from this proposal would constitute a significant public benefit, and as such should carry significant weight in favour of the proposed development.

CONTAMINATION

5.110 In support of this application and on behalf of the applicant, Herts and Essex Site Investigations conducted a Phase 1 Contamination Assessment in order to ascertain the potential for contamination on the site.

5.111 Potential sources of contamination were found on the site. Consequently, should this proposal be granted consent, the council may wish to attach conditions requiring further invasive soil sampling, testing and completion of an environmental report in accordance with BS 10175:2011+A2:2017. Further information may be found in the Desktop Study Report, submitted separately with this application.

SUSTAINABILITY AND ENERGY EFFICIENCY

5.112 This proposal has been designed in accordance with the North Herts Sustainability Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) 23 September 2024, wherever possible.

5.113 Accordingly, the layout of this proposal retains existing vegetation wherever possible and enhances and replaces it where this is not. Tree planting has been incorporated around the site, which should serve to provide seasonal shading during the summer, as well as cooling via evapotranspiration. The layout of the site, with the area of tree planting in the centre surrounded by built form, should create a courtyard effect, enhancing passive cooling during summer months.



- 5.114 The layout of the dwellinghouses has also been chosen with an eye to maximising natural energy and cooling; each dwellinghouse has an entrance hall at its primary entrance, which can be closed off from the remainder of the house and thereby improving air tightness. However, to ensure that night purge ventilation is possible during summer months windows have been positioned and shall be fitted to enable effective cross-ventilation.
- 5.115 The design of each dwellinghouse has sought to minimise the form-factor ratio wherever possible, with dwellinghouses kept to a simple shape where possible.
- 5.116 The dwellinghouses and carports are proposed to be constructed from high quality materials, with windows and glazed doors to be installed with U-values in accordance with Building Regulations Approved Document L, Conservation of fuel and power, Volume 1: Dwellings, 2021 edition incorporating 2023 amendments, and with reflective coatings to reduce passive heat gain and glare during summer months. Insulation shall be installed in line with the standards set out in the above document, and Thermal Bridging shall be minimised wherever possible.
- 5.117 Energy efficient lighting shall be installed within each dwelling. An air-source heat pump shall be fitted to each dwelling for heating, and water butts shall be fitted to the guttering for rainwater harvesting, thereby reducing reliance on mains water for non-potable purposes.
- 5.118 In addition to the above energy and water efficiency measures outlined above, the proposal has sought to facilitate social interaction and to foster a healthy community. Each plot is accompanied by generous garden space, while the common planted areas around site should provide space for social activities. The farmyard layout of the proposal serves to create a compact, social and secure community, enhancing passive surveillance and improving safety.
- 5.119 The above design and layout considerations are considered to be sufficient to ensure that impacts upon the environment are minimised, the proposed development shall be sustainable, and that the proposal is thus in line with the requirements of Policy D1.

FLOOD RISK

5.120 The Environment Agency mapping shows that the site is in Flood Zone 1 and is therefore at no risk of fluvial flooding. The mapping also shows that the site is also at no risk of surface water flooding. Accordingly, a Flood Risk Assessment is not required. The below Figures are taken from the online UK Government Flood Map for Planning Service online map, found at [Map – Flood map for planning – GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/government/maps/data/flood-map-for-planning).

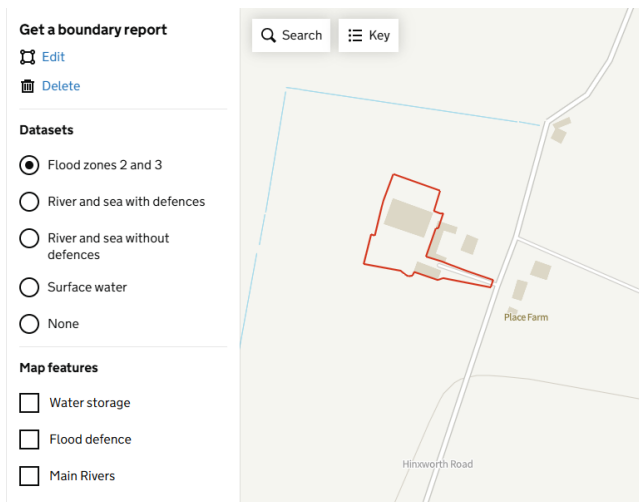


Figure 25 – Online Flood Mapping showing that site is not in Flood Zone 2 or 3, so is there in Zone 1

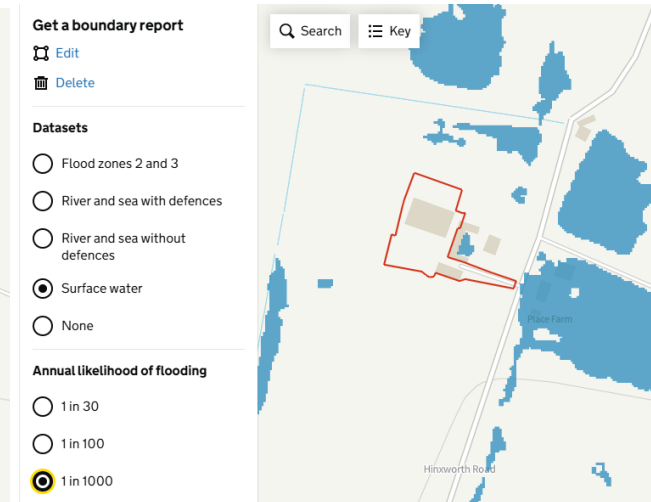


Figure 26 – Online Surface Flood Mapping showing site is not at risk of 1 in 1000-year surface flood

5.121 Additionally, it should be noted that the site is already previously developed land; almost the entire site is already covered in either buildings or hardstanding. Even with this, there is clearly minimal risk of flooding on this site. As set out above, the proposed scheme would replace a large area of this hardstanding with green and landscaped areas which will be permeable; the increased area of permeable land is therefore likely to be of benefit, via helping reduce flood risk outside of the site.

5.122 The application site therefore has a low probability of flooding, both in terms of flood zones and surface water. The proposed scheme will represent a substantial reduction to the areas of impermeable surface in the area. As such, the proposed dwellings will not be at an unacceptable risk of flooding and may help reduce flooding elsewhere via reduced runoff from the site, in comparison to existing. This proposal is therefore considered to be compliant with Policy NE7.



6.0 PLANNING BALANCE AND CONCLUSIONS

- 6.1 In summary, this proposal comprises a sustainable, attractive and high-quality development, involving the demolition of two equestrian buildings and the erection of 5 new detached dwellings (use class c3) together with 2 detached carports, access, parking and landscaping, at Glebe House Stables, Hinxworth Road, Hinxworth, Baldock, Hertfordshire, SG7 5HB.
- 6.2 It is a material consideration that the site is already previously developed land and in use as commercial stables. As such, the removal of the stables and their replacement with 5 dwelling-houses and 2 cart lodges will reduce the cumulative volume and footprint of the built form onsite by 9.21% and 23.75% respectively and shall not result in unacceptable highways impacts, actually reducing traffic movements to and from the site compared to the existing equestrian use. The site will remain well-screened from the road, with no impact on existing trees. Additional screening will be provided via the planting of a band of individual trees and other neutral grassland along the site's eastern and northern boundaries, which shall also assist in the site's meeting statutory BNG. No harm will arise in relation to ecology, trees, highways, design, or neighbour impact.
- 6.3 It is also a material consideration, in terms of the principle of this development being acceptable, that permission has already been granted for 4 no. dwellinghouses on this site. This proposal only seeks an uplift of 1 additional dwelling, has demonstrated that this increase shall not cause significantly more harm, and would bring with it greater public benefits.
- 6.4 These benefits include the delivery of 5 market dwellings that may contribute towards the Council's housing needs. The proposal will also offer economic benefits through the construction phase. The proposal offers several environmental benefits, including energy-efficient dwellings, along with additional planting sufficient to result in a biodiversity gain of 82.93% habitat units and 440.84% hedgerow units.
- 6.5 Regarding NPPF paragraph 11, the out-of-date position of the local plan means that the titled balance in favour of the development applies.
- 6.6 It has been demonstrated, in accordance with paragraph 11(d)(i), that no conflict has been identified in relation to policies that protect areas or assets of particular importance.



- 6.7 Turning to Para 11(d)(ii), no adverse impacts have been identified, certainly none that would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the NPPF as a whole.
- 6.8 Officers are therefore respectfully requested to support this application, subject to conditions as deemed reasonable and necessary.

APPENDIX 1

Decision Notice from Application Ref: 25/02408/FP



www.north-herts.gov.uk

NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Town and Country Planning Act 1990

DECISION NOTICE

Correspondence Address:

Mr Tom Allington
3 The Gatehouse
Hadham Hall
Little Hadham
Ware
SG11 2EB

Applicant:

Mr Smyth

PARTICULARS OF DEVELOPMENT

Application: 25/02408/FP

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

Location: Glebe House, New Inn Road, Hinxworth, Baldock, Hertfordshire, SG7 5HB

Plan Nos:

224420-PL-01-100	224420-PL-01-200	224420-PL-01-300
224420-PL-01-301	224420-PL-02-100	224420-PL-02-101
224420-PL-02-110	224420-PL-02-300	224420-PL-02-301
224420-PL-02-302	224420-PL-03-100	224420-PL-03-101
224420-PL-03-300	224420-PL-03-301	224420-PL-03-302
224420-PL-04-100	224420-PL-04-101	224420-PL-04-110
224420-PL-04-200	224420-PL-04-300	224420-PL-04-301
224420-PL-S-00-001	224420-PL-S-00-100 Rev B	224420-PL-S-00-101 Rev B
224420-PL-S-00-101 Rev B	224420-PL-S-00-102 Rev B	224420-PL-EX-300 - Barn 1
224420-PL-EX-300 - Barn 1	224420-PL-EX-301 - Barn 2	

PARTICULARS OF DECISION

In pursuance of its powers under the above Act and the associated Orders and Regulations, the Council hereby **GRANT PERMISSION** for the development proposed by

you in your application received with sufficient particulars on 6 October 2025, subject to the following condition(s):

Biodiversity Net Gain

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

There are statutory exemptions and transitional arrangements which mean that the biodiversity gain condition does not always apply (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/biodiversity-net-gain-exempt-developments>).

Based on the information available this permission is considered to be one which will require the approval of a biodiversity gain plan before development is begun because none of the statutory exemptions or transitional arrangements are considered to apply.
2. The development shall not commence until a Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan (HMMP), prepared in accordance with the approved Biodiversity Gain Plan has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the local planning authority and including;
 - (a) a non-technical summary;
 - (b) the roles and responsibilities of the people or organisation(s) delivering the [HMMP];
 - (c) the planned habitat creation and enhancement works in accordance with the approved Biodiversity Gain Plan;
 - (d) the management measures to maintain habitat in accordance with the approved Biodiversity Gain Plan for a period of 30 years from the completion of development;
 - (e) the monitoring methodology and frequency in respect of the created or enhanced habitat to be submitted to the local planning authority.The agreed measures are to be implemented on site prior to the first occupation of the first dwellinghouse hereby approved and shall remain on site thereafter.

Planning Conditions

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

All external lighting shall be installed in accordance with the specifications and locations set out in the strategy, and these shall be maintained thereafter in accordance with the strategy. Under no circumstances should any other external lighting be installed without prior consent from the local planning authority. Local Plan Policy NE4.

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

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

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

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

7. Prior to the first commencement, the hereby permitted the vehicular access improvements, as indicated on drawing number 224420-PL-S-00-100 Rev A , shall be completed and thereafter retained in accordance with details/specifications to be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority in consultation with the Highway Authority. Measures to ensure the existing drainage channel at the access remains operational must be provided.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

11. The approved details of landscaping shall be carried out before the end of the first planting season following either the first occupation of any of the buildings or the

completion of the development, whichever is the sooner; and any trees or plants which, within a period of 5 years from the completion of the development, die, are removed or become seriously damaged or diseased, shall be replaced during the next planting season with others of similar size and species, unless the Local Planning Authority agrees in writing to vary or dispense with this requirement.

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

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

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

Proactive Statement:

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

Informative/s:

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

Further information is available via the County Council website at: <https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/highways-roads-and-pavements/business-and-developer-information/business-licences/business-licences.aspx> or by telephoning 0300 1234047.

2. It is an offence under section 148 of the Highways Act 1980 to deposit compost, dung or other material for dressing land, or any rubbish on a made up carriageway, or any or other debris on a highway to the interruption of any highway user. Section 149 of the same Act gives the Highway Authority powers to remove such material at the expense of the party responsible. Therefore, best practical means shall be taken at all times to ensure that all vehicles leaving the site during construction of the development and use thereafter are in a condition such as not to emit dust or deposit mud, slurry or other debris on the highway. Further information is available by telephoning 0300 1234047.
3. The applicant is advised that in order to comply with this permission it will be necessary for the developer of the site to enter into an agreement with Hertfordshire County Council as Highway Authority under Section 278 of the Highways Act 1980 to ensure the satisfactory completion of the access and associated road improvements. The construction of such works must be undertaken to the satisfaction and specification of the Highway Authority, and by a contractor who is authorised to work in the public highway. Before works commence the applicant will need to apply to the Highway Authority to obtain their permission and requirements. Further information is available via the County Council website at:
<https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/highways-roads-and-pavements/business-and-developer-information/development-management/highways-development-management.aspx> or by telephoning 0300 1234047.
4. The applicant is advised that all new roads associated with this development will remain unadopted (and shall not be maintained at public expense by the highway authority). At the entrance of the new estate the road name plate should indicate that it is a private road and the developer should put in place permanent arrangements for long-term maintenance.

Signed:



Shaun Greaves
Development and Conservation Manager

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

Date: 25 November 2025

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 **Failure to satisfy conditions may invalidate this permission and/or result in enforcement action. Particular attention should be paid to the requirements of any condition in bold.**
- 2 Applicants will need to pay a compliance fee where they request confirmation in writing of any planning consent, agreement or approval (commonly known as discharge of conditions) required by one or more conditions or limitations attached to a grant of planning permission.
- 3 The fee is £298 per request or £86 where the permission relates to an extension or alteration to a dwellinghouse or other development in the curtilage of the dwellinghouse.

The request can be informal through the submission of a letter or plans, or formal through the completion of an application form and the submission of plans. Any number of conditions may be included on a single request. The form is available via the Council's website:
www.north-herts.gov.uk/home/planning/planning-applications/submit-planning-application
- 4 If the development hereby permitted is one that will require a new postal address/es then please contact the Council's **street naming and numbering service** on 01462 474431 or email SNN@north-herts.gov.uk who will advise you on how to apply for the new address/es.

Any proposed sales and/or marketing name to be adopted by the developer should be forwarded to the **street naming and numbering service**, prior to any publication of the site details and sales information.
- 5 If you are aggrieved by the decision of your local planning authority (LPA) 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.

However, if an enforcement notice has been served for the same or very similar development the time limit is 28 days from the date of the LPA decision or 28 days from the date the enforcement notice was served.

Appeals can be made online at: <https://www.gov.uk/appeal-planning-decision>

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.

The Secretary of State need not consider an appeal if it seems to him that the local planning authority could not have granted planning permission for the proposed development or could not have granted it without the conditions they imposed, having regard to the statutory requirements, to the provisions of any development order and to any directions given under a development order.

In practice, the Secretary of State does not refuse to consider appeals solely because the local planning authority based their decision on a direction given by him.

6 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.

- 7 The District Council and County Highway Authority wish to ensure that, in the implementation of the development, hereby approved, the highway verge adjacent to the property is not damaged or does not become unsightly due to the stationing of skips, parking of vehicles, storing of building materials etc thereon. Your attention is, therefore, drawn to the provisions of Section 131 of the Highways Act 1980 and to the Hertfordshire County Council Bylaws 1955 (specifically relating to grass margins and verges in Letchworth Garden City) by virtue of which such actions, unless authorised by the prior grant of a licence, constitute a prosecutable offence. Persons responsible for undertaking the development and any associated works are, therefore, strongly encouraged to take appropriate steps to ensure that no breach of the said legislation occurs during the course of such activities. In the event of any damage being caused it will be expected that suitable reinstatement is undertaken upon completion of the development. Failure to do so could also result in legal action being pursued. To obtain information regarding the issue of licences, contact Hertfordshire Highways, Hertfordshire County Council, County Hall, Pegs Lane, Hertford, SG138DQ or telephone 0300 1234 047.

8 **Cadent Gas Informative:**

Cadent Gas own and operate the gas infrastructure within the area of your development. Contact our Plant Protection Team for approval before carrying out any works on site and ensuring requirements are adhered to. Email plantprotection@cadentgas.com Alternatively you can register on www.beforeyoudig.cadentgas.com This service is free of charge.

THIS PLANNING PERMISSION DOES NOT CONSTITUTE APPROVAL UNDER BUILDING REGULATIONS AND IS NOT A LISTED BUILDING CONSENT OR CONSERVATION AREA CONSENT. IT DOES NOT CONVEY ANY APPROVAL OR CONSENT WHICH MAY BE REQUIRED UNDER ANY ENACTMENT, BYELAW, ORDER OR REGULATION OTHER THAN SECTION 57 OF THE TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990.

APPENDIX 2

Officers Report from Application Ref: 25/02408/FP

DELEGATED FILE NOTE

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

APPLICATION REFERENCE	BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT	APPLICATION SITE
25/02408/FP	Four dwellings (use class c3) together with associated car ports, access, parking and landscaping following demolition of No.2 equestrian buildings. (Amended plans received 17/11/25).	Glebe House New Inn Road Hinxworth Baldock Hertfordshire SG7 5HB

Submitted Plan Nos

224420-PL-01-100 224420-PL-01-200 224420-PL-01-300 224420-PL-01-301 224420-PL-02-100
 224420-PL-02-101 224420-PL-02-110 224420-PL-02-300 224420-PL-02-301 224420-PL-02-302
 224420-PL-03-100 224420-PL-03-101 224420-PL-03-300 224420-PL-03-301 224420-PL-03-302
 224420-PL-04-100 224420-PL-04-101 224420-PL-04-110 224420-PL-04-200 224420-PL-04-300
 224420-PL-04-301 224420-PL-S-00-001 224420-PL-S-00-100 Rev B 224420-PL-S-00-101 Rev B 224420-
 PL-S-00-102 Rev B 224420-PL-EX-300 - Barn 1 224420-PL-EX-301 - Barn 2

1.0 Policies

D1	Sustainable design
D3	Protecting living conditions
SP1	Sustainable development in North Herts
SP9	Design and Sustainability
CGB1	Rural Areas beyond the Green Belt.
CGB4	Exist buildings in the RA Beyond GB
T2	Parking
SECN12	Achieving well-designed places
SECN14	Meeting climate change,coastal,flooding

2.0 Site History

2.1 None relevant.

3.0 **Representations**

3.1 **Hinxworth Parish Council** – No objection.

3.2 **NHC Ecology** – No objection subject to conditions.

3.3 **NHC Environmental Health** – No objection subject to conditions.

3.4 **HCC Highways** – Does not wish to raise an objection and have provided conditions and informatives.

3.5 **Waste and Recycling** – None received.

3.6 **Site Notice and Neighbour Notification** – 3 neutral comments received relating to the provision of swift bricks.

4.0 **Planning Considerations**

4.1 **Site and Surroundings**

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

4.2 **Proposal**

4.2.1 This is a full application for the redevelopment of site to provide 4 no. dwellings following demolition of 2 existing equestrian buildings, to include access, parking, and landscaping. The proposal seeks to erect three four bedroom dwellings around a green and one 3 bedroom dwelling along the access road. Each dwelling has off street parking garage for at least two cars and bike storage, and a modest rear garden. There are 2 visitor spaces proposed on the south side of the access road.

4.2.2 Plots 2-4 are two storey dwellings with kitchen / dining room, utility room, bathroom, lounge and study on ground floor level and bedrooms / en-suites at first floor level. Plot 1 is a 3 bedroom bungalow dwelling consisting of kitchen / dining / lounge, utility room, study and bedrooms with en-suite.

The proposed materials are:

Walls – Red brickwork and timber cladding.

Windows – White Aluminium

Roof – grey slate

4.3 **Key Issues**

Principle of Development – Rural Area Beyond the Green Belt

4.3.2 The Local Plan Policy SP2 sets out the hierarchy for new residential development within the District, with the main housing being to allocated sites and then with general development allowed within the category A villages, in-filling within category B villages and development for limited affordable housing and facilities for local community needs meeting the requirements of policy CGB2 in category C settlements. This site is located within a semi-rural context which falls outside of the category A, B and C settlements and is an area protected by the designation of Policy CGB1, Rural Areas beyond the Green Belt where there is a presumption against new development.

4.3.3 The criteria of Policy CGB1 states:

“In the Rural Areas beyond the Green Belt, as shown on the Policies Map, planning permission will be granted provided that the development:

- a) Is infilling development which does not extend the built core of a Category B village;*
- b) Meets a proven local need for community facilities, services or affordable housing in an appropriate location;*
- c) Is strictly necessary for the needs of agriculture or forestry;*
- d) Relates to an existing rural building;*
- e) Is a modest proposal for rural economic development or diversification; or*
- f) Would provide land or facilities for outdoor sport, outdoor recreation and cemeteries that respect the generally open nature of the rural area.”*

4.3.5 As the proposed development would relate to existing equestrian buildings, Policy CGB4 provides further guidance:

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

- b) Any existing building to be converted for re-use does not require major extension or reconstruction;*
- c) The resultant building(s) do not have a materially greater impact on the openness, purposes or general policy aims of the Rural Area beyond the Green Belt than the original building(s); and*
- d) Any outbuilding(s) are sited as close as possible to the main building(s) and visually subordinate to them.”*

4.3.6 The proposal seeks a floorspace trade off with the existing equestrian buildings. The dwellings have been located to sit as closely to the footprint of existing buildings and thus minimizes their impact upon the openness of the Rural Area Beyond the Green Belt. Plot 1 is a bungalow designed to mimic the existing stables, plots 2-4 are two storey dwellings, although they would exceed the ridge of the existing barn by approximately 1m, the three dwellings in cumulation would not be as bulky as the existing barn.

4.3.7 The proposal is therefore not considered to harm the openness of the site when compared against the existing buildings. The proposal is compliant with policies SP2, CGB1 and CGB4 of the Local Plan.

Sustainability

- 4.3.8 The NPPF December 2023 version, like the versions before, sets out that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development and that to achieve this the planning system has three overarching objectives. These are that development must have an economic, social and environmental objective. These core aims are reflected within the Local Plan Policies SP1 and D1.
- 4.3.9 Regarding economic sustainability, the build process will provide for local jobs and will contribute to the local economy. Socially, friendships may form between new neighbours and residents can join in with local clubs and activities if they wish. The new houses will have to meet the high environmental code of current building regulations with regards to insulation, double glazing, low energy light fittings, low flow water fittings and an energy efficient boiler and each house will be provided with EV parking provision secured by condition. Solar panels and ground source heat pumps are not included on the plans. A condition is recommended to ensure that a scheme of sustainability measures to address the climate change emergency is agreed and implemented on site. On this basis, the development is considered to be sustainable and comply with the aims of the NPPF and Policies SP1 and D1.

Layout, Design and Heritage Considerations

- 4.3.10 Policy D1 of the Local Plan states that planning permission will be granted for development proposals that respond positively to the sites local context and create or enhance the public realm. Policy SP9 of the Local Plan further considers that new development will be supported where it is well designed and located and responds positively to its local context. This is echoed in Section 12 of the NPPF.
- 4.3.11 Along this area within Hinxworth Road, there is sporadic development but is predominantly rural and open. The application site is set back sufficiently from the highway and therefore is not visible through the existing hedgerow. Two barns style dwellings have been erected opposite the site under ref with similar materials (brick plinth and timber cladding):
- 4.3.12 The proposed elevations have been amended to include pitched roofs on top of the first floor windows. The proposed design and materials are therefore considered sympathetic to this agrarian setting.

The Impact on Neighbouring Dwellings/Future Occupiers

- 4.3.13 Policy D1 of the Local Plan also requires that development proposals meet or exceed the nationally described space standards. Policy D3 of the Local Plan states that planning permission will be granted for development proposals which do not cause unacceptable harm to living conditions. These considerations are echoed within Section 12 of the NPPF.

Impact to future occupiers

- 4.3.14 The houses are acceptable in size, all exceeding the minimum space requirements of these standards. This, along with private rear gardens, on plot parking and bin and bike storage means that these houses can be considered to represent a good standard of amenity for future occupiers, and Policy D1 is considered to be met in this regard. The new homes will provide a

fairly traditional relationship with each other and will not give rise to unacceptable overlooking of each other's homes.

Impact on Neighbouring residential properties

- 4.3.15 The dwellings are sufficiently set off the boundary with the host dwelling Glebe House. The proposed side windows on Plot 4 at first floor level would serve a bathroom, I have recommended a condition for obscure glazing to ensure no overlooking would occur.
- 4.3.16 The application is therefore considered to be in accordance with the aims of Policy D3 of the Local Plan.

Highways and Parking

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

Bin Stores and Collection

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

Biodiversity and landscaping

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

Other matters

- 4.3.21 Given the location of the dwelling within the Rural Area Beyond the Green Belt, a condition is recommended removing permitted development rights to prevent extensions to the dwellings,

that may harm neighbouring residential amenity and to prevent large garden outbuildings from being constructed without the consideration of the LPA.

4.4 Conclusion

- 4.4.1 The Council cannot demonstrate a five-year supply of deliverable housing sites – currently estimated at 3.9 years’ worth of supply – and therefore there is a potential presumption in favour of development as set out in Paragraph 11 of the NPPF. The nine new homes will make a minor contribution to the delivery of housing numbers in the District, which is a planning benefit, and the proposed scheme will have no harm on the setting of the neighbouring heritage assets, or adverse harm on the amenity of the neighbouring occupiers. The benefits of the application are therefore considered to be in accordance with the aims of Section 12 of the NPPF and Local Plan policies T1, T2, D1, D3, and NE4. The application is recommended for conditional permission.

4.5 Alternative Options

- 4.5.1 N/A

4.6 Pre-Commencement Conditions

- 4.6.1 N/A

5.0 Recommendation

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

All external lighting shall be installed in accordance with the specifications and locations set out in the strategy, and these shall be maintained thereafter in accordance with the strategy. Under no circumstances should any other external lighting be installed without prior consent from the local planning authority. Local Plan Policy NE4.

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

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

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

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

7. Prior to the first commencement, the hereby permitted the vehicular access improvements, as indicated on drawing number 224420-PL-S-00-100 Rev A , shall be

completed and thereafter retained in accordance with details/specifications to be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority in consultation with the Highway Authority. Measures to ensure the existing drainage channel at the access remains operational must be provided.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Reason: To safeguard and enhance the appearance of the completed development and the visual amenity of the locality, and to comply with Policy NE2 of the North

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

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

Biodiversity Net Gain

1. The effect of paragraph 13 of Schedule 7A to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 is that planning permission granted for the development of land in England is deemed to have been granted subject to the condition "(the biodiversity gain condition)" that development may not begin unless:
- (a) a Biodiversity Gain Plan has been submitted to the planning authority, and
 - (b) the planning authority has approved the plan.
- The planning authority, for the purposes of determining whether to approve a Biodiversity Gain Plan if one is required in respect of this permission would be North Hertfordshire District Council.
- There are statutory exemptions and transitional arrangements which mean that the biodiversity gain condition does not always apply (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/biodiversity-net-gain-exempt-developments>).
- Based on the information available this permission is considered to be one which will require the approval of a biodiversity gain plan before development is begun because none of the statutory exemptions or transitional arrangements are considered to apply.

Biodiversity Net Gain

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

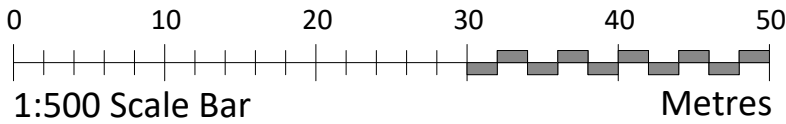
Proactive Statement:

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

Signed  Anne McDonald	Development Management North Hertfordshire District Council Council Offices Gernon Road Letchworth Herts SG6 3JF
Determining Officer Date: 25 November 2025	

APPENDIX 3

**Drawing No: 224420-PL-S-00-102 REV C; Proposed Site Layout Roof Plan approved under
Application Ref: 25/02408/FP**



Notes:

C	12/11/2025	Pitch Roof Added to Dormer Windows
B	10/1/2025	Plot 2 Label Added
A	6/30/2025	Site Layout Amended
REVISION	DATE	AMENDMENT

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SCHEME
GLEBE HOUSE, HINXWORTH BALDOCK.SG7 5HB
TITLE
PROPOSED SITE LAYOUT ROOF PLAN

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CLIENT No. SMY3507	DRAWING No. 224420-PL-S-00-102	REVISION C	