

Land West of Tuthill House

Planning Statement

November 2024



WARNER

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1 Introduction

Warner Planning submits this Planning Statement on behalf of Mr and Mrs Bullard and Quanta Homes 6 Ltd. The application seeks full planning permission for the erection of three detached dwellings, with associated amenity space, landscaping, drainage, parking and access at land west of Tuthill House, Kelshall Tops, Therfield, SG8 9TT.

It is important to note that this application is submitted followings a previous application (21/03533/FP) at the Site. The previous application was refused, and dismissed at appeal (23/3324095) – however the appeal was only dismissed on design grounds. The Inspector noted *"The site is eminently suitable for a residential development of three houses, which would make a contribution to housing supply in the district, consistent with the objective to boost housing supply contained in the Framework."*

The Inspector added:

"there would be a range of harms and benefits arising from the development which were carefully balanced in the officer's report to the planning committee, resulting in a clear conclusion that the benefits would outweigh the harms and so planning permission should be granted i.e. material considerations indicate a decision other than in accordance with the development plan. The Council has not provided evidence of any alternative balancing exercise performed by it in refusing planning permission and so I have not sought to repeat all the considerations explored by the officer."

And

"There is only one area where I disagree with the planning officer's recommendation and that is in relation to the effect on the character and appearance of the area, or more specifically the design of the scheme. Whilst redevelopment of the site would be a significant benefit, given its unsightly and discordant appearance at present, the proposed 'Manor House' (Plot 3) is simply too large."

The proposal has been revised with the design of plot 3 amended with a reduction in scale, and these amendments address the Inspector's comments. The height of the plot has been significantly reduced to reflect the wider comments and the wider character of the scheme.





Figure 1: Revised Plot 3, with previous version overlaid

In addition to this Planning Statement, the following documents are submitted in support of the application:

- ✿ Location Plan
- ✿ Design and Access Statement
- ✿ Site Location Plan
- ✿ Site Block Plan
- ✿ Proposed Site Layout Plan
- ✿ Proposed Streetscene
- ✿ Proposed Elevations
- ✿ Proposed Floor Plans
- ✿ Visibility and Tracking Plans
- ✿ RPS Heritage Statement (June 2024)
- ✿ Jomas Geo-Environmental Ground Investigation Report v1.5 (June 2024)
- ✿ Jomas Preliminary Risk Assessment Report v3.5 (June 2024)
- ✿ Ardent Flood Risk Statement (June 2024)
- ✿ Sharon Hosegood Arboricultural Impact Assessment Report (June 2024)
- ✿ Ardent Transport Statement (July 2024)
- ✿ Huckle Ecology - Ecological Assessment (November 2024)

This Planning Statement sets out the background relevant to the determination of the application by describing the Site and its general locality before setting out details of the proposed development. The Statement provides an overview of the planning policy context against which the development is assessed, followed by a detailed consideration of the development proposals against this policy context and all other relevant material considerations.

In making this planning application, it is our submission that the application proposes a high-



quality, sustainable development that will complement the immediate locality and the wider area.

There are significant benefits to be delivered by the development. It is considered that there are compelling grounds to grant planning permission for the proposed development, with these set out as follows:

- ✿ The creation of three high-quality family homes.
- ✿ Development on brownfield land, making effective use of previously developed land as encouraged by the Government.
- ✿ More appropriate use of the Site with the removal of the vacant storage depot with no harm to the countryside.
- ✿ Contribution to housing supply for the Council.
- ✿ Development does not encroach into the surrounding countryside nor remove any significant existing landscaping or natural features.
- ✿ Significant Biodiversity Net Gain resulting in an increase of 116% of habitat units, and 166% of hedgerow units.
- ✿ Reduction of hardstanding and increase of green space.
- ✿ Improved drainage
- ✿ New landscaping will improve the overall appearance of the Site by removal of large areas of hardstanding and upgrading of main entrance and site boundary.
- ✿ Re-use of existing vehicle entrance.
- ✿ Reduction of vehicle movements from the Site from the approved use
- ✿ Creation of a more appropriate land use by removing commercial activities from the Site.
- ✿ Sustainable measures integrated within the dwellings
- ✿ Connection from the Site to the adjacent Public Right of Way

This Planning Statement should be read in conjunction with the supporting documents, existing and proposed plans, submitted to accompany this planning application.



2 The Site and surrounding area

The application site is situated on land to the west of Tuthill House, Kelshall Tops, Therfield.

The Site is a storage depot that is located on the western edge of Therfield, just outside the village limits. The site location shown at Figure 1 below:

The eastern and western site boundaries are adjacent to Public Rights of Way 14 and 34. The Site forms a rectangular parcel of approximately 0.79 hectares with open agricultural land to the south, west and north. To the east is a group of four dwellings known as Tuthill Court.



Figure 2: Site Aerial Photograph (not to scale, for identification purposes only)





Figure 3: Existing Site Plan (not to scale, for identification purposes only)



Figure 4: Current Site Access

In the North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011-2031, Therfield is described as:

'Therfield is a village to the east of the District, south of Royston. It has a school, public house, village hall and churches. The surrounding parish includes a sizable rural area, including Therfield Heath in the north on the edge of Royston. At the 2011 census the population of the parish of Therfield was 556 and there were 217 dwellings in the parish. Therfield is identified as a Category A village, with a settlement boundary within which additional development will be allowed shown on the Policies Map. The remainder of the parish is classed as Rural Area beyond the Green Belt. Therfield has a Conservation Area covering much of the older part of the village, including the remains of the motte and bailey castle. The Site sits adjacent to the Conservation Area boundary which is to the east.'



Site History

The table below summarises the planning history for the application site.

Reference	Address	Proposal	Status
21/03533/FP	Land West of Tuthill House, Kelshall Tops, Therfield	Erection of three detached dwellings (1 x 4-bed, 1 x 5- bed and 1 x 6-bed) with associated infrastructure and landscaping.	Refused 13 th February 2023 Appeal Dismissed 22 nd February 2024
21/01349/FP	Land West of Tuthill House, Kelshall Tops, Therfield	Erection of three dwellings (1 x 4-bed, 1 x 5-bed and 1 x 6-bed) with associated infrastructure (amended plans received 27.07.2021)	Withdrawn following resolution to grant at Committee September 2021
20/00118/OP	Land West of Tuthill House, Kelshall Tops, Therfield	Outline application for erection of 18 dwellings (appearance and scale reserved)	Refused 17 th July 2020
20/00117/OP	Land West of Tuthill House, Kelshall Tops, Therfield	Outline application for erection of 6 dwellings (all matters except access reserved)	Refused 17 th July 2020
15/03221/1	Land West of Tuthill House, Kelshall Tops, Therfield	Creation of 17 dwellings	Withdrawn 2016
15/00468/1	Land West of Tuthill House, Kelshall Tops, Therfield	Creation of 17 dwellings	Withdrawn 2015
92/00143/1	Land Fronting Kelshall Road, Royston	Additional use of land, used for open storage of agricultural machinery, as operating depot for four heavy goods vehicles (in accordance with amended drawing no 9201/01C received by local planning authority on 21st April 1992)	Approved 16 th August 1992

Table 1: Site Planning History



The Site has a varied planning history. The application in 1992 (ref: 92/00143/1) importantly has no imposed conditions which would limit the hours when the Site could be operational, the number of vehicle movements or the intensity of the activity. There are restrictive conditions relating to parking, specifically Condition 3 which states that no HGVs or commercial vehicles are to be parked other than at the western end of the Site.

Further, Condition 4 states no more than four vehicles may be parked without the prior permission of the Local Planning Authority. This does not prevent the parking of four different vehicles each time or the frequency of change between vehicles to be parked.

Alongside the 1992 application, a S106 agreement was also secured and set out three main requirements as follows:

- ✿ Not to use that part of the Land coloured red on the attached Plan for any purpose other than as a landscaped area.
- ✿ Not to use that part of the Land coloured blue on the attached Plan for any purpose other than the storage of agricultural vehicles machinery and equipment which are used by the Owner in connection with the business carried out on the Land.
- ✿ Not to use that part of the Land hatched black on the attached Plan for any purpose other than for parking of four heavy goods vehicles owned and operated by the Owner of the Land coloured blue.

During the course of the most recent application and subsequent Appeal there has been significant discussion around this, particularly through the submission of third-party representations. The Council's Committee report was very clear on this issue and provided the following conclusions to aid discussions and provide clarity. The Case Officer stated:

'It has been established that the existence of the controlling legal agreement was not itself a reason for refusal of previous applications for housing, rather it was the planning harms that were identified. The existing restrictions are intended to control the use of the current authorised land use on the Site, not to prevent other forms of development following any other grant of planning permission. If the proposed development is complete the existing authorised use of the Site falls away, is no longer authorised, and no longer needs to be controlled by the existing agreement. This matter is not a material consideration that effects the merits of the current planning application for the provision of residential dwellings on the Site and therefore does not amount to a reason for refusal of planning permission.'

On the other hand, to develop the Site for housing without revoking or changing the controls in the extant S106 agreement would be a breach of it, as currently worded. There is however a mechanism available to ensure that the current controls on the land



remain until any new development is occupied and therefore the existing agreement does not prevent the Local Planning Authority from allowing a new, alternative development on this Site that it considers acceptable in planning terms.'

In conclusion of this issue, and for the avoidance of doubt, the Council's summary of the s106 is supported by the Applicant who concludes a consistent view that the existence of a Legal Agreement does **not** preclude the Site from successfully securing consent under any subsequent applications. Historical decisions and their associated S106 agreements form part of the Officer assessment but should not prevent future decisions being made. Applications are to be considered in the context of current Planning Policy and Legislation and should any relevant S106 be required for these the Council would draft and secure this in-line with their own processes and procedures.

Turning to the more recent application, in February 2024 an Appeal was submitted and subsequently dismissed following the refusal of application 21/03533/FP at Planning Committee in February 2023. The Case Officer had recommended approval of the application on the grounds that:

'...whilst this proposal does not comply with any of the above criteria (Policy CGB1). Nevertheless, the Site is brownfield land and positioned in an edge of village location. The Site relates well to existing dwellings, the proposed dwellings would be well contained within well landscaped domestic settings and would not physically encroach into the surrounding countryside.

Physical and visual separation between the Site and the nearest settlement is such that the proposed dwellings would not result in the expansion of the nearby village. It must also be reiterated that the previous Officer assessment noted that this Site which consists largely of a concrete apron on an admittedly elevated site has very limited contribution to the intrinsic value of the countryside. The Site is not an open green space but rather brownfield land dominated by concrete hard standing and it was concluded that in terms of protecting the countryside, the proposed development does not unduly harm the character of the countryside in this location.

In a recent appeal outcome (APP/X1925/W/22/3290692 – Loves Lane, Ashwell), an Inspector found a similar proposal to be in accordance with the objectives of the development plan even though it was accepted that the proposal which was under consideration did not meet the terms of Policy criteria which controls development within the Rural Area beyond the Green Belt.

In summary, the proposed development for the provision of 3 residential units at the application site, whilst not policy compliant, represents a positive benefit to the area as



well as the delivery of three new homes. All planning applications are considered on merit and this Site already has Officers and Members approval for development. The individual characteristics of this particular Site would enable the proposed development to be accommodated without harm to the wider area and there is no reason to suppose that a decision to grant planning permission in this case would set a precedent.'

Ultimately however the Officer recommendation was overturned by the Planning Committee on the following grounds:

'The application site is outside of the settlement envelope of Therfield in a location designated as rural area beyond the Green Belt. The proposed development therefore conflicts in principle with Policies SP2, SP5 and CGB1 of the Local Plan 2011 - 2031 (2022) which seek to focus new housing within defined settlement boundaries.'

Of importance is that this consideration and overturn at Planning Committee followed an earlier presentation of the same application in June 2022 which secured a resolution to grant subject to conditions and the successful completion of a S106 agreement. As the S106 remained outstanding at the time of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan (2011-2031) being adopted on the 8th November 2022 the application was required to be returned to Committee to re-consider the proposal in light of these material changes in circumstances.

Within the appeal the Inspector noted *"The site is eminently suitable for a residential development of three houses, which would make a contribution to housing supply in the district, consistent with the objective to boost housing supply contained in the Framework."*

However, the Inspector noted

"There is only one area where I disagree with the planning officer's recommendation and that is in relation to the effect on the character and appearance of the area, or more specifically the design of the scheme. Whilst redevelopment of the Site would be a significant benefit, given its unsightly and discordant appearance at present, the proposed 'Manor House' (Plot 3) is simply too large."

He added:

"The Framework requires a high standard of design, and the current proposal falls short of this high bar. This would detract from the character and appearance of the area, including the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside. It is for this reason alone that planning permission should be refused."

Following the appeal, the proposal has been revised with the design of plot 3 amended with a reduction in scale, and these amendments address the Inspector's comments.



Local Precedent

Within Therfield, there is clear precedence for development outside the established settlement limits including:

- ✿ 19/00321/FP - Erection of two 5-bedroom dwellings, with associated infrastructure and landscaping works following the demolition of existing property at Wychelms, Mill Lane, Therfield
- ✿ 19/00202/FP and 20/02204/FP- Erection of one 4-bedroom dwellings and detached double car port following demolition of existing garage /store barn and attached stable block. With all associated ancillary and landscaping works at Hay Farm, Police Row, Therfield
- ✿ 20/02292/OP - Outline application for a single dwelling with new vehicular access onto North End (appearance, landscaping and layout reserved)(as amended by plans received on 31 March 2021).
- ✿ 19/02388/FP - Conversion of 1 redundant farm building to create one x 4-bed dwelling and the erection of one x 3-bed residential dwelling and one x 5-bed dwelling and 6 bay cart lodge following demolition of existing grain store and barn (amended plans received 28 October 2020)
- ✿ APP/X1925/W/22/3290692 – Loves Lane, Ashwell

The appeal decision 22/3290692 – Loves Lane, Ashwell, was cited within the Officer's Committee report as being relevant to the redevelopment of this Site. The appeal followed refusal for the creation of one dwelling on amenity land associated with an existing property. The Inspector's decision makes specific reference to Policy CGB1 of the then emerging and since adopted Local Plan. The assessment concludes that a 'similar proposal to be in accordance with the objectives of the development plan even though it was accepted that the proposal which was under consideration did not meet the terms of Policy criteria which controls development within the Rural Area beyond the Green Belt'.



Site Attributes and Constraints

Attributes / Constraint	Applicability
Green Belt	The Site is not located with the Green Belt
Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty	The Site is not located within an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
Settlement	The Site is located outside the settlement envelope of Therfield.
Conservation Area	The Site is not located within the Therfield Conservation Area
Areas of Special Character	The Site is not located within an Area of Special Character
Tree Preservation Order	There are no Tree Preservation Order trees on Site.
Listed Buildings and Scheduled Monuments	The Site is within the vicinity of: ✳ Motte and Bailey Castle (100m south of Tuthill Farm) under ref. NHLE 1009245 ✳ Tuthill Manor (Grade II) under ref. 1307698
Archaeology	The Site is within an Area of Archaeological Significance
Flood Zone	The Site is located in Flood Zone 1 for surface water, reservoirs, river and sea flood risk scenarios

Table 2: Site Constraints



The Surrounding Area

The Site is well located within Therfield and nearby settlements. It is well located to local services and facilities, including:

- ✿ Therfield Pre-School - 0.4 miles
- ✿ Therfield First School – 0.4 miles
- ✿ HertsLynx Virtual Bus Stop – 0.5 Miles
- ✿ Saint Mary's Church, Therfield - 0.5 miles
- ✿ The Fox and Duck Public House – 0.5 miles
- ✿ Therfield Park Play Area – 0.5 miles
- ✿ Kelshall Village Hall – 0.6 miles
- ✿ Royston Cricket Club – 0.6 miles
- ✿ The Silver Ball Café – 1.9 miles
- ✿ Reed Veterinary Surgery – 2 miles
- ✿ Royston Golf Club – 3 miles
- ✿ Access to Bus Routes 90, 91, 901 on Baldock Street, Royston – 3 miles
- ✿ Royston Fire Station – 3.1 miles
- ✿ Ashwell and Morden Train Station - 3.1 miles
- ✿ Royston Train Station – 3.6 miles
- ✿ King James Academy, Royston – 4.1 miles
- ✿ Royston Hospital – 4.1 miles
- ✿ Tesco Extra, Royston – 4.2 miles
- ✿ Aldi, Royston – 4.5 miles
- ✿ Royston Leisure Centre – 4.5 miles



3 Proposed Development

This section outlines the proposal in greater detail. The full application seeks the erection of three detached dwellings, with associated amenity space, landscaping, drainage, parking and access at land west of Tuthill House, Kelshall Tops, Therfield, SG8 9TT.

The proposal in summary consists of the following aspects:

- ❁ Site clearance of the existing storage yard and removal of hardstanding.
- ❁ Creation of three detached family homes with associated gardens, parking and access.
- ❁ Wider site enhancements through landscaping and improvements to existing hedging along the site boundary (internal and external).
- ❁ Layout of dwellings in a courtyard arrangement to reflect a traditional farmstead.
- ❁ Reconfiguration of the existing vehicle access and removal of large gates onto Kelshall Road to reflect a less intensive commercial operation.
- ❁ Creation of an attenuation pond to provide visual amenity and support on-site drainage.
- ❁ Sensitive materials palette to reflect the countryside setting.



Figure 5: Artistic sketch of the proposal

Each dwelling has a car port and driveway, which provides opportunities for parking, and EV charging points.



All the dwellings have substantial landscaping and amenity space, and the landscaping on Site is proposed to be enhanced.



Figure 6: Proposed Site Plan



Figure 7: Proposed Streetscene



Figure 8: Proposed Front Elevation Plot 1





Figure 9: Proposed Front Elevation Plot 2



Figure 10: Proposed Front Elevation Plot 3



4 Planning Policy Context

The planning policy context relating to the application site is formed through:

- ✿ National Planning Policy
- ✿ Local Planning Policy

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires applications for planning permission to be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The Development Plan material for this proposal comprises:

- ✿ The North Herts Local Plan 2011-2031 (2022)

Other relevant key documents include:

- ✿ Vehicle Parking at New Development Supplementary Planning Document (Sept 2011)
- ✿ Design Supplementary Planning Document (July 2011)
- ✿ North Hertfordshire Transport Strategy (2018)
- ✿ Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document (November 2006)
- ✿ Design Supplementary Planning Document

National Planning Policy Framework

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied. It provides a framework within which locally prepared plans for housing, and other development can be produced.

Planning law requires that applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The National Planning Policy Framework must be taken into account in preparing the development plan and is a material consideration in planning decisions. Planning policies and decisions must also reflect relevant international obligations and statutory requirements.

At the heart of the Framework is a "presumption in favour of sustainable development". Therefore, where there are no relevant development plan policies or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out of-date, planning permission should be granted unless: i. the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or ii. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole.

Section 4 'Decision Making' sets out the approach that Local Planning Authorities should apply



to decisions for proposed development in a positive and creative way. Para. 38 states that decision-makers should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible.

Section 5 'Delivering a Sufficient Supply of New Homes' provides guidance to ensure as much of an area's identified housing need as possible is met including with an appropriate mix of housing types for the local community. Para. 70 gives specific advice relating to the support of windfall sites to contribute to housing supply.

Section 8 'Promoting Healthy and Safe Communities' addresses issues around the provision of healthy, inclusive and safe places and beautiful buildings. Para. 96 guides development to consider the delivery of safe and accessible green infrastructure to support healthy lifestyles.

Section 11 'Making Effective Use of Land' prioritises the effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses, while safeguarding and improving the environment and ensuring safe and healthy living conditions. Para. 124 specifically refers to the value of using suitable brownfield land within settlements and supports appropriate opportunities to remediate despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated or unstable land. Para. 125 also refers to the brownfield register to help bring sites that are suitable for meeting development needs.

Section 12 'Achieving Well Designed Places' sets out within Para. 131 that the creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve.

Section 14 'Meeting the Challenge of Climate Change, Flooding and Coastal Change' provides detailed technical advice relating to the issues around climate change. Para. 159 advises that new development should be planned for in ways that avoid increased vulnerability to the range of impacts arising from climate change. Para. 165 sets out that inappropriate development in areas of risk of flooding should be avoided by directing development away from areas at highest risk.

Section 15 'Preserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment' confirms the requirements for contributing to and enhancing the natural and local environment. Development should consider harm to biodiversity or habitats to ensure sufficient compensation strategies exist. Para. 190 refers to securing a safe development in relation to sites affected by contamination or land stability issues.

Section 16 'Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment' relates to heritage assets and how these are protected and enhanced. Para. 200 requires an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. Para. 208 sets out the narrative for where a development proposal will lead to less than



substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset being weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate securing its optimum viable use.

North Hertfordshire Local Plan (2011-2031)

SP1 - Sustainable Development in North Hertfordshire;

This Plan supports the principles of sustainable development within North Hertfordshire. We will:

- a) Maintain the role of key settlements within and adjoining the District as the main focus for housing, employment and new development making use of previously developed land where possible;
- b) Ensure the long-term vitality of the District's villages by supporting growth which provides opportunities for existing and new residents and sustains key facilities;
- c) Grant planning permission for 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.

SP2 - Settlement Hierarchy

Between 2011 and 2031, the Plan makes provision for at least 13,000 new homes. Approximately 80% of the District's housing development and the substantial majority of new employment, retail and other development will be located within the adjusted settlement boundaries of the following towns Baldock (2,198 homes), Hitchin (1,842), Letchworth Garden City (1,928), Royston (1,899), Stevenage (including Great Ashby) (1,705) and Luton (1,485).

Approximately 13% of housing, along with supporting infrastructure and facilities will be delivered within the adjusted settlement boundaries of the following five villages for the levels of development indicated - Barkway (208), Codicote (363), Ickleford (235), Knebworth (731) and Little Wymondley (312).

The remaining development will be dispersed across the District as set out below. In Category A villages, general development will be allowed within the defined settlement boundaries - Ashwell, Barley, Breachwood Green, Cockernhoe & Mangrove Green, Graveley, Hexton,



Kimpton, Lower Stondon, Oaklands, Offley, Pirton, Preston, Reed, Sandon, St Ippolyts & Gosmore, Therfield, Weston, and Whitwell.

Infilling development which does not extend the built core of the village will be allowed in the Category B villages of - Blackmore End, Great Wymondley, Hinxworth, Holwell Kelshall, Lilley Newnham Old Knebworth Rushden, Wallington and Willian.

Limited affordable housing and facilities for local community needs meeting the requirements of Policy CGB2 will be allowed in the Category C settlements of - Bygrave, Caldecote, Clothall, Langley, Nuthampstead, Peters Green and Radwell

Development outside of these locations or general parameters will be permitted where this is supported by an adopted Neighbourhood Plan. Under the provisions of national policy at the time of this Plan's examination, Neighbourhood Plans cannot allocate sites in the Green Belt or amend Green Belt boundaries.

SP5 – Countryside And Green Belt

We support the principles of the Green Belt and recognise the intrinsic value of the countryside. Green Belt and Rural Areas Beyond the Green Belt are shown on the Policies Map. We:

- ✿ Have conducted a comprehensive review of the Green Belt. Land has been removed from the Green Belt to:
 - enable strategic development at the locations referred to in Policies SP8 and SP3;
 - enable local development around a number of the District's towns and villages; and
 - define boundaries for villages referred to in Policy SP2 which fall within the Green Belt but were previously 'washed over' by this designation;
- ✿ Have provided new Green Belt to cover, in general terms, the area bounded by the Metropolitan Green Belt to the east, the Luton Green Belt to the west and the A505 Offley bypass to the north;
- ✿ Will only permit development proposals in the Green Belt where they would not result in inappropriate development or where very special circumstances have been demonstrated; and d) Will operate a general policy of restraint in Rural Areas beyond the Green Belt through the application of our detailed policies.

SP6 – Sustainable Transport

We will deliver accessibility improvements and promote the use of sustainable transport modes insofar as reasonable and practicable. We will:

- ✿ Comply with the NHDC Transport Strategy and the provisions of the Local Transport Plan and other supporting documents as relevant;



- ✿ Encourage development in locations which enable sustainable journeys to be made to key services and facilities;
- ✿ Work with Hertfordshire County Council, neighbouring authorities, Highways England and service providers to ensure that a range of sustainable transport options are available to all potential occupants or users. This may involve new or improved pedestrian, cycle and passenger transport (including rail and/or bus) links and routes;
- ✿ Seek the earliest reasonable opportunity to implement sustainable travel infrastructure on Strategic Housing Sites and other development sites in order to influence the behaviour of occupiers or users, along with supporting Travel Plans in order that sustainable travel patterns become embedded at an early stage;
- ✿ Assess development proposals against the parking standards set out in this Plan and having regard to relevant supplementary advice;
- ✿ Require applicants to provide assessments, plans and supporting documents to demonstrate the safety and sustainability of their proposals; and
- ✿ Protect existing rights of way, cycling and equestrian routes and, should diversion be unavoidable, require replacement routes to the satisfaction of the Council.

SP8 - Housing;

Over the period 2011-2031, housing growth will be supported across the District. We will:

- ✿ Release sufficient land to deliver at least 11,600 net new homes for North Hertfordshire's own needs. Of these:
 - around 11,500 net new homes will be provided within that part of the District falling within the Stevenage Housing Market Area (HMA); while
 - around 100 net new homes will be provided within that part of the District falling within the Luton HMA;
- ✿ Provide additional land within the Luton HMA for a further 1,950 net new homes as a contribution towards the unmet needs for housing arising from Luton with approximately 1,400 of these being delivered over the Plan Period to 2031;
- ✿ Deliver these homes through the sites and allowances identified in this Plan that will support approximately:
 - 5,100 homes from completions and permissions achieved since 2011 and other allowances;
 - 7,700 homes from six Strategic Housing Sites delivering approximately 5,560 of these by 2031:
 - • BA1 - North of Baldock for 2,800 homes (approximately 1,400 to be delivered by 2031);
 - • LG1 - North of Letchworth for 900 homes (approximately 600 by 2031);
 - • NS1 - North of Stevenage in Graveley parish for 900 homes (approximately 775 by 2031);
 - • HT1 - East of Hitchin for 700 homes;
 - • GA2 - North-east of Great Ashby in Weston parish for 600 homes; and



- • EL1 / EL2 / EL3 - East of Luton for 2,100 homes (approximately 1,500 by 2031);
- 4,000 homes through local housing allocations that will provide homes on:
 - • further sites within the adjusted settlement boundaries of the towns;
 - • land within the adjusted settlement boundaries of five villages identified for growth where more than 200 homes are expected to be built over the Plan period; and
 - • sites identified within the defined settlement boundaries of the Category A villages.
-
- This includes the use of land within pre-existing settlement limits, non-strategic sites released from the Green Belt and other land identified following a review of other relevant boundaries or designations.
- iv. 4 new, permanent Gypsy and Traveller pitches
- ✿ Maintain a five-year housing land supply and target the completion of 20% of new homes over the plan period on previously developed land;
- ✿ Seek to provide long-term certainty by
 - identifying Strategic Housing Sites that will continue delivery beyond the end of the Plan period in 2031;
 - working with the Government and other relevant agencies to identify new settlement options within North Hertfordshire that can provide additional housing supply in the period after 2026; and
 - safeguarding land to the west of the A1(M) at Stevenage, as shown on the Policies Map to meet longer-term development needs in the period beyond 2026 subject to a future review of this Plan; and
 - undertaking a review of this Plan by the end of 2023;
- ✿ Support a range of housing tenures, types and sizes measured against targets to provide:
 - 33% of all homes over the plan period as Affordable Housing for local needs with targets to deliver up to 40% Affordable Housing where viable;
 - a broadly even split between smaller (1- and 2-bed) and larger (3+ bed) properties subject to up-to-date-assessments of housing needs; and
 - 56 plots on specified Strategic Housing Sites to help proactively address demand for self-build development over the plan period; and
- ✿ Provide at least 350 bed spaces in suitable, supported accommodation to meet the needs of those who cannot live in their own home.

SP9 - Design And Sustainability;

The Council considers good design to be a key aspect of sustainable development. We will:

- ✿ Support new development where it is well designed and located and responds positively to its local context;



- ✿ Require Strategic Masterplans to be produced for Strategic Housing Sites and other significant development. Significant development generally comprises residential development of 100 dwellings or more. Exceptionally, developments under 100 dwellings will be considered significant if there are site specific complexities and sensitivities that require a masterplan-led approach. In some circumstances a Strategic Masterplan may also be required to consider the cumulative impact of more than one Site to support a co-ordinated and integrated approach to place-making and design.
- ✿ Require Strategic Masterplans and planning applications for Strategic Housing Sites and significant development to (as applicable):
 - create buildings, spaces and streets which positively reflect and respond to the local landscape, townscape and historic character
 - create integrated, accessible and sustainable transport systems with walking, cycling and public transport designed to be the most attractive forms of transport and effectively linking into the surrounding areas;
 - provide a clear structure and hierarchy of pedestrian friendly streets and well-connected footpaths and cycleways integrate with the wider built and natural environment and communities;
 - plan for integrated and mixed-use communities with walkable locally accessible community, employment and retail facilities;
 - positively integrate with adjacent rural and urban communities and positively contribute to their character and the way the area functions, including addressing cumulative, cross boundary planning and infrastructure matters;
 - create and accessible multi-functional green infrastructure network that provides:
 - a key structuring and functional place-making feature supporting healthy lifestyles, sport, play and recreation linking into the wider Green Infrastructure Network; and
 - a high-quality integrated network to support ecological connectivity, biodiversity net gain, climate adaptation and mitigation linking into the wider Ecological Network
 - ensure the effective use of sustainable urban drainage and sustainable water management; viii. ensure a hierarchy of linked, high quality and attractive public spaces and public realm that is safe, attractive and supports social interaction for all age groups; and
 - design to last with a clear stewardship, management and maintenance strategy
- ✿ Ensure Strategic Masterplans are informed by a technical and design evidence base and include the following for Strategic Housing Sites and where applicable for other significant development:
 - site specific vision and place-making principles
 - Masterplan setting out the quantum, scale, type, mix and distribution of land uses, housing and community facilities;



- Green Infrastructure Framework identifying the scale, distribution, type and design of green spaces, biodiversity net gain, strategic drainage and on and off-site linkages;
 - Movement Framework setting out the key access points, strategic highways, street hierarchy and footways and cycleways (on and off Site)
 - Urban Design Framework and design principles identifying how the Site responds to local character and context and key structuring elements and layout principles (including heights and densities)
 - Sustainability & Energy Framework identifying site-wide and building scale opportunities for low and zero carbon
 - Illustrative Masterplan Layout viii. Infrastructure Delivery, Phasing & Management Strategy
- ✿ Encourage the submission of Strategic Masterplans for the Council's consideration and agreement before the submission of a planning application. We will also confirm the scope and contents of individual Strategic Masterplans with applicants in pre-application discussions. Planning applications must be accompanied by a Strategic Masterplan. Where applications have already been submitted to the Council a Strategic Masterplan should be agreed with the Council prior to or as part of the grant of planning permission. Adherence to the Strategic Masterplan will be secured through planning conditions and/or legal agreement.
 - ✿ Assess proposals against detailed policy requirements set out in this Plan and have regard to the Design SPD; and
 - ✿ Adopt the Government's additional technical standards for the size of new homes, water efficiency and, in specified circumstances, accessibility.

SP10 - Healthy Communities

We will provide and maintain healthy, inclusive communities for our residents. We will

- ✿ Support the retention of existing community, cultural, leisure or recreation facilities;
- ✿ Require appropriate levels of new community, cultural, leisure and built sport & recreation facilities to be provided in new development;
- ✿ Work with the NHS Trust, the Clinical Commissioning Groups and other relevant providers to ensure appropriate coverage of healthcare facilities across the District;
- ✿ Maintain the network of local retail centres identified in Policy SP4 and support the retention of locally-important shops;
- ✿ Work with Hertfordshire County Council and education providers to ensure the planning system contributes to the provision of sufficient school places and facilitates the provision of new or expanded schools in appropriate and accessible locations. This will include monitoring of projected future demand to inform the review of this Plan in relation to secondary education provision for the Stevenage area; and
- ✿ Protect, enhance and create new physical and green infrastructure to foster healthy lifestyles.



SP11 - Natural Resources And Sustainability

This Plan seeks to meet the challenges of climate change and flooding. We will:

- ✿ Support proposals for renewable and low carbon energy development in appropriate locations;
- ✿ Take a risk based approach to development and flood risk, directing development to areas at lowest risk in accordance with the NPPF and ensuring the provision of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) and other appropriate measures;
- ✿ Support the principles of the Water Environment (Water Framework Directive) Regulations 2017 and seek to protect, enhance and manage the water environment;
- ✿ Give consideration to the potential or actual impact of land contamination and support proposals that involve the remediation of contaminated land; and
- ✿ Work with utilities providers, East Hertfordshire District Council and relevant agencies to ensure additional wastewater treatment capacity is delivered without harm to protected European sites.

SP12 - Green Infrastructure, Biodiversity And Landscape

We will accommodate significant growth during the plan period whilst ensuring the natural environment is protected and enhanced. We will:

- ✿ Protect, identify, manage and where possible enhance a strategic multi-functional network of green infrastructure;
- ✿ Consider and respect landscape character, scenic beauty and locally sensitive features, particularly in relation to the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty;
- ✿ Protect, enhance and manage designated sites in accordance with the following hierarchy of designations and features:
 - Internationally designated sites
 - Nationally designated sites
 - Locally designated sites;
 - Non-designated sites that include important habitats and species
- ✿ Protect, enhance and manage biodiversity networks including wildlife corridors, ancient woodlands and hedgerows, wetland and riverine habitats, Local Geological Sites, protected species, priority species and habitats, and non-designated sites of ecological value and ensure measurable net gains for biodiversity; and
- ✿ Protect other open spaces and support provision of new and improved open space.

SP13 - Historic Environment

The Council will balance the need for growth with the proper protection and enhancement of the historic environment. When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight will be given to the asset's conservation and the management of its setting. We will pursue a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment through:



- ✿ Maintaining a strong presumption in favour of the retention, preservation and enhancement of heritage assets and their setting according to their significance;
- ✿ Identifying sites on the national register of Heritage at Risk or on the Council's 'At Risk' register;
- ✿ Periodic reviews of Conservation Areas and other locally designated assets; and
- ✿ Publication of detailed guidance.

CGB1 – Rural Areas Beyond The Green Belt

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

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

T1 - Assessment Of Transport Matters

Planning permission will be granted provided that:

- ✿ Development would not lead to highway safety problems or cause unacceptable impacts upon the highway network;
- ✿ Mechanisms to secure any necessary sustainable transport measures and / or improvements to the existing highway network are secured in accordance with Policy SP7;
- ✿ Suitable Transport Statements, Transport Assessments and / or Travel Plans along with supporting documents are provided where required; and
- ✿ For major developments, applicants demonstrate (as far as is practicable) how:
 - the proposed scheme would be served by public transport;
 - safe, direct and convenient routes for pedestrians and cyclists will be provided; and
 - comprehensive integration into the existing pedestrian and cycle, public transport and road networks will be secured.

T2 - Parking

Planning permission will be granted provided that:

- ✿ Parking for residential development is provided in accordance with the minimum standards set out in Appendix 4 of this Plan;
- ✿ Parking for non-residential development is provided having regard to the standards for non-residential development set out in the relevant Supplementary Planning



Document;

- ✿ Proposals have regard to relevant Supplementary Planning Documents, strategies or advice and;
- ✿ Applicants clearly identify how they provide for all likely types of parking demand and demonstrate that parking will be safe and of a design and layout that will function satisfactorily. Variations from these standards will only be considered where applicants can demonstrate that the accessibility, type, scale, mix and use of the development; the availability of and opportunities for public transport; local car ownership levels; and on-street conditions justify such variations.

Hs3 - Housing Mix

Planning permission for new homes will be granted provided that:

- ✿ An appropriate range of house types and sizes are provided taking into account:
 - the overall targets of this Plan;
 - the findings of the most up-to-date evidence including the most recent Strategic Housing Market Assessment, the Council's SelfBuild Register and other relevant evidence of housing need;
 - the location and accessibility of the Site; and
 - recent completions, existing permissions and sites in the five year supply; and
- ✿ The scheme would provide a density, scale and character of development appropriate to its location and surroundings.

HS5 - Accessible And Adaptable Housing

Planning permission for major residential development will be granted provided that:

- ✿ applicants demonstrate that at least 50% of homes can be built to the M4(2) Accessible and Adaptable standard; and
- ✿ on schemes where 10 or more affordable units will be delivered, 10% of these can additionally be built to the M4(3) wheelchair user standard.

D1 - Sustainable Design;

Planning permission will be granted provided that development proposals:

- ✿ a) Respond positively to the Site's local context;
- ✿ b) Take all reasonable opportunities, consistent with the nature and scale of the scheme, to:
 - create or enhance public realm;
 - optimise the potential of the Site by incorporating Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS);
 - reduce energy consumption and waste;
 - retain existing vegetation and propose appropriate new planting;
 - maximise accessibility, legibility and physical and social connectivity both internally and with neighbouring areas;



- future proof for changes in technology and lifestyle;
- design-out opportunities for crime and anti-social behaviour; and
- minimise the visual impact of street furniture and parking provision;
- ✿ Have regard to the Design SPD, and any other relevant guidance;
- ✿ Within Letchworth Garden City have regard to the Letchworth Garden City Design Principles contained in Appendix 5; and
- ✿ For residential schemes, meet or exceed the nationally described space standards and optional water efficiency standards.

D3 - Protecting Living Conditions

Planning permission will be granted for development proposals which do not cause unacceptable harm to living conditions. Where the living conditions of proposed developments would be affected by an existing use or the living conditions of an existing development would be affected by a proposed use, the Council will consider whether there are mitigation measures that can be taken to mitigate the harm to an acceptable level. If the Council is not satisfied that mitigation proposals would address the identified harm, development proposals will not be permitted.

NE1 - Landscape

Planning permission will be granted provided that development:

- ✿ Protects, conserves and where possible enhances the strategic green infrastructure network;
- ✿ Avoids the loss, fragmentation, severance or negative impact on the function of the strategic green infrastructure network;
- ✿ Creates new strategic green infrastructure where appropriate and is accompanied by a plan for its long-term maintenance and management; and
- ✿ Has suitable mitigation measures or appropriate replacement to satisfactorily address adverse impacts on the strategic green infrastructure network.

NE4 – Biodiversity And Geological Sites;

Planning permission will only be granted for development proposals that appropriately protect, enhance and manage biodiversity in accordance with the hierarchy and status of designations and features listed in Policy SP12. All development should deliver measurable net gains for biodiversity and geodiversity, contribute to ecological networks and the water environment, and/or restore degraded or isolated habitats where possible. Applicants should, having regard to the status of any affected site(s) or feature(s):

- ✿ Submit an ecological survey that is commensurate to the scale and location of the development and the likely impact on biodiversity, the legal protection or other status of the Site;
- ✿ Demonstrate that adverse effects can be avoided and / or satisfactorily minimised having regard to the hierarchy of protection below:



- locating on an alternative site with a less harmful impact;
- providing adequate mitigation measures; or
- as a last resort compensated for. The acceptability of approach(es) to avoidance, mitigation and compensation will be commensurate with the status of the asset(s) likely to be affected by the application; Compensation is unlikely to be an appropriate solution for proposals affecting nationally or internationally designated sites other than in the most exceptional circumstances.
- ✿ Include appropriate measures to manage construction impacts by demonstrating how existing wildlife habitats supporting protected or priority species will be retained, safeguarded and managed during construction;
- ✿ Integrate appropriate buffers of complimentary habitat for designated sites and other connective features, wildlife habitats, priority habitats and species into the ecological mitigation and design. The appropriateness of any buffers will be considered having regard to the status of the relevant habitat. 12 metres of complimentary habitat should be provided around wildlife sites (locally designated sites and above), trees and hedgerows. It may be necessary to exceed this distance for fragile habitats such as ancient woodland or to provide appropriate root protection for mature trees; and
- ✿ Provide a long-term management and monitoring plan including mitigation measures as necessary. Local Geological Sites are ratified by the Herts & Middlesex Wildlife Trust (HMWT) and are afforded the same protection as Local Wildlife Sites.

NE5 - New And Improvement Public Open Space And Biodiversity;

Planning permission will only be granted for any proposed loss of open space provided that:

- ✿ It can be demonstrated that the open space is surplus to requirements and justified on the basis of:
 - the quality and accessibility of the open space;
 - the extent to which the open space is serving its purpose;
 - the quality and accessibility of alternative public open space; and
- ✿ It is mitigated against by:
 - re-provision of an appropriate open space taking into account quality and accessibility; and/ or
 - financial contributions towards new or existing open space where the required provision cannot reasonably be delivered onsite; or
 - the required provision cannot be provided on Site in full; and
 - the proposal has over-riding planning benefits.

NE6 – Designated Biodiversity And Geological Sites

Planning permission will be granted for development proposals that make provision for new and/or improved open space which:

- ✿ Meets the needs arising from the development having regard to the Council's open space standards and other relevant guidance;



- ✿ Contributes towards improving the provision, quality and accessibility of open space; and
- ✿ Incorporate any necessary open space buffer(s) for landscape, visual, ecological or air quality reasons. Any on-site provision must include a long-term maintenance and management plan, and where required phasing plans, to demonstrate delivery. Any built facilities within new or existing open space must be ancillary to the primary use and of an appropriate scale and design. Measures should be taken to integrate such facilities into the landscape. Proposals for new open spaces which meet identified needs will be encouraged in suitable locations, served by a choice of sustainable travel options. Financial contributions towards the provision of open space will be considered only where it can be demonstrated that the requirements of policy NE5 part (b)(ii) are met. Where a development is phased, or a site is either divided into separate parts or otherwise regarded as part of a larger development, it will be considered as a whole for the purposes of open space provision.

NE7 - Reducing Flood Risk

Planning permission for development proposals will be granted provided that (as applicable):

- ✿ Development is located outside of medium and high-risk flood areas (flood zone 2 and 3) and other areas affected by other sources of flooding where possible;
- ✿ Where (a) is not possible, application of the sequential and exception tests is demonstrated where development is proposed in areas of flood risk using the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) and Environment Agency flood maps;
- ✿ A FRA has been prepared in accordance with national guidance that considers the lifetime of the development, climate change impacts and safe access and egress;
- ✿ It will be located, designed and laid out to ensure the risk of flooding is reduced whilst not increasing flood risk elsewhere;
- ✿ The impact of any residual flood risk will be minimised through flood resistant, resilient design and construction;
- ✿ Any flood protection and mitigation measures necessary will not cause harm to nature conservation, heritage assets, and/ or landscape and recreation and, where possible, will have a positive impact in these respects; and
- ✿ Overland flow routes and functional floodplain areas are protected from all development other than that which is "water compatible" and this must be designed and constructed to remain operational and safe for users during flood events, resulting in no net loss of flood plain storage and not impeding water flows or increasing flood risk elsewhere.

NE8 - Sustainable Drainage Systems;

Planning permission for development will be granted provided that:

- ✿ The most appropriate sustainable drainage solution is used taking into account technical, viability and design issues to reduce the risk of surface water flooding,



- enhance biodiversity, water quality and provide amenity benefits;
- It aims to mimic the natural drainage patterns and processes as far as possible; and
- Drainage solutions follow the SuDS hierarchy.

NE9 - Water Quality And Environment;

Planning permission for development proposals will be granted provided that they make appropriate space for water, including (as applicable):

- Maintaining a minimum 8 metre¹³⁴ wide undeveloped buffer zone from all designated main rivers;
- Maintaining a minimum 5m wide undeveloped buffer zone for ordinary watercourses; and
- River restoration and resilience improvements where proposals are situated close to a river or considered to affect nearby watercourses.

NE10 - Water Framework Directive And Wastewater Infrastructure;

Planning permission for new development will be granted provided that;

- It does not result in the deterioration of any watercourse in accordance with the Water Environment (Water Framework Directive) (England and Wales) Regulations 2017 (WFD);
- It helps contribute towards the Water Framework Directive (WFD) actions and objectives;
- It helps achieve the objectives set out in the Anglian and Thames River Basin Management Plans;
- Mechanisms for delivering any necessary new or improved water and/ or wastewater infrastructure are secured under the requirements of Policy SP7; and
- Adequate foul water treatment and disposal already exists or can be provided in time to serve the development. New development around Stevenage within the Rye Meads Sewage Treatment Works Catchment will need to demonstrate that additional potable water supply and consequential wastewater treatment capacity can be achieved and implemented ahead of development without significant environmental impact, including adverse effects on designated sites.

NE11 – Contaminated Land

Planning permission for development affecting or affected by contaminated land will be granted provided that:

- A contaminated land study / contaminated land risk assessment is submitted as part of the application;
- Appropriate mechanisms are in place to investigate, characterise the risks and remediate the contamination to remove the risks, or reduce the risk to an acceptable level; and
- The Site is suitable for use taking account of ground conditions, groundwater



vulnerability and pollution arising from previous land use and land remediation in reference to relevant guidance (and any subsequent updates)

HE1- Designated Heritage Assets

Planning applications relating to Designated heritage Assets or their setting shall be accompanied by a Heritage Assessment/Justification Statement that:

- ✿ Assesses the significance of heritage assets, including their setting;
- ✿ Justifies and details the impacts of any proposal upon the significance of the designated heritage asset(s); and
- ✿ Informs any necessary measures to minimise or mitigate against any identified harms. Planning permission for development proposals affecting Designated Heritage Assets or their setting will be granted where they (as applicable):
 - Enable the heritage asset to be used in a manner that secures its conservation and preserves its significance;
 - Incorporate a palette of materials that make a positive contribution to local character or distinctiveness, where it is appropriate and justified; and
 - Will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of the designated heritage asset, and this harm is outweighed by the public benefits of the development, including securing the asset's optimum viable use. Where substantial harm to, or loss of significance, of a designated heritage asset is proposed the Council shall refuse consent unless it can be demonstrated that the scheme is necessary to deliver considerable public benefits that outweigh the harm or loss.

HE4 -Archaeology

Permission for development proposals affecting heritage assets with archaeological interest will be granted provided that:

- ✿ Developers submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where justified, an archaeological field evaluation.
- ✿ It is demonstrated how archaeological remains will be preserved and incorporated into the layout of that development, if in situ preservation of important archaeological remains is considered preferable; and
- ✿ Where the loss of the whole or a material part of important archaeological remains is justified, appropriate conditions are applied to ensure that the archaeological recording, reporting, publication and archiving of the results of such archaeological work is undertaken before it is damaged or lost. Where archaeological sites have been assessed to meet the criteria for inclusion on adopted registers or maps of locally important heritage assets these shall be treated in the same way as archaeology areas and areas of archaeological significance. Areas of as yet, unknown archaeology may be identified during research, or through the planning or Plan making process. These sites or areas should be treated in the same way as archaeology areas and areas of



archaeological significance.

Neighbourhood Plan

No Neighbourhood Plan is currently relevant to this Site.

Local Plan Proposals Map

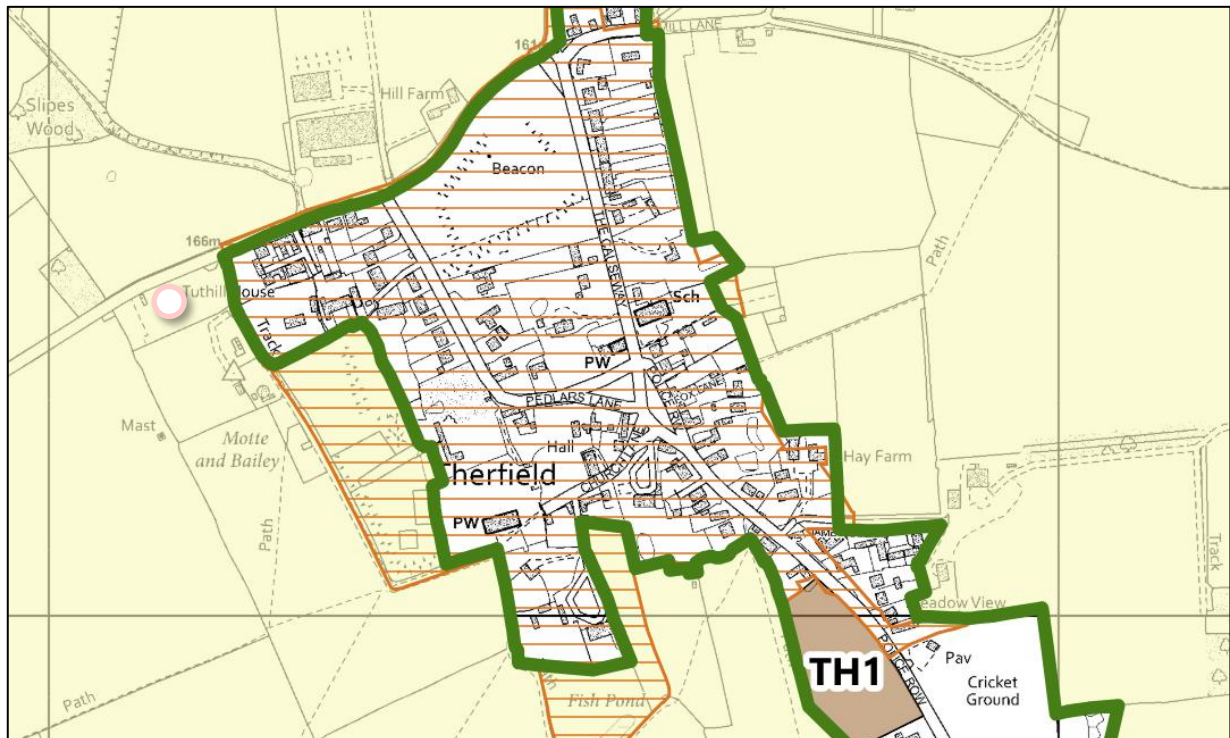


Figure 11: Extract of Local Plan Policies Map.



5 Analysis

An assessment of the proposed development has been undertaken against the relevant planning policy framework for the Site, and other material considerations in accordance with Section 38 (6) of the 2004 Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act. The assessment considers the following matters:

- ✿ Principle of Development
- ✿ Design and Appearance
- ✿ Heritage and Archaeology
- ✿ Highways and Transport
- ✿ Drainage and Flood Risk
- ✿ Ecology and Landscaping
- ✿ Amenity
- ✿ Sustainability
- ✿ Other Matters

An assessment of the application has been undertaken against the relevant planning policy framework for the Site: NPPF (2023)

Principle of Development

Whilst the Site falls outside the established settlement boundary of Therfield, it is well established as a previously developed site.

Para. 123 of the NPPF specifically highlights the importance of the effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses while safeguarding and improving the environment and ensuring safe and healthy living conditions. Previously developed or brownfield land is encouraged to be used as much as possible to deliver assessed needs. Para. 124 c) also confirms that planning policies and decisions should give substantial weight to the value of brownfield land and supports appropriate opportunities to remediate despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated or unstable land. The newly elected Government has also placed a significant emphasis on the redevelopment of previously developed sites to meet the acute housing need in the Country. Policy SP1 of the Local Plan seeks development to make use of previously developed land where possible.

As the Site relates to existing homes to the east and is located on the edge of the established village boundary with no perceived or physical 'gap' the proposed dwellings would form a sympathetic addition without harm to the character or appearance of the village. Moreover, the redevelopment of the Site would bring significant visual enhancements and improvements through the removal of the existing hardstanding, which offers no visual or amenity value in



this countryside setting. Further, as the Site is dominated by the existing concrete apron any removal of this would result in an overall improvement of the Site's appearance whilst also delivering three family homes. This assessment was echoed in the Inspector's Appeal Decision, where reference was made to the Officer's Committee report, which carefully considered the relative harms and benefits of the Site coming forward for housing. The Inspector stated the following:

'In this case, there would be a range of harms and benefits arising from the development which were carefully balanced in the Officer's report to the Planning Committee, resulting in a clear conclusion that the benefits would outweigh the harms and so planning permission should be granted i.e. material considerations indicate a decision other than in accordance with the development Plan.'

The Inspector further concluded that:

'...redevelopment of the site would be a significant benefit, given its unsightly and discordant appearance at present...'

Crucially, the Inspector stated:

'The Site is eminently suitable for a residential development of three houses, which would make a contribution to housing supply in the district, consistent with the objective to boost housing supply contained in the Framework. The introduction of a residential use would also be far more appropriate than the extant use, which could continue at any time, albeit subject to conditions and obligations. The proposed design approach, to introduce buildings of an agricultural style would reflect the Site's rural context, as would the use of timber weather boarding...'

The design and appearance of the scheme's finer details will be discussed in later sections of this Statement (and in the Design and Access statement) however, in the context of the principle of development, the following is concluded.

Whilst the Council can currently demonstrate a Five-Year Housing Land supply (subject to the current methodology), they appear to be currently under-achieving on necessary housing completions as set out in the North Herts Authority Monitoring Report 2022-2023 with a deficit of 495 dwellings for the period 2022/2023. There will always be an ongoing need to sustain this supply and continue to deliver schemes which can come forward in a timely manner. The North Hertfordshire and Stevenage Housing Market Assessment demonstrates that in North Hertfordshire, there is a need for 4,600 market houses between 2022 and 2031. Of these, 2140 three three-bedroom houses, 1,020 four-bedroom houses are required, and 320 five-plus-bedroom houses are required.



There are numerous and significant benefits from the redevelopment of this previously developed Site which must be considered to support the policies of the NPPF. The Local Plan states that the Plan will make use of previously developed land where possible.

Policy SP8 also commits to maintaining a five-year housing land supply and targets the completion of 20% of new homes over the plan period on previously developed land.

The Site logistically would not erode into the countryside as there is an existing concrete apron, vehicle access and established boundary treatment and gates associated with the existing use. The Site is not pristine Greenfield land, nor does it positively contribute to the character or appearance of Therfield village or the nearby historic features of the Conservation Area, Tuthill Manor and the Motte and Bailey Castle. The impacts of the development on nearby designated heritage assets are discussed in greater detail in later sections of this report.

In conclusion of the principle of development the following summary is relevant:

- ✿ The initial Officer assessment and presentation of the 2021 application to Committee in June 2022 concluded that benefits of bringing the Site forward outweighed any harms and the scheme was acceptable on balance. This recommendation was endorsed by Members of Committee who made a resolution to grant subject to the completion of a S106 Agreement.
- ✿ The requirement to return the application to Committee in February 2023 following adoption of the Local Plan concluded that the previous Officer recommendation still applied and that the benefits of the Site being delivered would result in a scheme which is acceptable even when considered in the context of the Local Plan policies.
- ✿ Therefore, the Case Officer concluded that in light of the new Local Plan no objections were raised, and they maintained their earlier position that the scheme could be accommodated without harm to the wider area.
- ✿ Members of the Committee did not consider any additional issues aside from the change in circumstances through the adoption of the Local Plan and subsequent Policy position in relation to rural areas beyond the Green Belt, notably Policies SP2, SP5 and CGB1. The application was subsequently refused following an overturn of the Officer recommendation.
- ✿ The Planning Inspector stated that the Site was 'eminently suitable for a residential development of three houses.'

Following the Inspector's decision this application has been prepared to reflect advice and guidance provided in order to overcome points raised in conflict. One key issue was focused on the scale, design and appearance of one of the three proposed dwellings (Plot 3) and the proposal requiring a higher standard of design overall. The drawings have been updated accordingly to reflect this advice. This will be discussed in later sections of this Statement.



Design

In the preparation of this application, the Applicant has considered relevant aims of Policy SP9 (Design and Sustainability) of the Local Plan and paras. 131 to 141 of the NPPF, which set out the visions and requirements for creating high-quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places. In conjunction with the supporting Design and Access Statement which accompanies this application the revised scheme has reflected the comments of the Inspector's 2024 decision to create a more sensitive scheme in the context of the adjacent countryside beyond the site boundary.

Plot 3 was specifically highlighted as requiring design changes to reduce the overall impact of the dwelling itself and the wider area. The figure below demonstrates how the scheme has evolved and responded directly to the Inspector's comments. The scale of the built form for Plot 3 has been significantly reduced to lower the ridge height across the entire property helping to reply to the Inspector's comments. The overall architectural approach has been proposed as being appropriate and sensitive to this setting and the finer details including external material finishes and window and roof features for example reflect the traditional style of properties found in the countryside.

The site layout also includes the provision of landscaping, ecological enhancements and SuDS features which all contribute to the creation of a high-quality development which is sensitive to the village setting and emulates buildings traditionally found in a rural setting. Plot 1 would create the appearance of a former stable building, Plot 2 a converted barn and Plot 3 the main farmhouse.

The scheme, as revised, has now resulted in an improved appearance overall particularly in relation to Plot 3 following the Inspector's decision. Should any appropriately worded conditions be required to secure further details of external finishes we would be happy to discuss these in conjunction with the Applicant to ensure the overall design and appearance is supported for this proposal. Taking into account the above the development is considered to reflect a positive addition to this part of Therfield, improving the appearance of the Site and creating three attractive and high-quality homes.





Figure 12: Overlay of Plot 3 Previous Application over revised plans

Heritage and Archaeology

In support of the Local Plan policies which address the historic environment, notably SP1, SP13, HE1, HE3 and HE4 and relevant sections of the NPPF (specifically Section 16), this application is accompanied by a Heritage Statement, which provides a technical assessment of nearby designated and non-designated heritage assets which are relevant to this Site. Crucially there are no assets within the Site.

In the context of this Site there are three key heritage-based features which are most relevant and have been considered in the context of the Site coming forward for redevelopment. The Heritage Statement addresses these three assets, and the key findings and conclusions are provided below for completeness:

- ✿ Motte-and-bailey castle and associated earthworks 100m south of Tuthill Farm (scheduled monument; NHLE 1009245)
- ✿ Tuthill Manor (Grade II listed building; NHLE 1307698)
- ✿ Therfield Conservation Area

Regarding the motte-and-bailey castle, the Heritage Statement concludes that although historically constructed with a rural landscape with very little surrounding built development this situation and its context has evolved over time:

'...the current urbanised appearance of the Site means that it is no longer rural in character and therefore no longer forms part of the monument's rural setting. There are no contemporary scheduled monuments or features within the surrounding landscape that contribute to the significance of the heritage asset.'



It is therefore concluded that the Site makes no contribution to the significance of the monument and due to the intervening planting, there is no experience of the monument from within the Site.

Tuthill Manor is a 16th century building which has been altered and extended over time and partly rebuilt in the 1970's and originally comprised a number of small properties which were combined to form one larger home. The Grade II Listed property also comprises grounds enclosed by planting which forms a visual boundary to the Site even during winter months. The Heritage Statement concludes that:

'The Site forms a small part of the extended setting of the listed building and permits very partial, glimpsed views of it. These views do not allow for an appreciation or understanding of the listed building's architectural interest and make no contribution to its significance.'

Further, there appears to be no historic evidence that the Site ever formed part of the Listed Building's landholding, so the two are not likely to have been associated. On this basis, the Manor is not affected by the Site in terms of impacting upon any significance of the Listed Building.

Therfield Conservation Area, which was designated in 1969 and subsequently amended in 1979 is centred around on the village green and extends outwards, and the Site forms part of the approach into the Conservation Area but is not within it.

There is a clear boundary around the Site, which has been formed to support the light industrial activities and hardstanding and this has formalised a clear delineation between sites within and outside of the Conservation Area.

Due to the existing concrete apron and entrance features the Site makes no contribution to the significance of the Therfield Conservation Area and the built form of medieval and post-medieval dwellings which justify its designation.

On the basis of the above, there are no conflicts with either Local or National objectives as set out in the Local Plan and NPPF. The delivery of three homes in this location would conserve the significance of the three designated heritage assets. Any harm would be less than substantial and outweighed by public benefits.

This view is supported and evidenced by a key consultee. As part of the 2021 application, detailed comments were received on behalf of Historic England, providing observations which concluded that there were no objections to the proposal of three dwellings in relation to harm caused to heritage assets.



Turning to the issue of Archaeology, during the 2021 application, there were no objections raised to the Site coming forward for development subject to appropriately worded conditions attached to any permission to secure further details via a programme of archaeological works in accordance with a written scheme of investigation. This would be required as the Site lies within an Area of Archaeological Significance. The Applicant is committed to working proactively with the Council to ensure compliance with Policies HE1, HE3 and HE4 of the Local Plan to ensure any heritage assets are appropriately considered.

Highways and Transport

To support this application, a Transport Statement has been prepared in order to demonstrate that the Site can comfortably and safely accommodate three homes and their associated vehicular activity. The Site is within walking distance of a number of local services, including a Public House, First School, Pre-School, Places of Worship and Play Area. The HertsLynx virtual bus stop service also includes Therfield, which offers wider public transportation options to reach further afield locations within North and East Hertfordshire. The existing Public Right of Way (PROW), which runs adjacent to the eastern boundary, will not be impacted by the development. However, it is proposed to provide a 2m wide pedestrian link at the eastern boundary of the Site, to provide a direct connection to this PROW (footway no. 34).

Of significance is that the previous application did not generate a technical objection from relevant Council Officers in terms of transport. Similarly, the Planning Inspector as part of the Appeal, concluded that the site access point and the Site's location for housing were suitable and sustainable.

There is concluded to be sufficient visibility onto the highway (Kelshall Tops), and in terms of vehicle movements, the change of use of the land will remove the more intensive HGV and agricultural storage vehicle movements which currently occur, which would be a benefit to the local community in terms of a reduction in traffic movements of larger, noisier vehicles.

The technical supporting Transport Statement demonstrates that the Site can achieve acceptable layouts to accommodate routes into and through the Site for refuse vehicles, emergency vehicles and day-to-day movements for occupiers and visitors. On-plot parking has been provided to deliver the necessary adopted standards. Electric Vehicle charging points are to be provided on-plot for each dwelling to support sustainable transport options. The specification of these can be secured via condition if required. On the basis of the supporting technical data the development as presented would support the vision and aims of Policies T1, T2 and SP6 of the North Herts Local Plan and paras. 114 to 117 of the NPPF in relation to promoting sustainable transport.

As demonstrated through the Transport Statement, the scheme will deliver a development which is compliant with the relevant policies and will result in a more appropriate land use for



this village setting by removing the commercial/industrial activities from the Site.

Drainage and Flood Risk

To support this application, a Flood Risk Statement (FRS) has been prepared to consider the necessary issues around site drainage, flood risk and water disposal.

The Site lies within Flood Zone 1, meaning a low probability of fluvial and /or tidal flooding and is not susceptible to any pluvial/surface water flooding. Further the Hertfordshire Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (2022) (SFRA) confirms the Site is not shown to be within the historic flooding area. The supporting FRS concludes that 'the scheme is not at risk of flooding from any source including fluvial, tidal, a breach of any nearby reservoir, groundwater or pluvial/surface water.' In addition, the Sequential Test will not need to be undertaken.

The Site is currently surfaced with a concrete apron significantly limiting any drainage. The clearance of this will allow areas of green and blue infrastructure to be delivered through landscaping, an attenuation pond and associated ecological enhancements. This will allow for more active site drainage and absorption to help support the aims and visions of Policy NE7, NE8, SP11 and SP12 of the Local Plan in addition to Chapter 14 of the NPPF.

Ecology and Landscaping

The current condition of the Site is accepted as being poor with little offerings in terms of visual interest or landscaping. Bringing this Site forward to provide numerous opportunities for planting, boundary upgrades and the promise of biodiversity and wildlife enhancements through the Biodiversity Net Gain metrics.

To support this application, a re-survey was carried out in June 2024 which informed an Arboricultural Impact Assessment prepared by Sharon Hosegood Associates. High-level data confirms there are twenty-two individual trees and five groups of trees within the Site although the majority are located along the site boundary as the Site itself is laid with concrete. There are several trees which trigger the need for urgent works due to their size, condition and location – these have been reported to the Local Authority. There are no trees within the Site covered by a Tree Preservation Order nor is the Site within the Conservation Area.

In terms of existing trees and vegetation, the proposed scheme will retain all of what is currently present bar a section of the hedgerow trees which are required to facilitate visibility splays for the improved vehicle access (G9). Crown lifting will also be necessary (G9) in addition to some coppicing of a low-quality hedge (G26). Due to the location of the proposed buildings, there would be no conflicting interactions between any root protection areas of existing trees on Site.

The proposed development commits to tree replanting and landscaping as indicated on the



submitted plans. Crucially the development will result in a positive arboricultural impact and a net gain in tree numbers. The scheme also provides further landscape features including a pond which adds additional visual interest in addition to wildlife opportunities for aquatic creatures and amphibians.

Turning to ecology and biodiversity, in the context of the requirements for this development, a supporting technical assessment has been undertaken setting out the current conditions of the Site and how the creation of three homes will help to deliver the necessary biodiversity net gains. These enhancements will support the upgrade of the Site which will be delivered through the residential development coming forward. There are currently no protected species found within the Site.

The technical BNG assessment provides the following on-site net change as follows:

-  Habitat Units – 116% (1.38 units)
-  Hedgerow Units – 166% (0.85 units)

These figures demonstrate the significant gains as part of the development which far exceed the Government's required targets. This indicates the scale of improvements that are being delivered in terms enhanced landscaping and ecological features which in turn will result in an exceptional outcome in terms of biodiversity and wildlife enrichment. These considerable gains will be delivered as part of the residential redevelopment of the Site which as established by the figures above will bring substantial benefits in terms of landscaping and ecology.

This positive approach will support and achieve the aims of Policies NE4, NE6, SP9 and SP12 of the North Herts Local Plan and paras. 128, 135, 136, 180 and 186 of The NPPF which set out commitments to creating beautiful spaces and the importance of landscaping.

Amenity

The creation of three spacious, comfortable and high-quality homes will result in an environment much more respectful and mindful of this village setting and in the context of nearby homes found within Tuthill Close particularly in reference to protection of amenity. From a noise perspective the occupation of three dwellings is expected to generate less unneighbourly disturbance than the currently approved use in terms of type of vehicles visiting and associated outdoor activity through storage.

The three properties which form this submission will be suitably laid out within the Site to take account of privacy and overlooking to ensure that all future occupiers can enjoy their homes accordingly. Moreover, the properties in Tuthill Court are located sufficiently far away that there would not be adverse impacts as a result of the Site being redeveloped in terms of loss of privacy or overlooking.



In relation to amenity pertaining to space standards the three homes proposed would exceed all relevant nationally described space standards for internal and external areas. The dwellings which form this submission would provide an excellent standard of living for future occupiers in this village setting with significant additional benefits being provided on-site through biodiversity opportunities, landscaping and general realm enhancements.

The development would support the aims and ambitions of the NPPF, particularly paras. 135 and 191 and Policies D1 and D3 of the North Herts Local Plan which set out requirements for ensuring protection of living conditions and compliance with relevant space standards. This redevelopment will create three homes which will provide a much sought-after living environment in this village setting, which will assist in removing more unneighbourly activities from the Site and creating a more attractive site with a more suitable land-use in the context of the local area respecting neighbouring amenity for existing and future occupants.

Sustainability

Economic

The Scheme satisfies the economic role of sustainability including through the provision of housing to support growth and the associated provision of infrastructure.

The Scheme generates a series of local and Borough-wide economic benefits including through (i) construction of the scheme and the range of employment generated as a result; and (ii) the on-going expenditure from the households purchasing and occupying the new homes.

The principal economic benefits arising from the scheme are summarised below:

- ✿ Increased house building in an area where there is a demand for new housing that in turn drives economic growth further and faster than any industry. In this regard the proposals will contribute to building a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right type is being made available in the right place and at the right time to support growth.
- ✿ The provision of three new homes in the Borough where there is an established need for housing delivery
- ✿ The Scheme will deliver much needed family homes and will encourage activity in the local property market.
- ✿ Meeting general housing needs is a substantial benefit, consistent with the Government's objective of significantly boosting the supply of housing.
- ✿ In order for the economy to function, sufficient housing is required in the right locations and at the right time. This Site represents a location where there would be no adverse effect upon the landscape nor on the amenity of neighbouring properties.



- ✿ Based upon a multiplier of 2.3 jobs per new home, then 3 dwellings are estimated to create approximately 7 new jobs.
- ✿ Increased expenditure in the local area will support local FTE jobs.
- ✿ Helping to deliver a significant boost to the local economy through 'first occupation' expenditure of £16,386. This is expenditure on new furniture and other household goods that residents spend as 'one-offs' when moving into a new home.
- ✿ Estimated £29,000 of spending each year from the development, with more than 50% of this spent in the local high street, providing an important boost to the high street following the pandemic.

By providing land of the right type, in the right place, and at the right time to support economic growth, the development of three dwellings on the Site fully accords with the objectives at paragraph 8 of the NPPF and assists in the aims of the NPPF in helping to build a strong and competitive economy.

This is further emphasised in the Government's November 2011 Paper 'Laying the Foundations: A Housing Strategy for England' where paragraph 11 states "getting house building moving again is crucial for economic growth – housing has a direct impact on economic output, averaging 3 per cent of GDP in the last decade. For every new home built up to two new jobs are created for a year".

The economic benefits are to be accorded substantial weight in the planning balance.

Social

The Scheme more than satisfies the social role, in helping to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, including through providing the supply of housing required to meet identified needs in open market. This is a very substantial benefit. In addition;

- ✿ Future residents will be in an easy walking and cycling distance to local services and facilities.
- ✿ The Application Scheme will provide much needed housing types.
- ✿ The scheme secures a high-quality form of development consistent with the development management policies of the NPPF and the approach to high quality design set out in the NPPF.
- ✿ The proposal includes the redevelopment of brownfield land, which will result in the tidying up of the land, whilst also utilising an existing access.

Overall, the social benefits of the scheme can be afforded substantial weight in the overall planning balance.



Environmental

In terms of the environmental role, the Application Site is not located on land designated for its landscape value.

The accompanying reports demonstrate that the Scheme will not have any material impact on existing ecology and will in fact enhance the biodiversity characteristics of the Site. The proposals would deliver sustainable homes allowing the fulfilment of this important objective whilst at the same time moving to a low carbon economy and securing an environmentally sustainable form of new residential development, with the Scheme securing a significant biodiversity net gain.

The proposal increases the amount of green space on the Site and reduces the hardstanding, which assists the Site and also improves natural drainage.

The replacement of the existing commercial activities from the Site will also reduce the vehicle movements and activities and noise from the Site which will improve the setting and amenity.

The proposal includes amenity space for future residents far and above policy requirements.

On the basis of the above, there are environmental benefits which would arise from the proposals, to which, on balance, significant positive weight should be attached to in the overall planning balance.

This satisfies the test in paragraph 11 of the NPPF on account of the many and wide-ranging benefits of the Scheme outweighing any perceived harm.

Other Matters

Legal Agreement

As part of any subsequent permissions for this Site the existing S106 secured under the 1992 consent would no longer be required as, once completed the new uses would result in the original permission falling away. There is a route which enables the current controls on the land to remain until any new development is occupied and therefore there should be no lawful reason why the Local Planning Authority could not confidently allow a new alternative development on the Site providing it is acceptable in all necessary planning terms.

Therefore, should an amended s106 be required, the Applicant would be happy to enter into discussions with the Council's Legal Officers to prepare and agree the relevant terms in order to support this application. This ensures comfort and confidence for the Council and the wider local community that the Site will be delivered appropriately. The applicant is committed to agreeing this during the application process and would welcome early engagement with the Council's Legal Team.



Ground Conditions

To support the Site being brought for residential development a supporting report and assessment has been prepared relating to ground investigation. The summary of this as set out in Section 8 clearly establishes a position whereby the redevelopment of this Site for residential use would not lead to any risks or harm either during construction or post-occupation phase. Some key findings are provided below to assist:

- ✿ Following generic risk assessments, no determinants were reported above the screening criteria within the 'residential with plant uptake' end use scenario.
- ✿ No asbestos fibres were detected in the samples analysed in the laboratory.
- ✿ Groundwater analysis was included in the original scope of the investigation; however, no groundwater was recorded during drilling, or within the wells on the first monitoring visits. Subsequent visits did report varying levels of water within the wells however this was not considered to represent true groundwater.
- ✿ As no polyaromatic hydrocarbon compounds have been reported above laboratory detection limit, extremely low levels of petroleum hydrocarbon compounds and low levels of metals have been reported in soils, there is not considered to be significant risk to controlled waters receptors from soil on Site.
- ✿ Calculating the Gas Screening Value using worst case results indicates Characteristic Situation 1. Therefore, formal gas protection measures are not considered necessary.
- ✿ On the basis of the findings of this investigation, the Site is not considered to pose a significant risk to the identified sensitive receptors.
- ✿ No further remediation works are considered necessary, and the Site is considered suitable for the proposed use following the adoption of the measures above.

As a result of the above the proposed scheme would support the visions and aims of Policy NE11 of the Local Plan in relation to contaminated land and would further result in more appropriate land use removing more commercial/industrial processes and activities. Residential use in this countryside setting would be infinitely more suitable.



6 Conclusion

Warner Planning submits this Planning Statement on behalf of Quanta Homes. The proposals are for a full application for the creation of three detached dwellings, with associated amenity space, landscaping, drainage, parking and access at land west of Tuthill House, Kelshall Tops, Therfield, SG8 9TT.

As noted this application is submitted follows a previous application (21/03533/FP) the Site. The previous application was refused, and dismissed at appeal (23/3324095) – however the appeal was only dismissed on design grounds. The Inspector noted *"The site is eminently suitable for a residential development of three houses, which would make a contribution to housing supply in the district, consistent with the objective to boost housing supply contained in the Framework."* The proposal has been revised with the design of plot 3 amended with a reduction in scale, and these amendments address the Inspector's comments.

There are significant benefits to be delivered by the development. It is considered that there are compelling grounds to support the proposed development, including:

- ✿ The creation of three high-quality family homes.
- ✿ Development on brownfield land, making effective use of previously developed land as encouraged by the Government.
- ✿ More appropriate use of the Site with removal of vacant storage depot with no harm to the countryside.
- ✿ Contribution to housing supply for the Authority.
- ✿ Development not encroaching into the surrounding countryside nor removing any significant existing landscaping or natural features.
- ✿ Significant Biodiversity Net Gain resulting in an increase of 116% of habitat units, and 166% of hedgerow units.
- ✿ Reduction of hardstanding and increased green space.
- ✿ Landscaping will improve the overall appearance of the Site by removal of large areas of hardstanding and upgrade of main entrance and site boundary.
- ✿ Improved drainage
- ✿ Re-use of existing vehicle entrance.
- ✿ Reduction of vehicle movements from the Site from the approved use
- ✿ Creation of a more appropriate land use by removing commercial activities from the Site.
- ✿ Sustainable measures integrated within the dwellings
- ✿ Connection from the Site to the adjacent Public Right of Way



The design is of a high quality and reflective of the immediate character and context. The proposals are compliant with the key Development Plan and Framework policies set out within this Statement.

In view of the above information contained within this report, and the supporting plans and statements, we respectfully invite the Council to approve this high-quality application which would deliver numerous benefits both on-site and within the wider area. This scheme has responded directly to the comments provided by the Inspector as part of the recent Appeal decision, and these are reflected in the design as proposed which forms this application. The creation of three homes will provide significant improvements to the existing yard/depot not only in terms of physical works through site clearance and the introduction of significant landscaping and biodiversity features but also through the removal of an existing activities which are less appropriate in this rural setting. The homes created as part of this development would be a welcome addition to the village creating opportunities for existing services to gain additional users and add further vitality to the local community.

The Applicant is committed to working with the Council and is happy to meet with the Council to discuss the application, consider any amendments where appropriate, and liaise over potential conditions. The application is also technically compliant and meets all the appropriate standards.

In view of the above information contained within this report, and the supporting plans and statements, we respectfully invite the Council to approve this application.

