

CONSERVATION TEAM CONSULTATION APPLICATION RESPONSE

APPLICATION REF:	25/00886/FP
CASE OFFICER:	TR
APPLICATION SITE:	Reed House, Jacksons Lane, Reed, Royston Hertfordshire SG8 8AB
DESCRIPTION OF WORKS:	Erection of 14 dwellings and associated infrastructure.

RECOMMENDATION:

I previously commented on 26/09/2025 and on 30/10/2025 I offered the following draft Reasons for Refusal 1 to the case officer to sit alongside R for R's 2 and 3:

1). The key character of Reed Conservation Area (RCA) is its openness and is identified as making a great contribution to the significance of RCA at 6.8 of the submitted Heritage Statement. There is no suburban quality to the area, instead houses and farms are mostly scattered along the various country lanes with space between properties. The village is highly rural with a strong countryside setting. The development of 14 dwellings would appear significantly denser than the neighbouring plots on Jackson's Lane which comprise detached and semi-detached houses on large plots, generally with substantial spacing between. The application site does not form part of the agricultural setting to the RCA, however, this garden area is 'open space' adjacent to the RCA which acts as a buffer between the RCA and the arable farmland to the north of The Joint. The lack of built form on this hinterland behind Reed House reinforces the linear built form along Jackson's Lane and Crow Lane, thus maintaining the character and appearance of the RCA. By reason of layout and density together with the 'green', driveways, access road and other features, the development would create an overtly suburban environment alien to this undeveloped site detracting from the setting and impairing the significance of the RCA. The development would not be sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment (para 135c) or would make a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness (para 210). The proposal fails to satisfy the aims of paragraph 135c) and Section 16 of the NPPF and the aims of Policy HE1 of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011-2031. The degree of harm is considered moderate on the less than substantial harm continuum and any perceived public benefits are such that these are not considered to outweigh the heritage harm.

2) The proposed development would detract from the open and rural character of the site and this, together its inappropriate scale and urbanising effect, would have an adverse effect upon the character and appearance of the surrounding area. The development in this regard would conflict with SP1, SP2, SP9 and D1 of the Local Plan and Section 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

3) By reason of its close proximity to The Joint and the public footpath 013, the development will be very prominent and visually discordant resulting in a materially adverse impact on the users of the adjacent highway and footpath. The development in this regard would conflict with SP1, SP2, SP9 and D1 of the Local Plan and Section 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

I was reconulted on amendments on 22 December 2025. I stand by the suggested RforR1 given above.



HERITAGE POLICY ASSESSMENT:

North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011-2031:

Policy HE1

NPPF (December 2024):

The following paragraphs are relevant:

- **135 c)** (*sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment*),
- **207** (*local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting*)
- **210** (*desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness*),
- **212** (*great weight should be given to the asset's conservation*),
- **213** (*clear and convincing justification*), and
- **215** (*harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use*).
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CONCLUSION:

Para 208 of the NPPF states that '*Local planning authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal (including by development affecting the setting of a heritage asset)....*'. Even though outside the RCA, the resulting development in depth will have a moderately erosive impact upon the openness of the settlement harming its significance. The proposal is **OBJECTIONABLE** in heritage terms.

OFFICER: Mark Simmons

DATE: 23/01/2026