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APPLICATION FOR FULL PLANNING PERMISSION
FOR THE ERECTION OF A DETACHED TWO-
STOREY DWELLING WITH ACCESS, PARKING
AND AMENITY SPACE ON LAND AT 1 THE
DRIVE, BLACKMORE END, HERTFORDSHIRE

PLANNING AND DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

MARCH 2025

STRUCTURE

1.0	Introduction	3
2.0	The Site and Surrounding Area	4
3.0	Planning History and Engagement	5
4.0	The Proposals	7
5.0	Planning Policy Context	9
6.0	Planning Assessment	14
7.0	Conclusions	23

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This Statement has been prepared to accompany an application submitted to North Hertfordshire District Council for full planning permission for the erection of a detached two-storey dwelling with access, parking and amenity space on land at 1 The Drive, Blackmore End, Hertfordshire.
- 1.2 The Statement is structured as follows:
- Section 2 – The Site and Surrounding Area
 - Section 3 – Planning History and Engagement
 - Section 4 – The Proposals
 - Section 5 - Planning Policy Context
 - Section 6 – Planning Assessment
 - Section 7 – Conclusions
- 1.3 The application comprises this Statement together with the plans and documentation set out in paragraph 4.1

2.0 The Site and Surrounding Area

- 2.1 The site, which forms part of the existing residential curtilage of 1 The Drive and extends to an area of approximately 0.10 hectares (1050sqm), is located on the western side of Kimpton Road, directly to the south of the junction with The Drive. The site, in comprising part of the garden of the existing dwelling, is generally soft landscaped with a range of mature and semi-mature trees, with a 1.8m high close-boarded fence along the eastern boundary of the site with Kimpton Road, returning along the southern site boundary with 51 Beech Way.
- 2.2 To the west of the site, and within the ownership of the applicant, is 1 The Drive, a detached two-storey dwelling of brick construction under a pitched tiled roof and dating from 2005/2006. The existing dwelling has an irregular plan form with the section nearest to the application site comprising a garage with accommodation set within the roof. To the north of the site, and fronting directly on to Kimpton Road (from which the majority of dwelling take access) are a series of two-storey predominantly semi-detached dwellings. To the south, the site adjoins part of the garden of 51 Beech Way, a detached two-storey dwelling located further to the south-west. Open fields are located opposite the site, on the eastern side of Kimpton Road.
- 2.3 The extent of the site is shown outlined in red on the site location plan accompanying the application. Whilst there are no planning designations that affect the site, it is understood that some of the trees on, or adjacent to, the site are subject of a Tree Preservation Order (TPO No 40).

3.0 Planning History and Engagement

Planning History

- 3.1 There is no material planning history on the application site, albeit it should be noted that the existing dwelling (1 The Drive) on the wider site was constructed pursuant to planning permission 04/00344/1 granted in April 2004.

Engagement

- 3.2 A pre-application enquiry (24/01387/PRE) was submitted to the Council last year seeking advice in connection with a proposal for the erection of a single four-bedroom dwelling. This, as detailed in Figure 1 below, was proposed on the north-eastern section of the wider site of 1 The Drive.



Figure 1: Pre-application Plan

3.3 It is material to note that the site for the pre-application submission was/is approximately half the size of the current application site, being considerably shallower from north to south. The Council's response to the pre-application submission detailed the following:

- That the principle of the proposed development is acceptable;
- That an ecological appraisal is required, along with the need to deliver a 10% Biodiversity Net Gain¹;
- That the proposals, given the limited size of the site, would likely appear cramped on the plot²;
- That the proposals would be unlikely to harm neighbouring residential amenity;
- That the scale of the site is such that it is not clear sufficient amenity space would be provided for occupiers of the new dwelling³;
- That parking for two vehicles would need to be provided on plot, together with cycle parking; and
- That any application would need to be accompanied by a Tree Survey, with the proposals retaining those trees that make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the area.

¹ Noting that this application is for a self-build dwelling and therefore exempt from the Biodiversity Gain Condition

² Noting that the application site is now twice the size of that submitted with the pre-application enquiry

³ See footnote 2.

4.0 The Proposal

- 4.1 The application seeks full planning permission for the erection of a detached two-storey dwelling with access, parking and amenity space, full details of which are set out in the following plans and documents:

Plans

- PL01 Site Location Plan (1:1250)
- PL02 Existing Site Plan (1:200)
- PL03 Proposed Site Plan (1:200)
- PL04 Proposed Floor Plans and Elevations (1:50)
- PL05 Proposed Site Sections (1:200)
- AIA/C Arboricultural Impact Assessment (1:250)
- TCP/D Tree Constraints Plan (1:250)

Documents

- Preliminary Ecological Appraisal
- Tree Survey and Arboricultural Impact Assessment
- Energy Statement (with SAP Calculations)
- Access Statement

- 4.2 As detailed on Plan PL03, the proposal involves erecting a dwelling on the northern section of the site, directly to the east of 1 the Drive. The proposed dwelling, which would have a broadly rectangular plan form, would front to the east on to Kimpton Road. The dwelling would be set back, on average, 10.0m from the eastern site boundary (with Kimpton Road) and some 8.0m from the northern site boundary (with The Drive), aligned with the garage building to the adjoining 1 The Drive, from which it would be separated by approximately 4.0m.
- 4.3 The dwelling would have a frontage width (to the east) of approximately 14.0m, and depth of approximately 11.0m. The dwelling, which would be two-storey in scale, would incorporate equal width two-storey hipped roof sections to the front, set either side of a slightly recessed front entrance that would be elevated, at first floor level, through a glazed gable section lighting the landing and staircase area. The main roof of the dwelling, which would be set-back from the frontage, would be fully hipped with the principal ridge line extending through the site on a north-south axis with an overall ridge height of approximately 8.8m.

- 4.4 The dwelling would be of predominantly brick construction incorporating feature brick bands, quoining details and tile hanging (to the front projections) all under a pitched, clay tile roof. Hardwood fenestration is proposed throughout. As shown in the proposed floor plans, a range of living accommodation would be provided at ground floor level with four bedrooms with associated bathroom facilities at first floor level.
- 4.5 The proposed dwelling would be served via a new entrance/access off Kimpton Road, the centre of which would be positioned approximately 30m to the south of the junction of the Drive with Kimpton Road. The existing close boarded fencing along the eastern boundary of the site would be removed and 're-set' within the site along the alignment of the required visibility splay from the new access (2.4m by 43.0m). The new access would lead to a parking and turning area contained to the front (east) of the dwelling and providing parking for two vehicles. Amenity space for occupiers of the proposed dwelling would be located mainly to the south of the dwelling, some 33.0m deep and to an average width of 15.0m.

5.0 Planning Policy Context

The Decision-Making Framework

- 5.1 The statutory decision-making framework is set by Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. This States:

'if regard is to be had to the development plan for the purposes of any determination to be made under the planning Acts the determination must be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise'.

- 5.2 That is, where the Development Plan is material to the determination of a planning application, the decision should be made in accordance with the terms of the Development Plan unless there are material considerations that would direct otherwise.
- 5.3 This statutory framework for decision-making is reinforced by paragraph 11 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework; 2024) which states that decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development and that development proposals should be approved where they accord with an up-to-date Development Plan. (Paragraph 11(c)).

Development Plan

- 5.4 The Development Plan for the area comprises the North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011-2031 (NHLP) adopted in November 2022. The most relevant policies of the NHLP are considered to be:

- SP1 Sustainable Development in North Hertfordshire
- SP2 Settlement Hierarchy and Spatial Distribution
- SP6 Sustainable Transport
- SP8 Housing
- SP9 Design and Sustainability
- SP10 Healthy Communities
- SP11 Natural Resources and Sustainability
- T1 Assessment of Transport Matters
- T2 Parking
- D1 Sustainable Design
- D3 Protecting Living Conditions

- D4 Air Quality
- NE2 Landscape
- NE4 Biodiversity and Geological Sites
- NE7 Reducing Flood Risk
- NE8 Sustainable Drainage Systems

Other Material Considerations

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

- 5.5 The NPPF was first published on 27 March 2012 and, with immediate effect, replaced a raft of advice and guidance contained in various Planning Policy Guidance notes (PPGs), and Planning Policy Statements (PPSs). In July 2018 a revised version of the NPPF was issued (NPPF2), followed by further revisions in February and June 2019 (NPPF3). A further set of revisions were published in July 2021 (NPPF(4)), with minor changes issued in September 2023 (NPPF(5)). Further revisions were published on 19th December 2023 (NPPF(6)), with the latest version (NPPF(7)) issued on 12th December 2024.
- 5.6 As with the original (2012) NPPF, sustainable development remains at the heart of the Framework, with three interdependent and overarching objectives – economic, social and environmental – driving the achievement of sustainable development. In order to ensure that sustainable development is pursued in a positive manner, the Framework embodies, in paragraph 11, a presumption in favour of sustainable development.
- 5.7 For decision-taking – in respect of applications for planning permission – the presumption in favour of sustainable development means (paragraph 11):
- (c) approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; or
 - (d) where there are no development plan policies or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting planning permission unless:
 - (i) the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a strong 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, having particular regard to key policies for directing development to sustainable locations, making effective use of land, securing well-designed places and providing affordable homes, individually or in combination.

- 5.8 In addition, paragraph 39 advises that Local Planning Authorities should approach decisions on proposed development in a positive and creative way, and that decision makers at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible.

Delivering a Sufficient Supply of Homes

- 5.9 Paragraph 61 states that, in order to support the Government's objective of significantly boosting the supply of houses, it is important that a sufficient amount and variety of land can come forward where it is needed. The Framework goes on to state (in paragraph 73) that small and medium sized sites can make an important contribution to meeting housing requirements, and that policies and decisions should support the development of windfall sites, giving great weight to the benefits of using suitable sites within existing settlements for homes. Paragraph 83 states that *'to promote sustainable development in rural areas, housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities'*.

Promoting Sustainable Transport

- 5.10 Insofar as it relates to matters of sustainable transport, paragraph 110 advises that significant development should be focused on locations that are, or can be made, sustainable. However, the Framework recognises that *'opportunities to maximise sustainable transport solutions will vary between urban and rural areas, and this should be taken into account in both plan-making and decision-making'* (paragraph 110).
- 5.11 Insofar as it relates to parking – and where local parking standards are being set – paragraph 112 advises that regard should be had to a range of factors including the accessibility of the development; the type, mix and use of development; and the availability of and opportunities for public transport. In addition, paragraph 115 advises, *inter alia*, that when assessing application for development it should be ensured that safe and suitable access to the site can be achieved for all users.

- 5.12 Furthermore, paragraph 116 advises that *'development should only be prevented or refused on highway grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network, following mitigation, would be severe, taking into account all reasonable future scenarios'*.

Making Effective Use of Land

- 5.13 Paragraph 124 states that planning policies and decisions should promote an effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses. Paragraph 125 goes on to state, *inter alia*, that planning decisions should (d) promote and support the development of under-utilised land and buildings, especially if this would help to meet identified needs for housing where land supply is constrained.
- 5.14 In addition, development should make efficient use of land (Paragraph 129) taking account of a range of factors, including the need for different types of housing, the desirability of maintaining an area's prevailing character and setting, and the importance of securing well-designed, attractive and healthy places.

Achieving Well-Designed Places

- 5.15 Paragraph 131 states that *'the creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities'*. In addition, Paragraph 135 states that planning decisions should ensure that developments:
- will function well and add to the overall quality of the area;
 - are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;
 - are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting;
 - establish or maintain a strong sense of place;
 - optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development; and
 - create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users.
- 5.16 Permission should be refused for development of poor design where it fails to reflect local design policies and government guidance on design, taking in to account any local

design guidance and supplementary planning documents (paragraph 139). Conversely significant weight should be given to development proposals that reflect local design policies/guidance and government guidance.

Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment

- 5.17 Paragraph 180 advises that planning decisions should contribute to, and enhance, the natural environment by, *inter alia*, protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity.

Other Matters

Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD)

- 5.18 In addition to the Development Plan policies noted, the following documents are also considered to be material to the assessment of the proposed development:

- Vehicle Parking at New Developments SPD
- Sustainability SPD
- Design SPD

Kimpton Neighbourhood Plan

- 5.19 The Kimpton Neighbourhood Plan Area – that includes Blackmore End – was designated in March 2014. However, it does not appear that any meaningful progress has been made in connection with the preparation of a Neighbourhood Plan.

6.0 Planning Assessment

6.1 This section of the Statement assesses – in the context of the housing land supply position – the relevant planning considerations raised by the proposed development. Accordingly, and after consideration of matters of housing land supply, this section of the Statement is structured as follows:

- The principle of the development;
- The impact on the character and appearance of the area;
- The effect on neighbouring residential amenity;
- The quality of living environment for future occupiers;
- Flood risk and drainage;
- Highways, access and parking;
- Landscaping and arboriculture;
- Ecology and biodiversity; and
- Energy and sustainability

The Principle of the Development

6.2 The application site is located in Blackmore End, a settlement excluded from the Green Belt, and identified through Policy SP2 of the adopted Local Plan as a Category B village. The Policy (SP2) goes on to indicate that 'infilling' which does not extend the built core of the settlement will be allowed at Category B villages.

6.3 Paragraphs 4.17 and 4.18 of the adopted Local Plan, in the sub-text to Policy SP2, state:

4.17 Category B villages are those with a lower level of facilities such as village halls and public houses. Category B villages will be allowed to accommodate limited infill development that does not expand the built core of the village into the surrounding countryside.

4.18 Blackmore End has been excluded from the Green Belt because of its limited contribution to the openness and purposes of the Green Belt. For the remaining Category B villages, this Plan does not define a settlement boundary or the extent of the built core. The Council believes it should be possible to assess on a case-by-case basis whether a site is in the built core. However, that may be something that affected communities wish to explore through neighbourhood plans.

6.4 The clear inference from paragraph 4.18 is that the extent of exclusion of Blackmore End from the Green Belt has, in effect, created a settlement boundary (built core) for the

village. Figure 2 below shows the extent of that exclusion (and hence the extent of the built core) from the Green Belt as denoted in the Local Plan Proposals Map.

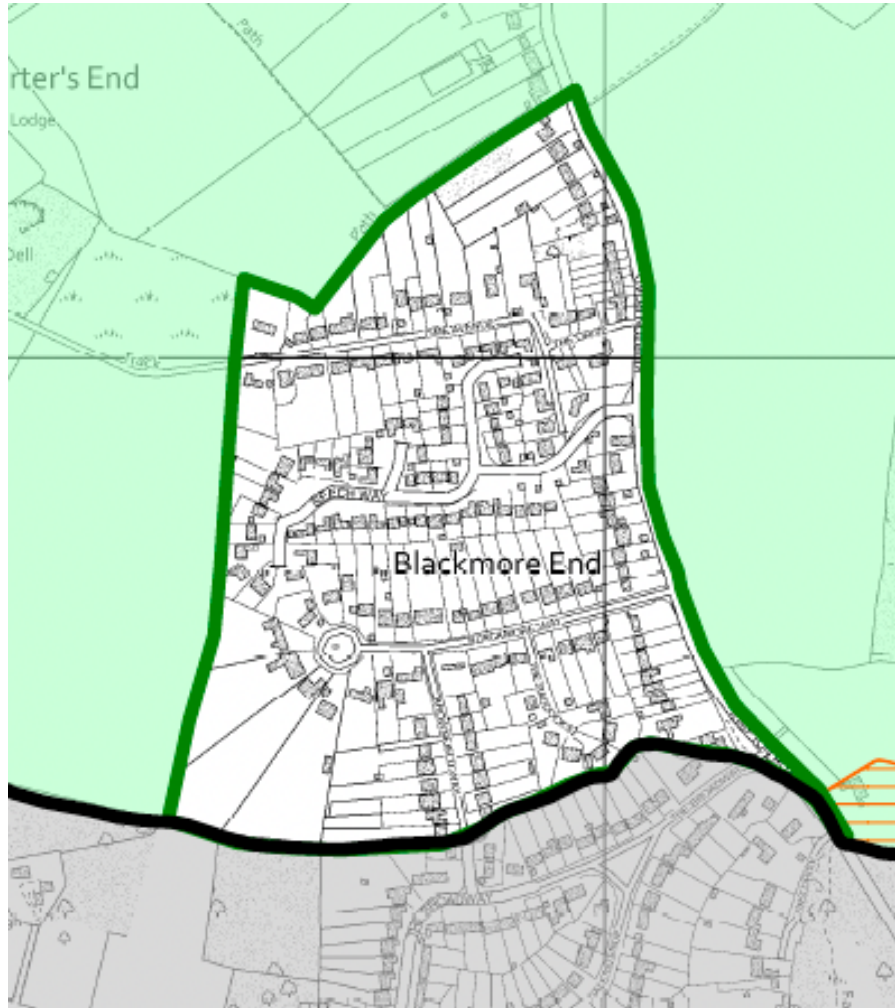


Figure 2: Extent of Blackmore End excluded from the Green Belt (including the application site)

- 6.5 As is evident from Figure 2 the whole of the site falls within that part of Blackmore End excluded from the Green Belt. Indeed, it is clear that the visual and physical relationship of the site with surrounding development, including development to the north, south and west, is such that the site is clearly within the built core of the settlement. Moreover, it is material to note that the Council, in determining an application (24/00797/FP) last year for the erection of a single dwelling on land directly to the south of the site (at 51 Beech Way) concluded that this site was in the built core of the village where the principle of the development was acceptable. That being the case it logically follows – as confirmed in the response to the pre-application enquiry - that the application site also falls within the

built core of Blackmore End such that the principle of the development accords with Policy SP2 of the adopted Local Plan.

The impact on the character and appearance of the area

- 6.6 As noted, the site is located within the built core of Blackmore End where there is a wide variation in the scale, form and shape of plots, with smaller plots containing mainly detached dwellings to the west of the site (The Drive and Beech Way), semi-detached dwellings occupying narrow, linear plots to both the west and north, and interspersed with some larger more spacious and irregular shaped plots. Indeed, 1 The Drive occupies, by comparison with those in the area, a disproportionately large plot.
- 6.6 The proposed plot, which would extend to an overall area of approximately 1050qm, would remain significantly larger than the majority of plots in the area (as would the retained plot of 1 The Drive) such that the sub-division would not result in plot sizes, shapes or forms inconsistent with the mixed layout and pattern of development in the area. Indeed, the substantial increase in the size of the plot (relative to the pre-application submission; Figure 1) enables a four-bedroom dwelling to be more comfortably accommodated without appearing – as indicated in the pre-application response – as a cramped overdevelopment of the site, and one that is evidently consistent with the overriding pattern of built development in the area.
- 6.7 Furthermore, and as shown on the site plan, the proposed dwelling would be positioned approximately 4.0m to the east of the garage section to 1 The Drive, with the north elevation aligned to follow north elevation of the garage section and with the depth of the building broadly consistent with that of the depth of the garage section (and considerably less than the overall depth of 1 The Drive). That being the case, the siting of the proposed dwelling would respect the alignment of the adjacent development, retaining a gap to 1 The Drive commensurate with the pattern of surrounding development, with generous gaps also retained to the remaining boundaries of the site. Accordingly, the siting/layout of the proposed dwelling would be comfortably integrated on the site and in the wider surroundings.
- 6.8 Moreover, it should be recognised the footprint of the proposed dwelling (which would be significantly smaller than 1 The Drive, but consistent with the surrounding development) would cover only 14% of the overall plot. This represents a building:plot ratio considerably less than the majority of dwellings in the area, and evidence that the proposals are respectful of the wider pattern and density of development.

- 6.9 The proposed dwelling would, as shown in the elevations, be two-storey in scale with an overall ridge height of approximately 8.8m. This (two-storey) scale would be consistent with the immediate built context of the site and, based on topographic data, would result in a building approximately 0.5m lower in height than the adjoining 1 The Drive. This, combined with the fully hipped roof form, ensures that the scale of the dwelling would respect the immediate context.
- 6.10 In addition, there is considerable variation in the age, style and design of the surrounding buildings such that there is no consistency or uniformity to which new development should conform. Nevertheless, the design of the proposed dwelling takes a number of 'cues' from 1 The Drive, with the simplicity of the design and form (incorporating elements of Arts and Crafts), external materials and fenestration detailing, resulting a dwelling that would be comfortably integrated in to the built context of the site.
- 6.11 Other elements of the scheme, including the access arrangements and parking/turning area, together with the retention (as set out below) of existing trees and vegetation that meaningfully contribute to the character and visual amenities of the area, all further ensure the development would respect the character of the area.
- 6.12 For these reasons, therefore, it is considered the proposals would appropriately respect, and be compatible with, the siting, layout, design, scale and form of development in the area, and would thereby comply with related Development Plan policies.

The effect on neighbouring residential amenity

- 6.13 As noted previously, the site is located in the core of the built-up area of Blackmore End, with residential development directly to the west (1 The Drive) and south (51 Beech Way) with additional residential development to the north (48 Kimpton Road), on the opposite side of The Drive. The impact on each is considered further below.

1 The Drive

- 6.14 As detailed on the site plan, the proposed dwelling would be located to the east of the garage building to 1 The Drive, from which it would be separated by a gap of approximately 4.0m. Whilst there are window openings at first floor level in the facing roof slope of 1 The Drive, these do not serve primary habitable accommodation and, in any event, do not provide the sole means of light to that accommodation (with openings also in the west elevation). Given such, the siting of the dwelling would not have any unacceptably adverse effects on light/outlook to this part of 1 The Drive. Moreover, the

main part of 1 The Drive is positioned further off the boundary of the application site, such that no adverse light/outlook impacts would arise in relation to this (main) part of the dwelling.

- 6.15 As shown in the floor plans, no habitable room windows are proposed in the facing (west) elevation of the dwelling, with such limited to a ground floor utility room and first floor bathroom. The ground floor opening, given boundary treatment and the relationship with the garage building at 1 The Drive, would not have any privacy consequences, whilst the bathroom window would be obscurely glazed – also ensuring privacy is maintained.
- 6.16 Although windows are proposed in the north and south elevations of the dwelling, these would have a relationship with 1 The Drive (and its garden area) typical of any other residential street and would not, therefore, be unacceptable in privacy terms.
- 6.17 In addition, the proposals would result in the truncation of part of the existing garden of 1 The Drive. Notwithstanding such, the existing property would retain a predominantly south-facing garden, some 20m deep and to an overall area in excess of 750sqm. The scale, form and orientation of the remaining garden would comfortably meet the amenity needs and requirements of the occupiers of 1 The Drive.

51 Beech Way

- 6.18 The application site abuts a small section of the side garden serving 51 Beech Way, with then property (No 51) located some distance further to the west. That distance is such that the physical presence of the proposed dwelling would have no harmful amenity impacts, whilst the depth of the garden of the proposed dwelling (some 33.0m) is such that there would be no adverse impact on privacy as a product of the windows proposed in the south elevation of the dwelling. That being the case, the amenities of the occupiers of 51 Beech Way would not be unacceptably affected by the proposed development.

48 Kimpton Road

- 6.19 48 Kimpton Road is located to the north of the site on the opposite side of The Drive. This property fronts on to Kimpton Road and, therefore, presents a flank elevation towards the site, with the proposed dwelling positioned some 19.0m from the main part of that flank elevation. This distance, notwithstanding the fact that there do not appear to be any habitable room window openings in the facing flank elevation of No 48, is such that the proposals would not impact adversely on light/outlook to this property.

- 6.20 Furthermore, only two windows are proposed at first floor level in the facing (north) elevation of the proposed dwelling, one serving a bedroom and the other (which would be obscurely glazed) to an ensuite. The bedroom window would be positioned towards the western end of the flank elevation where outward views (if they were to exist at all given the extensive vegetation along the boundary of the site) would be across The Drive and towards the parking area serving No 48. That being the case, and given the distance to the garden of No 48 (and the existing relationship (in privacy terms) of that garden with the properties further to the north), it is not considered that there would be an unacceptable or appreciative level of overlooking, nor to a level that materially differs from the existing relationship with neighbouring buildings⁴.
- 6.21 Given the analysis above, it is therefore considered that the proposals would appropriately respect and preserve the amenities of the occupiers of neighbouring properties.

The quality of living environment for future occupiers

- 6.22 For similar reasons to those set out above, the relationship between the existing buildings surrounding the site and the proposed dwelling is such that these existing buildings would not detract from the amenities of future occupiers of the proposed dwelling with reference to matters of light, outlook or privacy.
- 6.23 Moreover, the internal layout of the proposed dwelling has been carefully designed with principal openings to main habitable rooms in the front (east) and side (south) elevation – elevations which are not hindered by surrounding buildings and in relation to which high levels of natural daylight/sunlight and an open outlook would be secured. In addition, the scale (internal floor area) of the proposed (four-bedroom) dwelling would comfortably exceed the minimum requirements set out in the Technical Housing Standards – nationally described space standard. These factors contribute to the creation of a high-quality internal living environment.
- 6.24 Occupiers of the proposed dwelling would benefit from a garden area to the south that would be some 33.0m deep, 15.0m wide and with an overall area of approximately 500sqm. This level of amenity space would be generous for a four-bedroom property whilst also being level, private and containing a range of external spaces that provide for both high levels of sunlight and natural shading.

⁴ In addition, although the garden of the property to the north of No 48 appears to 'return' on to The Drive, the principal area of amenity space is located directly to the rear of that property and, therefore, to the north of No 48. It therefore follows, given the analysis in relation to No 48, that there would be no unacceptable overlooking of the garden of this property.

- 6.25 Given these matters, it is considered that a high standard living environment would be provided for future occupiers of the proposed dwelling.

Flood risk

- 6.26 Data held by the Environment Agency indicates that, for the purposes of fluvial flooding, the site is located in Flood Zone 1 and, therefore, acceptable as a matter of principle for the proposed development. Moreover, that same data details that the site is not subject to surface water flooding, nor flooding from reservoirs, groundwater or any other natural or artificial sources. Accordingly, there are no flooding constraints to the proposed development and the scheme is acceptable in this regard.

Highways, Access and Parking

- 6.27 As shown on the site plan, the proposed dwelling would be served via a new access off Kimpton Road, positioned approximately 30m to the south of the junction with The Drive. As detailed in the Access Statement accompanying the application, this entrance would be provided with visibility splays on to Kimpton Road of 2.4m by 43.0m – appropriate for the speed of Kimpton Road at this point – with the geometry of the access designed to facilitate safe turning and manoeuvring in to and out of the site. Accordingly, the Access Statement demonstrates that appropriate, safe and convenient access would be provided in to the site in accordance with Development Plan policy and advice in the Framework.
- 6.28 In terms of parking, the Vehicle Parking at New Development SPD requires that dwellings of two-bedrooms or more should be provided with a minimum of two parking spaces. As shown on the proposed site plan two parking spaces would be provided in accordance with the SPD⁵. Moreover, space would be provided within the site for vehicles to safely turn, such that vehicles can enter and leave the site in forward gear, thereby contributing to safe access on to the highway network. The scheme also includes cycle parking / storage in accordance with local policy requirements.
- 6.29 Accordingly, there are no highways, access or parking constraints to the proposed development.

⁵ Indeed, the level of parking would be consistent with that required and proposed for the dwelling to the south of the site at 51 Beech Way (24/00797/FP) and which was found to be acceptable to the Council.

Landscaping and arboriculture

- 6.30 The application is accompanied by a Tree Survey and Arboricultural Impact Assessment prepared by GHA Trees. This details that across the site (including the wider ownership of 1 The Drive) there are 16 individual trees and groups of trees of which there is a single Category A (Oak) tree, 10 Category B trees and five Category C trees.
- 6.31 The Tree Constraints Plan submitted with the application details that the proposed dwelling would be located wholly outside the root protection area(s) of all of the existing (predominantly 'B' Category) trees located on the northern boundary of the site (including those trees outside of the site), whilst neither the formation of the access, nor the provision/retention of the required visibility splays would impact materially on any of the existing trees.
- 6.32 The formation of a small section of the parking area would fall within the root protection area of T7 ('B' Category Lime) and T8 ('C' Category Sycamore) but, as set out in the accompanying Report (paragraph 6.7), a no-dig construction technique is proposed for the formation of the parking area (which could be controlled by planning condition), thereby ensuring no adverse effect on these trees. Similar considerations also apply to the short section of proposed pathway that falls within the root protection area of T8.
- 6.33 Accordingly, and subject to the measures set out in the Assessment, there would be no adverse impact on the existing trees on the site that make a meaningful contribution to the character and visual amenities of the area⁶.

Ecology and biodiversity

- 6.34 The application is accompanied by a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) prepared by AA Environmental Ltd. The PEA details that there are no habitats of international, national, county or local importance that would be directly affected by the proposed development, with the site considered to be of limited ecological value and with no evidence of protected species recorded.
- 6.35 In the context of the limited ecological value of the site, the PEA nevertheless outlines a number of mitigation and enhancement measures that would appropriately control

⁶ Noting also that the location of window openings in the proposed dwelling (through which appropriate levels of light and outlook would be delivered), the generous garden area, and the location of trees are all such that an appropriate standard of amenity would be provided for future occupiers of the dwelling without undue pressure from future occupiers to carry out works to the trees.

impacts and secure ecological benefits, all of which could be controlled by planning condition.

- 6.36 In terms of biodiversity, and whilst some enhancements would be delivered through the recommendations of the PEA, the proposal is for a self-build dwelling and is therefore exempt from the legislation concerning the need to comply with the Biodiversity Gain Condition.

Energy and sustainability

- 6.37 The application is accompanied by an Energy Statement that, as set out therein, summarises the policy requirements detailed in the adopted Local Plan and related Sustainability Supplementary Planning Document (SPD).
- 6.38 The Statement outlines a number of measures to be incorporated in the design, layout and construction of the proposed dwelling that would reduce the energy demand of the scheme and achieve compliance with the fabric energy efficiency criteria in the Building Regulations. In addition, the Statement details that, with the inclusion of an Air Source Heat Pump and solar photovoltaics, an 82% **reduction** in carbon emissions would be achieved against Part L Building Regulations requirements (2021), with a 66% **improvement** in the Dwelling Primary Energy Rating over Target Emissions Rating. Given such, the significant improvements over the minimum requirements of the 2021 Building Regulations would deliver compliance with the objectives of the sustainability-related policies of the adopted Local Plan and the terms of the SPD.

7.0 Conclusions

7.1 This Statement has been prepared to accompany an application submitted to North Hertfordshire District Council for full planning permission for the erection of a detached two-storey dwelling with access, parking and amenity space on land at 1 The Drive, Blackmore End, Hertfordshire.

7.2 In the context of (a) the response to the pre-application enquiry detailed in Section 3.0, and (b) Section 38(6) of the Act – including the requirements of Development Plan policy and advice in the Framework - the Statement demonstrates:

- That the principle of the proposed development is acceptable;
- That the siting and layout of the proposed dwelling and related works would appropriately respect the rhythm and pattern of development in the area, with the scale of the dwelling reflective of those found in the area, and the design and external appearance adding positively to, and complementing, the mixed and varied styles found in the area;
- That the design, layout and form of the proposed development would appropriately respect the amenities of surrounding residential properties;
- That the layout, form and size of the proposed dwelling, together with the generous, private garden area, would deliver a high-quality living environment for future occupiers;
- That the proposals are fully compliant with flood risk policy;
- That there are no highways, access or parking constraints to the proposed development;
- That the proposals would retain existing arboricultural features on the site that make the most significant and meaningful contribution to the visual amenities and character of the area;
- That there are no ecological constraints to the proposed development; and
- That the proposals, as detailed in the Energy Statement, would deliver a sustainable and highly efficient (in energy terms) form of development.

- 7.3 Given such, it is considered that the proposals would be fully compliant with Development Plan policy and that planning permission should be granted accordingly.