

North Hertfordshire District Council,
PO Box 7075,
Manchester,
M28 8JX



Date: 22 May 2026

My ref: 25113/LT20260522

By email

Dear Sir / Madam,

"Erection of 5 detached dwellings including garages, parking, landscaping, bin stores, installation of Air Source Heat Pumps and alterations to existing vehicular access off London Road" (26/00805/FP)

1. On behalf of the applicant, Hornbeam Homes Ltd., we are writing in response to public comments on the above planning application.
2. Objections have been made by the occupier of the property to the south west of the Application Site (Old Police House, Mill Road). The concerns primarily relate to the perceived impact of overlooking from Plot 5. The applicant has taken a constructive approach to addressing the concerns of this neighbour by attending a recent parish council meeting to discuss the issues raised. We have also submitted amended drawings in response.

Overlooking

3. The main concern raised by this neighbour is perceived overlooking from Plot 5. The rear elevation of Plot 5 is separated from the south western boundary by over 20m. The distance between habitable windows is over 60m. These are significant separation distances which, in addition to new and existing mature planting, will result in no unreasonable loss of privacy to this neighbour. This is consistent with the Council's pre-application advice.
4. Without prejudice, we have submitted amended drawings that remove the rear dormer window to Plot 5. This is replaced with a rooflight that will preclude any views towards this neighbour. We are also committing to additional planting along the south western boundary.
5. We are aware that there is an outbuilding in the rear garden of this neighbouring property. It has windows that face south westwards towards the main dwelling. The use of this building is incidental to the main dwelling. It is not a habitable room.

Inappropriate backland development

6. A comment is made about the Application Proposal being inappropriate backland development. Backland development typically represents land to the rear of existing properties. The Application Proposal is not situated on existing garden land.

Overdevelopment of the site

7. A comment has been made arguing that the Application Proposal is overdevelopment. We disagree. The density of the Application Proposal site is reflective of the surrounding area with the new dwellings set away from the site boundaries and served by large rear gardens. This has been accepted by the Council in its pre-application advice.

Green Belt

8. An objection has been made arguing that the Application Proposal is inappropriate development in the Green Belt. We have addressed this matter in our Planning Statement. The Application Proposal is Grey Belt and is therefore not inappropriate development in the Green Belt. This has been accepted by the Council in its pre-application advice.

Cumulative impact of recent developments

9. An objection is made on the basis of the cumulative impact of recent and proposed developments. Firstly, the Application Proposal must ultimately be determined on its own merits. It is important to recognise that the National Planning Policy Framework supports the delivery of small and medium housing sites (paragraph 73). Furthermore, the North Hertfordshire Local Plan identifies St Ippolyts and Gosmore as sustainable Category A villages where modest growth is supported. This is reflected in the allocation of two housing sites within the villages, providing approximately 52 dwellings.
10. The Application Proposal comprises a modest development of five dwellings and, as explained in our Transport Statement, would generate a very modest level of vehicle movements. No substantive evidence has been provided to demonstrate that the Application Proposal, either individually or cumulatively with other recent developments, would result in unacceptable impacts.

Highways matters

11. Highway safety concerns are raised in relation to the access to London Road. We have provided detailed drawings showing that adequate visibility splay can be achieved to London Road. Hertfordshire County Council, as the Highways Authority, has raised no objections to the Application Proposal.

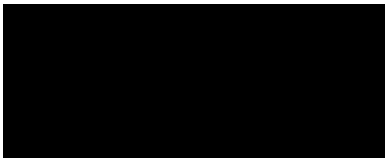
Other matters

12. Concerns have also been raised in relation to biodiversity, external lighting and landscape character. These matters have addressed in our Planning Statement and other technical documents. We have agreed to a condition for details of external lighting.

Conclusion

13. The Application Proposal represents a modest addition to the sustainable village of Gosmore that is compatible with the surrounding area. Careful consideration has been given to the impact on surrounding neighbours. Without prejudice, we have provided amended drawings to further reduce any perceived level of overlooking from Plot 5 to neighbouring properties.

Yours sincerely



James Garside
Associate

