

25/03084/RM

Reserved matters application for approval of layout, scale and appearance of buildings and landscaping pursuant of outline permission 21/00504/OP granted 03.04.2025 for residential development comprising of up to 120 dwellings with vehicular access via Flint Road

Land To The East Of Talbot Way And Kristiansand Way And Flint Road Allotments Flint Road Letchworth Garden City Hertfordshire SG6 1TY

ECOLOGY AND BNG MATTERS – Liz Anderson – see OP framework plan below

MP DESIGN PRINCIPLES	Comments
• Tree specimens with large sizes at maturity (+15-20m) should be planted in the open spaces (village and entry greens) and form part of the landscape design related to large buildings – liaise with Frank	Agree – consideration to future shading of PV on roofs (eg plot 35 or 82), though shading of public realm is beneficial.
• Garden streets will create east-west habitat continuity, and must integrate SUDS design with the landscape – liaise with Frank	I don't see this demonstrated, minimal planting shown on green street detail sheets. Reliance on greenspace at the front of properties which can easily be replaced with gravel / artificial surfaces. It's merely the pale street colour which offsets how harsh this will be.

	
• A tree strategy for private back gardens should be proposed to create backdrop planting for the quintessential Letchworth condition of homes surrounded by greenery. Plants should be evident in the background, midground and the foreground as one moves through the street – liaise with Frank	We discussed this and the potential for the inclusion of fruit trees in back gardens or smaller trees like Rowan which are beneficial to birds and insects. The opportunity to give new home owners the chance to choose a tree? https://www.msn.com/en-gb/money/other/councillors-celebrate-wildlife-garden-at-cala-development-in-arlesey/ar-AA1STokT
• Is proposed hedge along western boundary with allotments optimal from a BNG perspective? Any recommendations for improvements?	Happy with the mix, bramble and elder will come in themselves and add nectar and berry sources. It's interesting that blackthorn – prunus spinosa doesn't feature at all. Perhaps there is a new movement that is anti but it's an important hedgerow / scrub plant and foodplant to many butterflies and moths. Given this boundary needs to provide a defensible edge I would have thought more thorns would be good?
Other comments and recommendations for changes and improvement from a BNG / ecology perspective	Disappointed to see the 'resin bound gravel footpath / cycleway' along the eastern edge by plots 79, 80 and 81. I raised this at the workshop, suggesting that the trees 'prunus Accolade and Corylus avellana' were removed to allow for a continuation of the path around the housing, even if this was not for vehicles and had bollards to prevent a through route it would maintain connectivity. The situation as it is has resulted in a considerable additional loss of approx. 350sqm of what could be a broad habitat edge.

Condition 16 – Rural Edge Design Code (yet to be formally submitted but docs provided as part of RM submission) - requires approval of a design code to the eastern edge to include - - o Parcel edge landscaping - o Peripheral edge planting - o New woodland planting Place Services are providing comments on general landscaping issues. Do you have any comments or recommendations on the above issues from an ecology/BNG perspective?	In terms of cond 16 – lighting is also an important ecological consideration. We discussed this in considering positioning in relation to trees and also my desire to retain dark edges and minimising light spill. Not necessarily rural edge but with the orchard I'd like to see local fruit varieties included rather than 7 of the same apple. Discovery is a lovely apple but you could have 2 conference pears, 3 discovery and 2 of either; <table border="0"> <tr> <td>Hitchin Pippin</td> <td>Originated in North Hertfordshire</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Young's Pinello</td> <td>Letchworth</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Redcoat Grieve</td> <td>Letchworth</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Crimson Newton Wonder</td> <td>Holwell</td> </tr> </table>	Hitchin Pippin	Originated in North Hertfordshire	Young's Pinello	Letchworth	Redcoat Grieve	Letchworth	Crimson Newton Wonder	Holwell
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Condition 14 – BNG – 19.96 habitat units, 1.84 hedgerow units (yet to be formally submitted but docs provided as part of RM submission – see attached DN)	The November 2025 Statutory Metric provided demonstrates a 13.58% net gain in habitat units and 824.26% gain in hedgerow units. This is sufficient to meet mandatory net gain – even though this site is not subject to 10% BNG. However, the number of units generated falls below that required by the condition with 16.38 habitat units and 1.02 hedgerow units. As far as I am concerned the 10% has been met and I would be satisfied that the site is compliant. I think it is likely that the differences in value has arisen partly due to changes in the metric version but also acknowledge that the greenspace on site is having to work harder with more expectation on formal recreation / SUDS which will impact unit values.								

Condition 15 – bat and bird boxes (yet to be formally submitted but docs provided as part of RM submission – see attached DN)



Whilst number and orientation of boxes is correct, location of bat boxes (red dots) is ill-conceived. Bats will seek refuge along dark corridors so those in the west are acceptable but units along the central spine road have no connecting habitat that bats could use to commute along. It really is purely lip service, and I would rather see every house on the periphery of the development having a bat box where it is in close proximity to woodland or the hedgerow. Location of lighting will also be a key factor, though I do welcome an acknowledgement to using integrated bricks. We are encouraging / expecting (as in NPPF) the use of swift bricks where heights allow so the tall buildings in the SW should max out on swift bricks but instead they have none?

Approved Green Infrastructure Framework Plan

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Figure 29 Plan showing the green infrastructure and ecology framework