

<u>Location:</u>	Land Between Royston Road And Cambridge Road Barkway Hertfordshire
<u>Applicant:</u>	Mrs Louise Simmonds
<u>Proposal:</u>	Approval of reserved matters (access, appearance, landscaping, layout and scale) for the erection of 140 residential dwellings with associated landscaping, highways, drainage, public open space and ancillary infrastructure pursuant to outline planning permission reference 25/02234/S73 granted 03.12.2025
<u>Ref.No:</u>	25/03149/RM
<u>Officer:</u>	Ben Glover

Date of expiry of statutory period: 15/10/2025

Extension of statutory period: 17/04/2026

Reason for Delay: In order to present the application to an available committee meeting.

Reason for Referral to Committee: Residential development with a site area of 0.5 hectares or greater.

1. **Relevant History**

- 1.1. 26/00457/NMA - Non-material amendment to discharge of condition permission reference 24/02396/DOC (Vary wording of condition 20 to change reference to approved plan) granted on 24.01.2025 – Pending consideration at time of writing.
- 1.2. 25/02586/DOC - Details reserved by Condition 9 (Sewage Treatment Upgrades) of outline planning permission reference 18/01502/OP granted on 25.07.2023 – Pending consideration at the time of writing.
- 1.3. 25/02234/S73 - Variation of wording to Condition 3 and Condition 20 of planning permission 18/01502/OP granted on 25.07.2023 – Granted Conditional Permission on 03/12/2025.
- 1.4. 25/01759/S73 - Variation to Condition 3 and Condition 20 of planning permission 18/01502/OP granted on 25.07.2023 – Withdrawn and not proceeded with on 20/08/2025.

- 1.5. 25/00636/NMA - Vary condition 25 (fire hydrants) to allow for commencement up to slab level before a scheme is agreed (as non-material amendment to outline planning permission 18/01502/OP granted on 25.07.2023) – NMA agreed on 30/06/2025.
- 1.6. 25/00103/DOC - Details reserved by condition 24 (Phasing Plan) of outline permission reference 18/01502/OP granted 25.07.2023 – Approved on 10/03/2025.
- 1.7. 24/02858/DOC - Details reserved by condition 25 (Fire Hydrants) of outline permission reference no. 18/01502/OP granted 25.07.2023 – Refused on 12/03/2025.
- 1.8. 24/02835/DOC - Details reserved by Condition 16 (Reinstatement of verge/footway) of outline planning permission 18/01502/OP granted on 23.02.2023 – Under consideration at the time of writing this report.
- 1.9. 24/02408/DOC - Details reserved by Condition 17 (Local Transport Plan) of outline permission application reference 18/01502/OP granted on 25.07.2023 – Approved on 12/02/2025.
- 1.10. 24/02595/DOC - Details reserved by condition 10 Part A (Archaeology) of planning permission reference no 18/01502/OP granted 25.07.2023 – Approved on 12/02/2025.
- 1.11. 24/02396/DOC - Details reserved by Condition 19 (Construction Traffic Management Plan) of outline permission application reference 18/01502/OP granted on 25.07.2023 – Approved on 27/01/2025.
- 1.12. 24/01883/RM - Application for the approval of reserved matters comprising: details of the siting, design and external appearance of the development, and the landscaping of the site in respect of the approved outline planning permission ref: 18/01502/OP for the development of 140 dwellings and a new shop on the land between Royston Road and Cambridge Road, Barkway – Under Consideration at the time of writing this report.
- 1.13. 24/01994/S73 - Variation of wording to Condition 3 and Condition 20 of planning permission 18/01502/OP granted on 25.07.2023 – Appeal withdrawn on 05/09/2025.
- 1.14. 18/01502/OP - Outline application with all matters reserved other than strategic point of access onto Royston Road and Cambridge Road for the erection of up to 140 dwellings and a new shop – Granted Conditional Permission on 25/07/2023.

2. **Policies**

2.1. **North Hertfordshire District Council Local Plan (2011-2031)**

Policy SP1: Sustainable development in North Hertfordshire

Policy SP2: Settlement Hierarchy and Spatial Distribution

Policy SP6: Sustainable Transport

Policy SP8: Housing

Policy SP9: Design and sustainability

Policy SP10: Healthy communities

Policy SP11: Natural resources and sustainability

Policy SP12: Green infrastructure, biodiversity and landscape
 Policy SP13: Historic environment
 Policy T1: Assessment of transport matters
 Policy T2: Parking
 Policy HS1: Local Housing Allocations
 Policy HS2: Affordable Housing
 Policy HS3: Housing Mix
 Policy HS5: Accessible and adaptable housing
 Policy D1: Sustainable design
 Policy D3: Protecting living conditions
 Policy D4: Air quality
 Policy NE1: Strategic green infrastructure
 Policy NE2: Landscape
 Policy NE4: Biodiversity and geological sites
 Policy NE6: New and improved open space
 Policy NE7: Reducing flood risk
 Policy NE8: Sustainable drainage systems
 Policy NE9: Water quality and environment
 Policy NE10: Water conservation and wastewater infrastructure
 Policy NE11: Contaminated Land
 Policy HE1: Designated heritage assets
 Policy HE4: Archaeology

2.2. **National Planning Policy Framework (2024)**

Section 2: Achieving sustainable development
 Section 5: Delivering a sufficient supply of homes
 Section 6: Building a strong and competitive economy
 Section 8: Promoting healthy and safe communities
 Section 11: Making effective use of land
 Section 12: Achieving well-designed places
 Section 14: Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change
 Section 15: Conserving and enhancing the natural environment
 Section 16: Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

2.3. **Barkway and Nuthampstead Neighbourhood Plan (Referendum passed in favour of the Neighbourhood Plan on the 1st May 2025)**

Policy BN H1 Affordable Housing
 Policy BN H2 Design and Layout
 Policy BN H3 Sustainable Construction
 Policy BN H4 Framework for BK3
 Policy BN NE3 Conserve and Enhance Biodiversity
 Policy BN NE4 Important Views
 Policy BN HA2 Non-Designated Heritage Assets
 Policy BN T1 Sustainable Transport Provision
 Policy BN T2 Mitigating Traffic Impact
 Policy BN T3 Public Rights of Way
 Policy BN T4 Safe and Accessible Walking and Cycling Routes
 Policy BN T5 Vehicle Parking in Residential Development

The Barkway and Nuthampstead Neighbourhood Plan was made (formally adopted) in May 2025 and therefore carries significant weight in the determination of this application. As part of the original outline permission, a masterplan and associated approved documents were also secured. While the Neighbourhood Plan has

statutory priority, the approved masterplan and outline permission documents remain a relevant material consideration and provide an important framework for assessing the Reserved Matters applications. Accordingly, both the Neighbourhood Plan and the approved masterplan have been given significant weight.

2.4. **Other Planning Guidance and Documents**

Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)
Sustainability SPD (September 2024)
Vehicle Parking at New Developments SPD (November 2011)
Design SPD (July 2011)
North Herts Design Code SPD – Public Consultation Draft (2026)

3. **Representations**

3.1. **Site Notice:**

Start Date: 15/01/2026

Expiry Date: 07/02/2026

3.2. **Press Notice:**

Start Date: 15/01/2026

Expiry Date: 07/02/2026

3.3. **Neighbouring Notifications:**

24 representations have been received following public consultation. 15 are objections to the scheme and 4 are neutral. The comments can be viewed on the NHC website in full and have been summarised below:

Objections:

- Issues with the accuracy of the northeastern corner of the site and the location of Bridleway 018.
- Bridleway 017 should be surfaced to the correct specifications set out in the British Horse Society's Advice Note Surfaces document.
- The site layout does not reflect the existing layout of the village and differs from the approved masterplan.
- Insufficient boundary planting along the northern boundary which adjoins Newsells Stud.
- No inclusion of the shop.
- Inadequate visitor parking and unequal distribution.
- Light pollution from the development would not be in keeping with the dark skies village.
- The housing design does not reflect the historic character of Barkway.
- Visitor parking should be increased to stop excessive overflow parking on Royston Road and Cambridge Road.
- Lack of affordable housing.
- Lack of affordable housing in the eastern and northern areas.
- Affordable homes should be well integrated.
- Insufficient clarity regarding bin storage and collection arrangements.
- Status of historic village will change.
- Rural aspects of living in Barkway will not be enhanced.
- Increase in traffic, noise and visual pollutants.
- Facilities available in Barkway and minimal. Development will strain them.
- Barkway is not a prime site to start a business.

- Use of long straight lines does not create an easy on the eye flow on the main route.
- Concerns around lack of capacity at the water treatment plant.
- EV parking layout unclear.
- Southern boundary would not provide sufficient visual or acoustic buffering to the south.
- Upgraded to the A10 area required before development begins.
- No mention of lighting strategy.
- No improvement to access the bus stops close to the site.

Neutral:

- Include a condition requiring swift bricks for each dwelling.
- Lack of shop shown on plans which should be secured.

Neighbour Comments Following 14-Day Reconsult:

- Revised planting does not make any revision to the southern boundary and are species that do not promote wildlife.
- View of fences from the south.
- No revision on allocation of visitor parking.
- Does not demonstrate social integration with the village.
- Should continue hedging on Bridleway 018.

3.4. Consultees:

Active Travel England – No objection.

Affinity Water – No objection.

Anglian Water – No comments received.

Barkway Parish Council – Objection. Comments available in full on the NHC website.

Braughing Parish Council – No objection. Concerns raised. Comments available in full on the NHC website.

Countryside Management Service – No comments received.

CPRE Hertfordshire – No comments received.

Environment Agency – No comments received.

HCC Archaeology – No objection.

HCC Education – No comments received.

HCC Growth & Infrastructure – No comment.

HCC Highways – No objection subject to recommended conditions.

HCC Minerals & Waste – No comments received.

HCC Public Rights of Way – No objection.

Hertfordshire Public Health – No comments received.

Herts & Middlesex Wildlife Trust – No comments received.

Herts Fire & Rescue – No objection.

Historic England – No comments.

Lead Local Flood Authority – Objection to the discharge of Condition 21.

Natural England – No objection subject to mitigation.

NHC Community Development Officer – No comments received.

NHC Conservation Officer – No comment.

NHC Ecology – No objection. Subject to conditions.

NHC Environmental Health – No objection.

NHC Greenspace – No comments received.

NHC Housing Development Officer – Objection. Comments available in full on the NHC website.

NHC Leisure – No comments received.

NHC Urban Design – No objection.

NHC Waste and Recycling – No comments received.

NHS Cambridge and Peterborough – No comments received.

NHS Hertfordshire and West Essex – No comments received.

Reed Parish Council – No objection. Concerns raised. Comments available in full on the NHC website.

Sports England – No objection.

Thames Water – No objection.

The British Horse Society – No comments received.

The Water Officer – No comments received.

4. Planning Considerations

4.1. Site and Surroundings

- 4.1.1. The application site is 7.62 ha in size and is arable land situated between Royston Road and Cambridge Road with an existing bridleway (017) running north/south through the site. Bridleway 018 runs east/west along the north site boundary with

Newsells Estate lying to the north and the Cokenach Estate off to the north east. The site is allocated for housing under Local Plan Policy SP8 – Local Housing Allocation BK3.

4.2. **The Proposal**

- 4.2.1. This reserved matters application follows the grant of outline planning permission reference 25/02234/S73, which has the following description:

‘Variation of wording to Condition 3 and Condition 20 of planning permission 18/01502/OP granted on 25.07.2023.’

- 4.2.2. The outline application, which was varied pursuant to the above, held the description:

‘Outline application with all matters reserved other than strategic point of access onto Royston Road and Cambridge Road for the erection of up to 140 dwellings and a new shop’

- 4.2.3. As part of the outline application as varied, all matters were reserved save for access. This Reserved Matters application seeks approval of details relating to appearance, landscaping, layout, and scale for the erection of 140 residential dwellings with associated landscaping, highways, drainage, public open space, and ancillary infrastructure.
- 4.2.4. The application form submitted alongside the application also requested approval of Conditions 4, 5, and 21 of the parent permission (25/02234/S73). Conditions 4 and 5 are compliance conditions, which the applicant is complying with through the submission of this reserved matters application. Condition 21 has been removed from the description and is not for consideration as part of this reserved matters application. The agent has agreed to a revised description removing Condition 21 and the discharge of planning obligations from the description of development.
- 4.2.5. The 140 dwelling scheme comprises of the following market and affordable housing:

Affordable Housing:

56 x affordable dwellings (40%) comprising:

- 10 x 1-bed
- 24 x 2-bed
- 18 x 3-bed
- 4 x 4-bed

Market Housing:

84 x market housing (60%) comprising:

- 4 x 2-bed
- 47 x 3-bed
- 9 x 4-bed
- 24 x 5-bed

4.3. **Key Issues**

- 4.3.1. As this is a reserved matters application relating to an already approved outline permission complete with legal agreement, the discussion relates only to details which have been reserved (layout, scale, landscaping, and appearance). The access arrangements to and from the site have been secured by the outline permission.
- 4.3.2. Accordingly, the report will be structured around these headings with an added section dealing with 'other matters', such as affordable housing, ecology, sustainability.

Masterplan Compliance

- 4.3.3. The application is accompanied by a Masterplan Compliance Statement, as required by Condition 4 of the parent permission (25/02234/S73). Condition 4 reads as follows:

'Concurrent with the submission of the first Reserved Matters application, and any subsequent Reserved Matter applications, a Masterplan Compliance Statement shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The Masterplan Compliance Statement shall provide detailed explanation of how the proposal accords with the Masterplan Summary Report approved under application reference No. 18/01502/OP and dated March 2022, and plan numbers 1797/30/101 Rev E - Land Use Plan; 1797/30/103 Rev E - Access and Movement; 1797/30/104 Rev A - Urban Design Parameter Plan; and 1797/30/105 Rev A - Landscape Parameter Plan; 163462-002 Rev A - Alternative Royston Road Crossing Improvements (Option 2); 163462-003 Rev B - Cambridge Road Potential Gateway Feature and Foot/Cycleway Extension; 163462-008 – Indicative Pedestrian Improvements Plan; 1797/30/100 Rev G - Illustrative Masterplan. Where the proposal does not accord with a specific principle or parameter within the approved Masterplan, the Masterplan Compliance Statement must provide clear and robust justification for each departure.

Reason: To ensure that the development as envisaged by the outline application is satisfactorily implemented in accordance with Policy SP9 of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan.'

- 4.3.4. The requirement for a Masterplan Compliance Statement arose following the submission of application 25/02234/S73, which sought to vary Conditions 3 and 20 of the original outline permission (18/01502/OP). During the S73 application, it was accepted that the original wording of Condition 3 was overly restrictive in the scope

of an outline planning permission. It's amendment therefore necessitated the addition of a new condition requiring the submission of a Masterplan Compliance Statement. This condition gives the Local Planning Authority appropriate control of future submissions and ensures that the development envisaged by the approved outline application and associated masterplan would be satisfactorily implemented.

- 4.3.5. The purpose of the Masterplan Compliance Statement is to demonstrate the extent to which the proposal accords with the masterplan approved under the original outline permission (18/01502/OP), and to provide clear justification for any departures that were established by that original permission.
- 4.3.6. The statement sets out the design evolution of the site following several rounds of discussions with officers from the Local Planning Authority and concludes that the proposal broadly complies with the parameters established at the outline stage. The Masterplan Compliance Statement is taken into consideration throughout the report below.

Layout

- 4.3.7. Layout is defined in the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) Order 2015 (as amended) as, *'the way in which buildings, routes and open spaces within the development are provided, situated, orientated in relation to each other and to buildings and spaces outside the development...'* Having regard to this definition, the proposed layout has been assessed against relevant policies contained within the North Herts Local Plan, the emerging North Herts Design Code, and the relevant NPPF design principles.
- 4.3.8. The layout of the site flows directly from the primary road that runs east/west through the site linking Royston Road to Cambridge Road. The primary road is also referred to as 'The Village Street'. The geometry of the primary road has evolved through discussions with the Council to adopt a more angular alignment. This primary road layout is considered to result in an improved plot efficiency and site legibility while broadly maintaining the village street envisaged at the outline stage. The primary road layout is considered compliant with Policy D1 of the Local Plan and SS01 of the emerging North Herts Design Code supplementary document.
- 4.3.9. The Village Street provides access to several secondary streets, which in turn provide access to residential lanes. The hierarchy of the primary village street, secondary streets, and residential streets is considered clear and legible. The street layout is considered to appropriately avoid the creation of dead end routes and would provide coherent east/west and north/south vehicular and pedestrian connectivity and accessibility through the site. The street hierarchy and its layout have evolved positively following discussions between the applicant and Council. The street layout is considered to broadly comply with access and movement principles set out in the outline masterplan and would comply with the provisions set out in Policy D1 of the Local Plan.

- 4.3.10. The site features two bridleways. Bridleway 017 runs north/south through the middle of the site, and Bridleway 018 runs along the northern boundary of the site before cutting into the north-east of the site. It is considered that both bridleways are adequately served by footpaths within the site. The layout of the footpaths would not detract from the existing bridleways.
- 4.3.11. It is noted at this stage that the Highways Authority have raised no objection to the proposed internal layout of roads and footpaths within the site. The Highways Authority have noted that no design and layout plans have been submitted to detail the primary road and Bridleway 017 crossing. Whilst details have not been submitted, it is considered that this can be appropriately conditioned. Therefore, a condition is recommended requiring the submission of the detailed design of the primary road (village street) and Bridleway 017 crossing.
- 4.3.12. The development is divided into three different character areas (Village Street, Residential Lanes, and Wooded Lanes). The character areas are considered to be broadly compliant with the illustrative character areas set out in the approved masterplan. The Village Street would follow the primary road through the site, the larger four and five bed properties would be located within the Wooded Lanes, as per the masterplan, and the Residential Lanes would provide a mix of two to four bed homes. It is noted that the Wooded Lanes extend along the northern edge of the site to the west side of the central north/south green space. While not part of the original masterplan, the rationale set out within the compliance statement is considered to be acceptable in this specific case.
- 4.3.13. The plot structure of the site is considered acceptable. Properties would be appropriately orientated within their context to provide natural surveillance and enhance legibility. The layout of plots within the site has evolved following negotiations while remaining broadly compliant with the masterplan documents submitted with the outline permission.
- 4.3.14. The relationship and integration of the development with the existing area is acceptable. The western edge of the site, fronting Royston Road, has evolved in line with officer recommendation. The plots that front Royston Road have been pushed closer to the existing street, removing what was previously a private driveway arrangement. Instead, plots along Royston Road will be served by parking to the rear. It is considered that this plot arrangement to the west of the site enhances the appearances of the western frontage onto Royston Road and minimises the visual impact of parking provision on locality. This would comply with Policy D1 of the Local Plan and broadly comply with SS03 of the emerging North Herts Design Code.
- 4.3.15. Plots along the eastern edge of the site are set back from Cambridge Road and separated by a landscaped buffer. This layout would mitigate the urbanisation of the site as viewed from Cambridge Road, which is currently characterised by mature trees and boundary vegetation.

- 4.3.16. The layout of the plots and their relationship with existing neighbouring properties is considered acceptable. No.9 Royston Road would be most affected by the development. However, the distance and orientation of the plots closest to No.9 are considered to be appropriate and not result in unacceptable harm to the neighbours amenity.
- 4.3.17. The layout is such that no individual building within the development would be unreasonable impacted by surrounding buildings in terms of outlook, lack of light or loss of privacy. The back-to-back distances and back-to-side distances are considered reasonable. Where there are relatively close back to side distances between dwellings, there are no relationships in the proposed layout where there would be a conflict of windows with potential for overlooking. The proposal would comply with Policy D3 of the Local Plan.
- 4.3.18. Affordable tenures have been appropriately distributed throughout the site to create a more equitable neighbourhood. The placement of affordable tenures along the central open space with direct access to the landscape is considered to be in line with BF01 of the emerging North Herts Design Code.
- 4.3.19. Each plot would benefit from private garden space that would be of adequate size in relation to their respective property type. It is noted that the majority of plots feature a detached garage pushed back into the rear garden. This feature does not align with PA03 of the emerging North Herts Design Code. While this arrangement does not fully align with PA03 of the emerging North Herts Design Code, a combination of the Design Codes emerging, limited status, and the site specific masterplan, it is considered that the garages does not rise to a level of harm to the quality of the private amenity space or the wider character of the development to justify refusal, and the overall layout remains acceptable.
- 4.3.20. The provision of open space within the site aligns appropriately with the outline permission masterplan documents. The central north/south bridleway corridor of open space has been widened to allow for the redesign of the SUDs basins that would have a maximum gradient of 1/3 to allow these spaces to feel part of the landscape and ensure safety for users of the bridleway. 'Play on the way' features would be accommodated along the bridleway corridor, and a local area of play would be provided to the south of the site and incorporate natural play equipment in line with the masterplan.
- 4.3.21. Parking within the site would be primarily provided through on-plot parking and parking courts. Where parking courts are proposed, the layout of the plots within the site would provide adequate natural surveillance to minimise the risk of anti-social behaviour. On-plot parking would be either along the sides of properties or to the front of properties. While this parking layout would result in some degree of car dominance in some areas of the site, the overall parking strategy is, on balance, considered acceptable in this case.

- 4.3.22. In conclusion of the above, the proposed site layout is considered acceptable. It would deliver a legible and accessible public realm through a well-designed network of vehicular and pedestrian routes and incorporate measures that appropriately design out opportunities for crime and anti-social behaviour. The level and distribution of parking within the site is not considered to result in unacceptable levels of visual dominance of vehicles, particularly along the western edge of the site and along the central bridleway corridor, and in locations where parking courts are used. Furthermore, the layout would safeguard the amenity of future occupiers and existing neighbouring occupiers. Overall, the proposed layout is considered to comply with Policies D1, D3 and T2 of the Local Plan, Policy BN H2, BN T3, and BN T4 of the Neighbourhood Plan and the core principles set out in Section 12 of the NPPF.

Landscaping

- 4.3.23. Landscaping, in relation to reserved matters applications, is defined in the Town and Country planning (Development Management procedure) Order 2015 (as amended) as: *'the treatment of land (other than buildings) for the purpose of enhancing or protecting the amenities of the site and the area in which it is situated and includes: (a) screening by fences, walls or other means; (b) the planting of trees, hedges, shrubs or grass; (c) the formation of banks, terraces or other earthworks; (d) the laying out or provision of gardens, courts, squares, water features, sculpture or public art; and (e) the provision of other amenity features...'*
- 4.3.24. This reserved matters application has been accompanied by planting plans, a surface treatment plan, a materials plan, a boundary treatment plan, and a landscape management plan.
- 4.3.25. The outline permission (25/02234/S73) secured access arrangements to and from the site. The applicants Masterplan Compliance Statement provides a summary of accordance between the reserved matters application and the approved outline plans, including the Landscape Parameter Plan (1797/30/105A) and the Masterplan Summary Document. At the outline stage, six landscape character areas were established (Bridleway Corridor, Newsells Edge, Village Square, Royston Road Frontage, Cokenach Woodlands, and Urban Blocks). The six character areas remain the basis for the current scheme.
- 4.3.26. While some amendments have been made, due to the need for an improved surface water drainage strategy, the proposed landscaping scheme set out is considered to be broadly compliant with the details set out within the masterplan submissions supporting the outline application.
- 4.3.27. A key variation between the original masterplan supporting the outline permission submission and the now submitted reserved matters application includes the removal of the Royston Road frontage landscape character area. This character area has been removed to allow for the widening of the Bridleway Corridor character area to accommodate redesigned SUDs basins with a shallower 1:3

gradient. Officers support these changes as it is considered that it would result in improvements to safety, integration, and visual quality.

- 4.3.28. The proposed development would deliver the following green infrastructure features throughout the site, which are considered to be consistent with the masterplan documents supporting the outline permission, or in addition to:
- A Local Area of Play (LAP) with natural play equipment.
 - A new pedestrian and cycle link connecting the south-western boundary to Royston Road.
 - Retention of the bench and linear green space along the eastern boundary.
 - 'Play on the way' features would be incorporated into the central Bridleway Corridor landscape.
 - Streets would be designed with tree planting and grass verges to soften the public realm.
 - A deer-proof fence and hedgerow along the southern boundary adjoining the reserved school site, which would soften views of the site from the south.
- 4.3.29. The retention and enhancement of the central north/south bridleway through the site is considered a significant benefit of the scheme. It would provide strong amenity value, would be appropriately connected to both sides of the development to create legibility and wayfinding, and would be benefit from natural surveillance from the properties fronting onto the central open space.
- 4.3.30. The landscaping strategy set out by the applicant would retain and reinforce existing hedgerows throughout the site. Furthermore, the development would be kept a sufficient distance from hedgerows and the boundaries, in line with the outline application, to protect the health of the vegetation.
- 4.3.31. Soft landscaping throughout the site would include native tree and shrub planting, and wildflower mixes, which would contribute to the ecology and biodiversity of the site.
- 4.3.32. A key issue for the development to address is the boundary treatment along the northern boundary of the site with Newsells Park Stud and ensure adequate measures are in place to minimise the impact of the proposal upon the neighbour to the north. The development would include a landscaped buffer along the northern boundary to mitigate the potential impact of the development on Newsells Park Stud. The buffer would include continuous tree planting and shrubs along the northern boundary. Development would be set back from the boundary as set out within the outline applications supporting masterplan documentation.
- 4.3.33. Boundary treatments are set out clearly and include ornamental hedges, particularly along the primary and secondary streets, bricked walls, estate railings, and closed boarded fencing. Public facing boundaries are considered to generally be high quality and limit the visibility of close boarded fencing. While some fencing would be visible, its visibility is considered limited, and overall, the boundary treatments throughout the site are considered to be acceptable.

- 4.3.34. Hard landscaping details are provided within the submitted Surface Treatments Plan. The materials chosen are considered coherent to their respective place within the street hierarchy and aid in differentiating between higher and lower order routes around the site. The materials would include:
- Primary Street: Black top surface to both the road and footpaths, appropriate to the streets status as the primary route through the site.
 - Secondary Streets: Shared surfaces consisting of Marshalls Keyblock Bracken block paving.
 - Residential Lanes, Driveways, and Parking Courts: Marshalls Keyblock Burn Orchre.
 - Footpaths and Bridleways: Timber edged hoggin, which would provide an appropriate hard wearing, low maintenance surface within the site.
- 4.3.35. In conclusion of the above, the proposed soft and hard landscaping scheme put forward by the applicant is considered acceptable. The proposal is considered to be of a standard that would create a positive environment for future occupiers of the development and would improve the bridleways for existing users. The proposal would comply with the local plan policies D1, D3, NE2, NE6, NE7, and NE8, Policy BN H2 and BN H4 of the Neighbourhood Plan, and the core principles set out within the NPPF.

Appearance

- 4.3.36. Appearance is defined in the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) Order 2015 (as amended) as: *'the aspects of a building or place within the development which determines the visual impression the building or places makes, including the external built form of the development, its architecture, materials, decoration, lighting, colour and texture...'* Therefore, this reserved matter relates more to the appearance of dwellings and the use of materials.
- 4.3.37. The application is accompanied by a Materials Plan, Surface Treatments Plan, elevation plans for each unit type, a street scene plan, and visualisations. The applicant has also submitted Barkway Design Code Response documents for each of the three character areas within the site.
- 4.3.38. The application site sits on the northern edge of Barkway. The northern part of the village and the High Street exhibit a varied character, with a wide range of roof forms, materials, and architectural features that reflect the time in which the development took place. Close to the site are the more modern new build dwellings and mid-20th century builds. Barkway can be considered to have a varied architectural context.
- 4.3.39. The Masterplan Compliance Statement proposes a traditional townscape character drawing on elements of the Barkway's distinctive vernacular architecture and urban form. The statement sets out that homes would be well proportioned, with pitched roofs along the village street and built using locally appropriate materials such as

red brick and weatherboard. Design cues are also taken from northern Barkway, such as larger detached properties, on plot parking, privacy strips, and hedges.

- 4.3.40. As set out in the report above, the site is separated into three character areas, Village Street, Residential Lanes, and Wooded Lanes.
- 4.3.41. The Village Street would feature predominantly detached single and two storey properties to the west and small groups of two storey terraced properties to the east. Roof typologies would vary along the street scene with a mix of gables and interlocking gables. The properties along the Village Street would feature the Russell Galloway Country Stone roof tile, which is a brown clay effect tile. Facing materials on properties along the Village Street would be a mix of red brick, white render, and black weatherboard. The Village Street would also feature chimney stacks and flint panels on the brick walls that front the primary road through the site. The range of materials used along the Village Street would be used to aid wayfinding throughout the site and improve legibility.
- 4.3.42. The Village Street would incorporate a public footpath separated from the road by green verges and trees. Hedges would also heavily feature to the front of the properties along the Village Street, which would soften the appearance of the development.
- 4.3.43. The Residential Lanes would provide predominantly detached dwellings with some small groups of terraced properties. The roof typologies would consist of a mix of gabled and hipped ends. The materials would be slightly different from those used along the Village Street. Roof materials would be brown clay effect and walls would be predominantly red multi bricks. There would be less material variety to the Residential Lanes compared to the Village Street, which would help differentiate between the two character areas. The road surface would be shared between pedestrians and vehicles. The street would include green verges, trees, and hedges, which would soften the appearance of the Residential Lanes improving the site visually.
- 4.3.44. The Wooded Lanes would consist of large detached two storey dwellings. The roof typology would consist of hips, interlocking gables, and small dormer windows. Materials would include grey slate effect roof tiles, a red multi brick, and architectural features including exposed timber framing and chimney stacks. The road surface would be shared, and hedges would feature strongly to the front boundaries of properties in these Wooded Lane areas.
- 4.3.45. The development would not incorporate any street lighting. Barkway is a dark skies village and therefore street lighting has not been proposed by the applicant.
- 4.3.46. Affordable housing would be distributed across the site, predominantly as terraced clusters, with four detached bungalows also proposed. The affordable units would front prominent public spaces including Royston Road, the Bridleway Corridor, the Village Street. The affordable housing would use the same materials palette as the

market units. Parking for the affordable plots would be mainly to the rear or within parking courts, reducing visual car dominance in the street scene.

- 4.3.47. The key frontages of the site are considered to be along Royston Road, Cambridge Road, the central Bridleway Corridor, and Village Street. The development would deliver what is considered to be a coherent appearance along these frontages that appropriately reflect their location within the development and wider area. Materials are considered to be of an acceptable quality and variety with some reflection of the existing Barkway appearance. Furthermore, parking in these key frontage areas would be to the rear or to the sides of plots and views would therefore be softened by planting and reduced hard surfacing.
- 4.3.48. In conclusion of the above, it is considered that the proposed appearance of the development would be acceptable. Views of the site from both Royston Road and Cambridge Road would be acceptable through the use of appropriate materials and house typologies. Views of the development from within the site, including along the public bridleways would also be of an acceptable quality. There would be sufficient variation in unit types, materials, and planting to create a strong sense of character and public realm. The proposed appearance of the development is considered to comply with Policy D1 of the Local Plan, Policy BN H2 and BN NE3 of the Neighbourhood Plan, and the core principles set out in Section 12 of the NPPF.

Scale

- 4.3.49. Scale is defined in the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) Order 2015 (as amended) as: *'the height., width and length of each building proposed within the development in relation to its surroundings...'*
- 4.3.50. The development would comprise predominantly of two storey dwellings with a limited number of single storey bungalows within the affordable housing mix. The development would also incorporate single storey garages. The height of the development is considered consistent with the existing village context and would be acceptable within the site.
- 4.3.51. As set out above, the Wooded Lanes would feature the larger dwellings, as set out within the outline permission. The Village Street and Residential Lanes would be a mix of dwelling types and sizes.
- 4.3.52. The edges of the development would align with the existing context. The scale of the development fronting Royston Road would be appropriate and integrate within the street scene acceptably. The development would be set back from Cambridge Road given the landscaped buffer, which would reduce the massing along that frontage.

- 4.3.53. In conclusion of the above, the proposed scale of the development would be appropriate within the context of the site. The development would generally accord with the principles set out in the outline permission. The proposal would comply with Policy D1 and HS6 of the Local Plan, Policy BN H2 and BN H4 of the Neighbourhood Plan and Section 12 of the NPPF.

Other Matters

- 4.3.54. **Affordable Housing:** The proposed development would provide 56 affordable housing units (40%) as required by the S106 which was agreed as part of the outline approval. The development would provide 64.3% affordable rent (36 units) and 35.7% shared ownership (20 units). The housing mix was indicative at the time of the outline submission. It is considered that the affordable housing mix, as set out in paragraph 4.3.2 of this report, is acceptable and would comply with Policy HS2 of the Local Plan and Policy BN H1 of the Neighbourhood Plan. The affordable housing would comply with the S106 agreement.
- 4.3.55. **Ecology:** The outline permission, as varied, did not secure an obligation to provide a specified biodiversity net gain, given that the permission pre-dates the mandatory obligation to provide 10% gain. It is however noted that the outline permission would result in a net gain in BNG. The application states that the site will achieve a net gain in biodiversity, in line with Policy NE4 of the Local Plan and Policy BN NE3 of the Neighbourhood Plan.
- 4.3.56. The development would include the extensive planting of trees, shrubs, and hedges throughout the site. The development would also see the introduction of a species rich seed mix to much of the public open space.
- 4.3.57. The application also sets out a commitment to providing swift bricks and hedgehog highways as standard. Details around the inclusion of bat bricks are unclear. It is considered appropriate to condition details of ecological enhancements including wildlife features within the site.
- 4.3.58. **Energy and Sustainability:** The application is accompanied by a Energy & Sustainability Strategy. The statement confirms that the development will be compliant with the relevant building regulations. No gas will be installed across the development. All private homes being served by electric Air Source Heat Pumps and underfloor heating. Every property would benefit from either a wall mounted or post mounted EV charging point. The proposal would be compliant with Policy D1 of the Local Plan and Policy BN H3 and BN T1 of the Neighbourhood Plan.
- 4.3.59. **Waste:** The application is accompanied by a Refuse Collection Plan. The plan sets out where refuse bins would be stored within plots and where the refuse would be collected. Refuse bins would all be stored in rear gardens reducing the risk of street clutter. Refuse collection points are considered an appropriate drag distance from

where the refuse bins would be stored. The Highways Authority have not raised any objection to refuse collection or refuse vehicle tracking.

4.3.60. **Environmental Considerations:** The Council's Environmental Health Team have raised no objection to the scheme.

4.3.61. The LLFA have raised an objection to the discharge of Condition 21, which originally formed part of the application. It was agreed with the agent prior to validation to have reference to Condition 21 removed and submitted for consideration separately. Condition 21 therefore does not form part of this reports consideration.

Neighbouring Objections:

4.3.62. Several objections have been received. Many of the comments raised have been addressed in the report above or are not directly relevant to this reserved matters application. Remaining comments have been addressed below:

- Corrected plans have been submitted correctly showing the location of the Bridleway 018 within the application site.
- Bridleway 017 would be enhanced to 6m wide and feature a surface usable for pedestrians and equestrians. No objection has been raised to the enhancements by the Public Rights of Way Officer.
- The absence of the shop from the plan has been noted. The applicant has confirmed that there is currently a lack of demand for the shop and they have been unable to find a willing occupier. The provision of the shop has not been secured as part of the outline permission by condition or planning obligation to be detailed or delivered by any triggers for a particular need arising from the development itself. The omission of the shop in this reserved matters application is not a reason for refusal. The reserved matters application aligns with the approved phasing plan condition and all other matters related to the outline permission (as varied), and remains compliant with policy BK3.
- The development would provide policy compliant visitor parking within the site.
- As this is a reserved matters application, improvements to facilities and highways outside of the site do not form part of the consideration, they were matters for the outline permission.

4.4. **Conclusion**

4.4.1. This application for reserved matters following from the approval of 25/02234/S73. The reserved matters seeking approval include details of layout, scale, appearance, and landscaping.

4.4.2. Subject to the inclusion of appropriately worded conditions, it is considered that the proposed development would be of a suitable scale commensurate to the site location to the northern edge of Barkway. It is also considered that the development would have an acceptable and functional layout for future residents and visitors to

the site, would be of an appearance considerate to the site and its setting, and would be acceptable in terms of the proposed landscaping. The proposed development is therefore considered to be in compliance with the relevant local plan policies and the core principles set out within the NPPF.

- 4.4.3. The application site is an allocated housing site in the adopted local plan and will therefore make an important contribution to the housing land supply. As the Council is currently unable to demonstrate a 5-year housing land supply, the tilted balance of paragraph 11(d) of the NPPF is engaged. The collective benefits of the development as described would be significant. Any adverse impacts would not significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against the policies in the NPPF taken as a whole.
- 4.4.4. Where the proposed development departs or differs from that approved within the associated Masterplan Summary Document and associated plans submitted in support of the original outline permission, it is considered that the accompanying Masterplan Compliance Statement adequately justified the changes made. Furthermore, the applicant has engaged proactively with council officers in making changes to the scheme that would fall in line with much of the emerging North Herts Design Code.
- 4.4.5. Given the above, it is recommended that reserved matters be approved, subject to conditions.

5. **Alternative Options**

- 5.1. None applicable.

6. **Pre-Commencement Conditions**

- 6.1. At the time of writing, pre-commencement conditions have not yet been agreed between the Council and applicant. A written update will be provided once conditions have been agreed.

7. **Legal Implications**

- 7.1. In making decisions on applications submitted under the Town and Country Planning legislation, the Council is required to have regard to the provisions of the development plan and to any other material considerations. The decision must be in accordance with the plan unless the material considerations indicate otherwise. Where the decision is to refuse or restrictive conditions are attached, the applicant has a right of appeal against the decision.

8. **Recommendation**

That planning permission be **GRANTED** subject to:

- A) Delegate to the Development and Conservation Manager powers to (i) resolve any outstanding matters and (ii) update conditions and informatives with minor amendments as required; and

B) The conditions set out below:

1. 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.

2. Prior to the first occupation of the development hereby permitted the proposed all onsite car and cycle parking shall be laid out, demarcated, levelled, surfaced and drained in accordance with the approved plans (Ref: 1877-22-02-005, Rev C) and retained thereafter available for that specific use.

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

3. 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.

4. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the Landscape Management Plan prepared by idverde (dated 06/03/2026) unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To safeguard and enhance the appearance of the completed development and the visual amenity of the locality and in accordance with Policy D1 of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan (2011-2031).

5. The development hereby approved shall be constructed in accordance with the submitted Energy & Sustainability Statement prepared by Redrow, and details of the proposed air source heat pumps submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning prior to their installation, and the identified sustainability measures shall be maintained and retained thereafter unless otherwise agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In order to provide a sustainable form of development, to reduce the carbon footprint of the development and in order to minimise the impact on Climate Change.

6. 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 boxes in buildings/structures and hedgehog highways has been

submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. Swift bricks should be used where building heights allow.

Reason: To ensure development is ecologically sensitive and secures biodiversity enhancements in accordance with Policy NE4 of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan (2011-2031) and the National Planning Policy Framework.

7. No above slab level development approved by this application shall commence until detailed technical plans are submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, in consultation with the Highways Authority and Public Rights of Way Officer, which show the detailed engineering designs and layout of the vehicle and pedestrian crossing and associated works concerning the crossing point between the 'Village Street' and Bridleway 017. These works shall be constructed in accordance with the approved details to the Highways Authority and Local Planning Authority's satisfaction and completed prior to first occupation of the site.

Reason: To ensure the provision of a vehicle and pedestrian crossing which is safe, suitable, and sustainable for all highway users and in accordance with Policy T1 of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan (2011-2031)

8. Notwithstanding the information submitted with the Reserved Matters application, prior to any above slab level development approved by this application, a schedule of materials to be used on all surfaces shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority and the approved details shall be implemented on site.

Reason: To ensure that the development will have an acceptable appearance which does not detract from the appearance and character of the surrounding area and in accordance with Policy D1 of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan (2011-2031).

Proactive Statement:

Planning permission has been granted for this proposal. The Council acted proactively through early engagement with the applicant at the pre-application stage which led to improvements to the scheme. 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.