

**PLANNING, DESIGN AND  
ACCESS STATEMENT**

**IN SUPPORT OF A**

**FULL PLANNING APPLICATION  
FOR THE DEMOLITION OF  
ONE CAR PORT AND THE  
ERECTION OF TWO  
DETACHED  
DWELLINGHOUSES AND  
ONE DETACHED GARAGE**

**AT**

**RYEFIELD  
STEVENAGE ROAD  
ST IPPOLYTS  
HITCHIN  
HERTS  
SG4 7PE**



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## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 This statement has been prepared by Swords on behalf of Mr Christian Lafferty (hereafter referred to as the 'Applicant') in support of an application for Full Planning permission for the demolition of a detached garage and the erection of two detached dwellinghouses and one detached garage at Ryefield, Stevenage Road, St Ippolyts, Hitchin, Herts, SG4 7PE.
- 1.2 The site is located at the south-eastern edge of the settlement boundary of the Category A village of St Ippolyts & Gosmore, approximately 2.8km south-east of Hitchin. The site forms part of the garden of the adjoining property, Ryefield, is mostly undeveloped save for a detached garage on the southern boundary and extends to approximately 0.24ha. There are no other buildings on site. The site currently forms part of Title HD281807.

## **2.0 PROPOSAL**

- 2.1 This application proposes the demolition of a detached garage and the construction of two detached dwellinghouses and one detached replacement garage. One dwellinghouse will be served by the detached garage (Plot 2), and the second dwelling will include an integral carport (Plot 1). Each dwelling has been provided with a generous garden to reflect the size of curtilages typically found in St Ippolyts.
- 2.2 The proposal shall include use of one of the existing accesses to Ryefield from Stevenage Road to the north, and the infilling of the access from Sperberry Hill to the south.
- 2.3 The proposed layout of the site may be seen in Drawing No. 224338 DWG 002.



Figure 1: Proposed Site Layout Plan, from Drawing Ref: 224338 DWG 002

- 2.4 For the purpose of this application, the western dwellinghouse shall referred to as Plot 1, while the eastern dwellinghouse shall be referred to as Plot 2.

### Plot 1:

2.5 Plans and elevations for Plot 1 can be seen in Drawing No. 224338 DWG 003.



Figure 2: Plot 1 Elevations, from Drawing Ref: 224338 DWG 003

- 2.6 Plot 1's dwellinghouse shall be two storeys, with a maximum ridge height of 8.39m, and eaves of 4.59m. It will feature an 'L' shaped footprint, covering a total external area of 110m<sup>2</sup>.
- 2.7 Windows shall be constructed of dark aluminium. The base of the walls and the whole of the chimney shall be clad in red brick, and the remainder of the walls shall be clad in light render. The barge board on the gables shall be painted white. The roof shall be dual pitched and finished in red plain tile to match nearby dwellings.
- 2.8 On the northeast elevation of the house there shall be a small porch. Its roof shall be dual pitched, and walls clad in brick at their base, then in horizontal dark stained weatherboarding till they meet the roof. The roof of the porch shall be finished in plain red tile.



- 2.9 On the northwest elevation of the house a carport, large enough for a single vehicle, shall be constructed. The carport shall be 2.4m high at its eaves, rising to 4.59m where it meets the wall of the dwellinghouse. It shall have a Gross Internal Area of 20sqm. Its roof shall be single pitched and finished in red plain tile to match the dwellinghouse. The base of the walls shall be clad in red brick. Its northwest wall shall be clad to match the dwellinghouse, while the walls of its northeast and southwest elevations, where not left open, shall be supported with wooden beams, and clad in dark stained horizontal weatherboarding. The gables shall be covered by dark-painted barge board.
- 2.10 The interior of the carport shall contain an EV charging port, and bicycle storage space.
- 2.11 Further details of the external materials of Plot 1 may be secured by condition.
- 2.12 The internal layout of Plot 1 can be seen in Drawing No. 224338 DWG 003. As can be seen, the dwelling shall contain 3 bedrooms, 2 of which have en-suite bathrooms. Plot 1 shall have a Gross Internal Area of 143.2sqm.
- 2.13 To the north of the house an area of land shall be hard surfaced to form a driveway, sufficient for parking two cars.
- 2.14 To the southwest of the dwelling a 32sqm area of garden shall be hard surfaced to form a patio, and a generous area of garden, measuring approximately 435sqm will be provided. Three small trees shall be planted on the southern boundary of the plot to fill in the original access point to the site from Sperberry Hill. Along the eastern boundary of the garden a new hedgerow will be planted, to separate the gardens of Plots 1 and 2.

## Plot 2:



*Figure 3: Plot 2 Elevations, from Drawing Ref: 224338 DWG 004*

2.15 Plans and elevations for Plot 2 can be seen in Drawing No. 224338 DWG 003.

2.16 Plot 2's dwellinghouse shall be two storeys, with a maximum ridge height of 8.19m, and eaves of 4.91m. Plot 2 will also feature an 'L' shaped footprint, covering a total external area of 87.9sqm.

2.17 Windows shall be constructed of dark aluminium. The base of the walls and the whole of the chimney shall be clad in red brick, and the remainder of the walls shall be clad in light render. The barge board on the gables shall be dark-painted. The roof shall be dual pitched and finished in plain red tile to match nearby dwellings.

2.18 On the northeast elevation of the house there shall be a small porch. Its roof shall be dual pitched, and walls clad in brick at their base, then in horizontal dark stained weatherboarding till they meet the roof. The roof of the porch shall be finished in plain red tile.

2.19 Further details of the external materials of Plot 2 may be secured by condition.



- 2.20 The internal layout of Plot 2 can be seen in Drawing No. 224338 DWG 003. As can be seen, the dwelling shall contain 4 bedrooms, 1 of which is provided with an en-suite bathroom. Plot 2 shall have a Gross Internal Area of 142.1sqm.
- 2.21 To the south of the dwelling a 21.5sqm area of garden shall be hard surfaced to form a patio, and a generous area of garden, measuring approximately 1245sqm will be provided.

### Garage

- 2.22 Between the two dwellinghouses a detached garage, large enough for a single vehicle, shall be constructed, to provide sheltered parking space for Plot 2. Its roof shall be dual pitched and finished in red plain tile to match the dwellinghouse. The garage shall be 1.48m high at its eaves and 3.41m high at its ridge. It shall have a footprint of 30.1sqm and shall have a Gross Internal Area of 25.3sqm. Its walls shall be clad in red brick at their base, and dark stained weatherboard up to the eaves and gables. The gables shall be covered by dark-painted barge board.

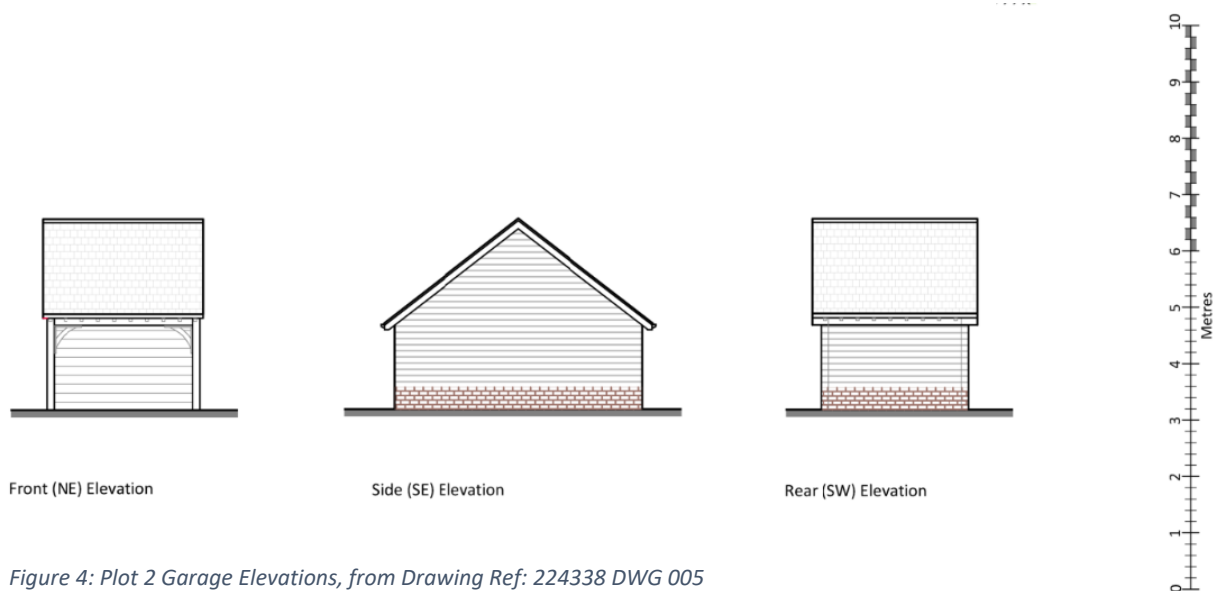


Figure 4: Plot 2 Garage Elevations, from Drawing Ref: 224338 DWG 005

- 2.23 The interior of the garage shall also contain an EV charging port and bicycle storage space.
- 2.24 To the northeast of the garage an area of hardstanding shall be laid out, to be used as a driveway sufficient for the parking of 2 cars.
- 2.25 The interiors of Plot 2's garage and Plot 1's carport shall have the floors surfaced in concrete.



Paths and parking areas shall be surfaced in rolled gravel. The new access road shall be surfaced in a no-dig cellular confinement system (for example Geoweb), filled with no-fines stone, to preserve the root protection areas of trees on the northern boundary and maintain infiltration.

2.26 Further details of hard and soft landscaping may be secured by condition.

### **3.0 RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY**

3.1 No planning history is available for this site.

3.2 However, the site directly adjoins a neighbouring site on which 14 dwellings have been approved under planning ref: 19/01669/FP (Appendix 2). As shall be set out in this statement, this proposal has been designed to be in keeping with both this development and with the existing house at Ryefield.

3.3 This application also considers pre-application advice received from North Herts under local authority ref: 24/02649/PRE (Appendix 1). The advice received was broadly supportive and key recommendations, which have informed this proposal, were as follows:

- The development would be within the boundary of a Category A Village and therefore would be acceptable in principle.
- The two houses (one 4 bedroom, the other 5) proposed were deemed to present a risk of increasing pressure on existing mature trees and reducing access to natural light and ventilation. Consequently, the officer stated they would support either 1 dwellinghouse or 2 smaller dwellinghouses that would not have a negative impact on the trees on the boundaries of the site.
- The broad details of landscaping were deemed reasonable, showing the existing trees being retained where possible.
- It was not considered that the proposal would cause any materially adverse harm upon the reasonable living conditions and well-being of neighbouring dwellings.



- Any future proposal would need to provide suitable levels of parking for future occupiers and their visitors, in accordance with the details set out in Appendix 4 of the Local Plan. Moreover, the scheme would need to provide suitable levels of cycle parking in accordance with the aforementioned guidance.

#### 4.0 PLANNING POLICY

- 4.1 National Planning Policy is contained within the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). At the core of the NPPF is the principle of sustainable development, which is defined in Paragraph 8 as development that meets, on balance, three objectives: economic, social and environmental.
- 4.2 Paragraph 11(d) sets out a presumption in favour of sustainable development where the policies most relevant for determining the application are out-of-date, including situations where the Local Authority cannot demonstrate a 5-year supply of deliverable housing. As of the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024, North Hertfordshire was only able to demonstrate a 3.9-year supply of housing. As such, the presumption in favour of sustainable development applies.
- 4.3 Paragraph 70 of the NPPF encourages local planning authorities to promote the development of a good mix of sites. One of the ways in which they are encouraged to do so is to *“d) support the development of windfall sites through their policies and decisions – giving great weight to the benefits of using suitable sites within existing settlements for homes”*.
- 4.4 Windfall sites are defined as *“Sites not specifically identified in the development plan”*.
- 4.5 The development plan comprises saved policies in the North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011-2031.
- 4.6 Policy SP1 of the development plan, ‘Sustainable development in North Hertfordshire’ mirrors the sustainability focus underlying the NPPF, and states that planning permission will be granted to 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.”*

- 4.7 Policy SP2: ‘Settlement Hierarchy and spatial distribution’ is most relevant local policy to this proposal. This policy identifies St Ippolyts & Gosmore as a Category A village and states that, in such villages, *“general development will be allowed within the defined settlement boundaries”*.
- 4.8 Policy SP8: ‘Housing’ is also relevant to this proposal. This policy released land across the district from the Greenbelt. This release of land readjusted the settlement boundary of St Ippolyts & Gosmore and placed the site at Ryefield outside of the Green Belt and inside the settlement boundary.
- 4.9 Other policies of relevance to this application are:
- Policy SP9: Design and Sustainability
  - Policy SP10: Healthy communities
  - Policy SP11: Natural resources and sustainability
  - Policy SP12: Green Infrastructure, landscape and biodiversity
  - Policy SP13: Historic Environment
  - Policy T1: Assessment of Transport matters
  - Policy T2: Parking
  - Policy HS1: Local Housing Allocations
  - Policy HS3: Housing mix



- Policy D1: Sustainable Design
- Policy NE2: Landscape
- Policy NE6: New and improved open space
- Policy NE7: Reducing flood risk
- Policy HE4: Archaeology

4.10 The following Supplementary Planning Documents are also relevant:

- Vehicle Parking at New Developments SPD - November 2011
- Design SPD - July 2011
- Sustainability SDP - September 2024

4.11 The proposed development has also been designed in accordance with BSI Standards Publication BS 8233:2014 - Guidance on sound insulation and noise reduction for building.

## **5.0 PRINCIPLE OF DEVELOPMENT**

5.1 The site lies within the settlement boundaries of St. Ippolyts as defined by the Local Plan. Pre-application advice received under local authority ref: 24/02649/PRE confirms that Policy SP2 of the Local Plan designates St Ippolyts is a Category A village, where general development will be allowed within village boundaries. On this basis, the development that is proposed is acceptable in principle.

5.2 The acceptability of the principle and location of this development has also been confirmed in the Officer's Report for application ref: 19/01669/FP, which also stated that the site subject to that application was within the development boundary of St Ippolyts, that Policy SP2 of the Local Plan designates St Ippolyts is a Category A village where general development will be allowed within village boundaries, and that on this basis the development that was proposed was acceptable in principle.



- 5.3 The site subject to this application is very close to the site approved in application ref: 19/01669/FP, also sits within the development boundary of St Ippolyts, and as such should be considered equally as appropriate a location for development.
- 5.4 Additionally, national policy also supports the principle of development. Firstly, Paragraph 73 d) encourages local authorities to *“support the development of windfall sites through their policies and decisions – giving great weight to the benefits of using suitable sites within existing settlements for homes”*. As stated already, this site is within an existing settlement and is being proposed for two new houses.
- 5.5 Finally, as mentioned already, the presumption in favour of sustainable development, located in paragraph 11(d) of the NPPF, applies to this application. Consequently, provided that; the proposal meets the three objectives of sustainability set out in paragraph 8 of the NPPF;
- the application of policies in the Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance do not provide a strong reason for refusing the development proposed, and
  - any adverse impacts from the development would not significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, the application should be approved.
- 5.6 Beginning with the assessment of sustainability, this proposal is economically sustainable. The proposed development would provide 6 additional jobs during construction (according to the HBF housing calculator), and it is estimated that the corresponding increase in population would bring £56,666 into the local economy via residents spending in local shops.
- 5.7 Environmentally, the site constitutes other neutral grassland of moderate species diversity. The proposal will not impact protected trees or any local wildlife sites. Socially, the site sits within the development boundary of St Ippolyts, so is within easy reach of necessary services – as such, the site would not contribute greatly to traffic levels. The site consequently meets the requirements of the social objective as well. As such, it is established that the development of the site would be sustainable.



- 5.8 The only potential constraint is the sites proximity to the remains of an iron age village to its south and west. The neighbouring site, as part of application ref: 19/01669/FP, had to undertake a detailed archaeological investigation as part of that application, to demonstrate that there would be no harm to any assets of archaeological interest. As shall be set out in the section of this statement relating to the heritage impacts of this proposal, this proposal has also undertaken a scheme of archaeological works, which found that the proposed development would not impact any assets of archaeological interest, and as such no strong reason for refusing the development proposed may be found in the policies of the NPPF that protect areas or assets of particular importance.
- 5.9 As shall be elaborated in the section of this statement relating to Material Considerations, the proposed development would not have adverse impacts that would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits. The proposal is in line with the requirements of paragraph 110, to the extent that these relate to rural areas; it is accepted in said policy that *“opportunities to maximise sustainable transport solutions will vary between urban and rural areas”*, and as such it is probable that some journeys will likely need to be made by car. However, as previously stated, the site is within the development boundary of St Ippolyts and, as such, is already considered to be an appropriate location for housing.
- 5.10 Safe and suitable access to the site shall be achieved for all users, and the design of the driveways, access and parking areas has been made with reference to the National Design Guide. The limited size of this development means that there would not be any significant impacts from the development on the transport network, and the access has been designed to ensure no harm to highway safety.
- 5.11 The choice for this proposal to be for one 3-bedroom and one 4-bedroom house was made upon reviewing the North Herts and Stevenage SHMA PART II UPDATE INCLUDING IMPACT OF FIRST HOMES 2023. This update identified that, in North Herts, the housing most in demand was 3- and 4-bedroom housing. This being the case and considering the local policy support already given to the principle of development in this location and the insignificant impact this proposal would have on the surrounding area’s character, it is considered that this proposal meets the requirements for using land efficiently set out in paragraph 129 of the NPPF.



5.12 This being the case, the proposal being sustainable and there being no assets present of particular importance that would constrain the proposed development, the presumption in favour of sustainable development applies.

## 6.0 MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS

### Design, Scale and Layout

6.1 Local Policy SP9: Design and Sustainability requires that new development be well designed and located and to respond positively to the local context, in order to be supported.

6.2 Part a) of Policy D1: Sustainable design repeats the requirement for proposals to respond positively to the site's local context. The rest of the policy, as it relates to this site, adds the following requirements:

*b) Take all reasonable opportunities, consistent with the nature and scale of the scheme, to:*

- i. create or enhance public realm;*
- ii. optimise the potential of the site by incorporating Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS);*
- iii. reduce energy consumption and waste;*
- iv. retain existing vegetation and propose appropriate new planting;*
- v. maximise accessibility, legibility and physical and social connectivity both internally and with neighbouring areas;*
- vi. future proof for changes in technology and lifestyle;*
- vii. design-out opportunities for crime and anti-social behaviour; and viii. minimise the visual impact of street furniture and parking provision;*

*c) Have regard to the Design SPD, and any other relevant guidance;*

*[...]*

*e) For residential schemes, meet or exceed the nationally described space standards and optional water efficiency standards."*

- 6.3 The design of the proposed development has been chosen to evoke the neighbouring developments, as well as existing housing in St Ippolyts. Pre-application advice received under local authority reference 24/02649/PRE states that because the application site is within the settlement boundary of St Ippolyts, new housing development is permitted by the relevant LP policies and is also required to deliver new housing by Policy SP8. The urbanisation of the site is therefore considered acceptable due to these policies.
- 6.4 The advice received also stated that two smaller dwellinghouses could be supported onsite, provided that they did not have a negative impact on the trees located on the boundaries of the site. As may be seen on the Site Layout Plan (Drawing Re: 224338 DWG 002), and in the Arboricultural Impact Assessment, this proposal would preserve the boundary trees. For further details, please see the latter section of this statement detailing the impact upon trees onsite.
- 6.5 The houses approved on the neighbouring site under 19/01669/FP were constructed with North Herts Design SPD in mind. The scale has been similarly influenced, with care taken that the height and massing of the proposed dwellinghouses should not be disproportionate when viewed alongside the existing dwellinghouse at Ryefield (see below).



*Figure 5: Photo of existing dwellinghouse, Ryefield, viewed from driveway off Stevenage Road, taken June 21<sup>st</sup>, 2024*

6.6 Accordingly, regard has also been had to the Design SPD for this proposal; the dwellinghouses have been restricted to two storeys, thus ensuring that views in and out of St Ippolyts are preserved. The materials proposed for the dwellinghouses are similar to those used in Ryefield, albeit of a slightly higher quality so as to simultaneously preserve the local context and maintain the diversity of housing that characterises St Ippolyts.

6.7 The materials of the car port and garage, meanwhile, have been chosen to mimic the materials used in the existing garage on the site, seen below. The dark stained horizontal weatherboard also serves to diversify the materials present while still coordinating well with the dominant light render of the dwellinghouses.



*Figure 6: Photo of existing garage onsite, to be demolished and replaced, taken June 21<sup>st</sup>, 2024*

6.8 The landscape character of Sperberry Hill Road will be mostly unaffected, save for being marginally enhanced via the planting used in blocking up the existing access to the site from here. The landscape of Stevenage Road to the north of the site shall also be maintained, given that access shall be via a point that already serves the existing dwellinghouse of Ryefield, and the two new dwellinghouses will be at least partially screened by the existing dwellinghouse and existing mature vegetation.



- 6.9 Regarding the capacity to future proof this development, air source heat pumps shall be fitted to each dwelling, and an EV charging point provided per dwellinghouse. Each dwellinghouse has at least part of their roof facing southwest, allowing for the provision of solar panels, should future owners wish. Windows and glazed doors shall be installed with U-values in accordance with Building Regulations Approved Document L, Conservation of fuel and power, Volume 1: Dwellings, 2021 edition incorporating 2023 amendments, and with reflective coatings to reduce passive heat gain and glare during summer months. Insulation shall be installed in line with the standards set out in the above document, and Thermal Bridging shall be minimised wherever possible. Energy efficient lighting shall be installed within each dwelling. Further details of future-proofing measures may be secured via Condition if deemed necessary.
- 6.10 The layout of this development has been designed to secure safe and inclusive access for all users, whilst also securing the private amenity of each individual dwellinghouse. In the common areas of the site to the north, passive surveillance is enabled from each dwellinghouse. This should also assist in reducing the risk of crime to this development, although the low level of crime in St Ippolyts, coupled with the limited scale of this development, limits the degree to which the development may impact crime rates.
- 6.11 Both dwellinghouses have been designed in accordance with nationally described space standards.
- 6.12 Overall, this scheme has been designed, where practical, with Policy D1 in mind, and has sought to meet its requirements. It is considered that the above measures are sufficient to accomplish this, and thus the proposal should be considered in line with policies D1 and SP9, and thus appropriate in terms of its Design, Scale and Layout.

#### Access

- 6.13 Adequate parking and turning space shall be provided on site to ensure no harm to the safety highway network. It is anticipated that this development, once completed, will generate 10 additional car movements a day; 5 in, 5 out. As part of this it is anticipated that this development will generate 1 additional car movement at the AM peak, going outwards, and



1 at the PM peak, coming into the site. This level of vehicle movements would be imperceptible in terms of impact on the local road network.

- 6.14 Access to the site shall be from Stevenage Road, with the existing access to the site from Sperberry Hill to be blocked off, in the interest of enhancing highway safety in the area. This will not lead to highway safety problems nor cause unacceptable impacts upon the highway network. As such it is compliant with Local Plan Policy T1.
- 6.15 3 parking spaces are provided per dwellinghouse: 2 each on the driveways and 1 each in the associated garage/car port. This level of parking provision is in line with standards set out in North Herts Vehicle Parking at New Developments SPD, Appendix 4 of the Local Plan and Policy T2.
- 6.16 Servicing by refuse vehicles would take place from the roadside and within the site as it currently does for all existing units along Stevenage Road. It should be noted that the neighbouring dwelling to the north of the site is currently served by public Refuse Collection. The proposed bin collection point is located within 25m of this dwelling and therefore would be within suitable drag distances of the existing operation. Therefore, no changes are proposed for the existing refuse collection process.
- 6.17 Delivery and fire services also already utilise the road to serve the dwelling to the north of the site and therefore the proposal should be able to be served under the existing operation.
- 6.18 For further details, please see the Transport Technical Note, prepared by EAS and submitted alongside this statement (Ref: 4627/2025-TTN-REV B).

### Landscape

- 6.19 This site sits within Landscape Character Area 215: Wymondley and Titmore Green. This landscape is characterised by a rolling chalk landscape, Irregular sized fields in arable with parcels of grazing adjacent to settlements, a historic pattern of small winding lanes and historic place names and mature tree cover, Distinctive features close to the site include Flint church at St Ippolyts and Wymondley transformer station.



- 6.20 The pre-application advice received under local authority reference 24/02649/PRE, while based off of an early indicative set of plans, encouraged trees to be preserved on site where possible.
- 6.21 As stated above, the site is presently in use as residential garden land and is bordered by mature vegetation on all sides. Care has been taken throughout the design process for this application to ensure that the vegetation on the boundary is preserved, and to minimise the impact on the trees within the site as far as is possible.
- 6.22 However, as set out in the submitted Archaeological Evaluation Report prepared by ASE (Ref: 250234-EV-2025220-V1), some clearance of vegetation and trees towards the centre of the site has been required, in order to allow for the necessary archaeological investigations. This could have been carried out as part of the garden maintenance in any case, as none of this was protected. No trees on the boundary of the site were impacted by these works.
- 6.23 As set out in the Arboricultural Impact Assessment prepared by OMC Associates (ref: 02193AIA/CJO/0610), this proposal will require the removal of one C grade tree, the cyprus hedge G2. A B Grade ash tree (T25) will also need to be crown-lifted, and 2 C grade hawthorns (T24 and T26, both in poor condition) will need to be cut hard back to 0.5m stumps, in order to accommodate the new drive. The cutting back of the two latter trees will have the added benefit of allowing for the regeneration of the dense native species hedge on the site border. The RPAs of T24, T25 and T26 will be notably incurred upon, but this would be represented entirely by new hard standing rather than by structures and, as such, should allow for a significant proportion of the overlain roots to continue growing. The RPAs of T21 and T27 would also see some incursions, but the scale of these are deemed negligible and not considered to have a material impact on the health of the trees.
- 6.24 Such hard surfacing as crosses into the RPAs shall be formed of a no-dig cellular confinement system such as *geoweb*, infilled with no-fines stone to preserve infiltration and the RPAs. During construction a combination of ground protection and protective fencing will be used to protect RPAs of all trees to be retained. These mitigation measures, along with the relatively insignificant nature of the trees that will be subject to works, mean that the proposal will not have significant impacts on trees.



- 6.25 As such, the site will remain well screened from both the church at St Ippolyts and Wymondley transformer station, and the proposed development shall not be large enough to be visible from either of them. The aforementioned boundary screening also prevents the site from being visible from nearby fields to the south, and the proposed development will not impact the road network.
- 6.26 To distinguish the site from Ryefield and to provide separated garden space for each plot, additional planting shall be introduced on the southern border of the site (as part of the filling in of the existing access onto Sperberry Hill), and native hedge shall be planted along the western boundary of the site and between the gardens of Plot 1 and Plot 2.
- 6.27 As such, it is considered that the existing screening of the site, the additional planting, and the low impact that the site has upon the landscape is sufficient to ensure that this proposal shall not harm the character and appearance of the surrounding area. The proposal is therefore considered to comply with Policy NE2 of the local plan.

#### Residential Amenity

- 6.28 Each dwellinghouse is provided with a generous area of garden, of a size similar to those found elsewhere in St Ippolyts.
- 6.29 The nearest dwelling to the site is Ryefield, approximately 10.3 metres from the northwestern elevation of the carport of Plot 1. To reduce the impacts upon the amenity of Ryefield, Plot 1 is set at an obscure angle, with no windows on the first floor of the northwest elevation. This, combined with the hedgerow planting along the boundary between the site and Ryefield, should be sufficient to ensure no overlooking, loss of privacy or harm to amenity for either dwelling occurs.
- 6.30 Regarding the impact of Plots 1 and 2 upon each other, the garage for Plot 2 serves to screen the two buildings from one another, preventing Plot 1 from overlooking Plot 2. Tree planting in the garden of Plot 1 meanwhile shall serve to screen the garden of Plot 1 from Plot 2, and the window on the 1<sup>st</sup> floor of the northwest elevation of Plot 2 shall be obscure glazed to reduce impacts upon privacy and amenity still further.

- 6.31 The proposal will not cause any harm by way of noise disturbance, and any noise associated with construction would be temporary.
- 6.32 The scheme will comply with the Nationally Described Space Standards, with adequate room sizes, and windows serving all habitable rooms.
- 6.33 A communal bin storage area shall be provided at the entrance to the site, and may be seen on the attached image, taken from drawing ref: 224338 DWG 002:



Figure 7: Excerpt of drawing ref: 224338 DWG 002, with bin area circled in yellow. For scale version, please see drawing ref: 224338 DWG 002, attached separately with this application

- 6.34 This proposal is therefore acceptable in terms of its impacts on the amenity of both the residents of the proposed development and the residents of Ryefield.



## Noise

- 6.35 The proximity of the site to the road and to the nearby Wymondley Electrical Substation places the site at some marginal risk of being unduly impacted by noise. The pre-app advice received under local authority reference: 24/02649/PRE stated that the main noise generating development in the vicinity of the application site is Wymondley Substation.
- 6.36 A Noise Assessment was undertaken for the approved application for 14 dwellings on the adjacent site (application ref: 19/01669/FP). Both this application and the one for the adjacent site have been designed to comply with BSI Standards Publication BS 8233:2014 'Guidance on sound insulation and noise reduction for buildings'. This document provides guidance on indoor ambient noise levels for dwellings. These levels are applicable in this case and are set out in Table 4 of the document:

| Activity                   | Location         | 07:00 to 23:00 | 23:00 to 07:00 |
|----------------------------|------------------|----------------|----------------|
| Resting                    | Living room      | 35 dB LAeq,16h | -              |
| Dining                     | Dining room/area | 40 dB LAeq,16h | -              |
| Sleeping (daytime resting) | Bedroom          | 35 dB LAeq,16h | 30 dB LAeq,16h |

- 6.37 A note to this table states: *"NOTE 7 Where development is considered necessary or desirable, despite external noise levels above WHO guidelines, the internal target levels may be relaxed by up to 5 dB and reasonable internal conditions still achieved."*
- 6.38 In respect of noise levels in garden areas BS8233: 2014 states: *"For traditional external areas that are used for amenity space, such as gardens and patios, it is desirable that the external noise level does not exceed 50 dB LAeq,T, with an upper guideline value of 55 dB LAeq,T which would be acceptable in noisier environments. However, it is also recognized that these guideline values are not achievable in all circumstances where development might be desirable. In higher noise areas, such as city centres or urban areas adjoining the strategic transport network, a compromise between elevated noise levels and other factors, such as the convenience of living in these locations or making efficient use of land resources to ensure development needs can be met, might be warranted. In such a situation, development should be designed to achieve the lowest practicable levels in these external amenity spaces, but*



*should not be prohibited.”*

6.39 When the tonal nature of the substation noise was also taken into consideration, the assessment found it appropriate to set lower internal noise limits of:

- 15 dB LAeq,t at night in bedrooms; and
- 25 dB LAeq,t during the day.

6.40 When noise from the substation was isolated, the following results were obtained:

- At night, noise levels for the substation prevailing at the monitoring position at a height of approximately 5.0 metres above site level were found to be:
  - 38.9 dB LAeq,8h, with a maximum of level of 40.3 dB LAeq,15m and a minimum of level of 37.4 dB LAeq,15m being recorded.
- During the day, noise levels for the substation prevailing at the monitoring position at a height of approximately 2.5 metres above site level were found to be:
  - 31.4 dB LAeq,1.25h, with a maximum of level of 31.8 dB LAeq,15m and a minimum of level of 30.8 dB LAeq,15m being recorded.
- During the day, noise levels for the substation prevailing at the monitoring position at a height of approximately 5.0 metres above site level were found to be:
  - 29.3 dB LAeq,1.25h, with a maximum of level of 30.1 dB LAeq,15m and a minimum of level of 28.6 dB LAeq,15m being recorded.

6.41 Due to the uncertainty of the daytime noise levels, the daytime noise level for the substation prevailing at a height of 5.0 metres at the monitoring position was, for the noise assessment of the neighbouring site, taken to be the same as the specific night-time noise level, ie 40 dB LAeq,15m, taken to equate to 40 dB LAeq,1h.

6.42 It is our view that any noise assessment for the site subject to this application would obtain broadly similar results to the neighbouring site. This view is supported by the assessment’s statement that ***“the levels of substation noise prevailing at the nearest existing dwellings to north and south-east of the development site are very similar to the levels prevailing at the worst-case locations on the proposed development.”*** [emphasis added].

6.43 The noise assessment for the neighbouring site went on to demonstrate that, once built, worst-case free-field noise levels due to the substation at the development would not exceed:

- 40 dB LAeq,t at location of the worst-case first floor window head (Plot 7);
- 38 dB LAeq,t at location of the worst-case ground floor window head (Plot 7); and
- 37 dB LAeq,t in the worst-case garden (the garden of Plot 14);

6.44 For clarifications sake, these plots have been marked on the below screenshot of the site plans for the application at the neighbouring site under application ref: 19/01669/FP:



Figure 8: Screenshot of Site Layout, taken from Noise Assessment undertaken in support of neighbouring application ref: 19/01669/FP, annotated with Plot 7 outlined in Green and Plot 14 outlined in Pink.

6.45 Standard thermal double glazing (4-12-4 or similar) attenuates externally generated noise by around 25 dB at a frequency of 100 Hz (the main frequency of the substation noise). A façade with a partially open window is normally taken to attenuate externally generated noise by around 15 dB, which is taken to apply at 100 Hz as well as a broadband noise spectrum.



6.46 With the worst-case external noise level not exceeding 40 dB LAeq,t, standard thermal double glazing was found to most likely result in internal noise levels (for the neighbouring site) not exceeding:

- 40 - 25 = 15 dB LAeq,t with windows closed; and
- 40 - 15 = 25 dB LAeq,t with windows partially open.

6.47 As such, in the case of the neighbouring site, it was deemed possible to comply with the relevant internal noise limits via the use of standard thermal double glazing. It is considered that similar conclusions may be drawn with respect to the development being proposed in this application. The site is at a similar distance both to the road and to the substation, and consequently noise levels would be similar. As such the noise levels can be suitably mitigated via the use of simple measures such as standard thermal double glazing. This application should therefore be deemed to be appropriate in terms of the impact of noise upon future inhabitants, and said double glazing may be secured via condition should the council feel necessary.

#### Ecology and Biodiversity

6.48 The application site is not close to any sites or features of national or local nature conservation interest. However, Local Plan Policy NE4: Biodiversity and geological sites requires development proposals to demonstrate that there would be no harm to protected species or biodiversity within the site, and a Preliminary Ecological Assessment (PEA) was therefore undertaken early in the project, followed by further protected species surveys that fed into an Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA) that was submitted alongside this application.

6.49 The EclA, produced by Maydencroft, was informed by the following surveys:

- UK Habs habitat Survey;
- Botanical survey
- Ground Level Tree Assessments (GLTA);
- Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment (PBRA)
- Pre-works badger walkover



6.50 The following conclusions were drawn regarding the site's potential to support protected species: structures on site have Negligible and Low/Negligible suitability to support Bats, no potential roost features were observed in trees to be removed, grassland on site was confirmed to be 'Other neutral grassland (g3c)' under UKHab specifications, and only three orchids were observed, none of which are protected under Schedule 8 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act (WCA).

6.51 In addition, no badger setts or evidence of badger activity were identified within 30m of the Site within the woodland to the north of the site.

6.52 Mitigation measures recommended, and as such proposed to be followed, are as follows:

- To protect the retained grassland during works, track matting should be installed to limit erosion to the soil.
- Good practice measures relating to the storage of hazardous substances and disposal of waste must be followed to ensure these do not enter the soil.
- Any permanent habitat losses must be compensated for through Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG).
- Losses of individual trees should be kept to an absolute minimum.
- All mitigation measures to protect the retained treelines will be detailed within a BS5837 Tree Protection Plan and Arboricultural Method Statement.

6.53 In addition, species specific compensatory measures recommended by the EcIA, and consequently planned to be incorporated into the development, are the installation of

- 2x Shwegler 2F Bat Boxes;
- 2x Shwegler 1B Hole Nest Boxes

6.54 These measures may be secured via suitably worded conditions.



- 6.55 In terms of mandatory Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) requirements, this proposal would result in a 44.14% loss in Habitat Units, and a 3.07% loss in linear habitat/hedgerow units. The baseline for this calculation takes into account trees that were subsequently removed to make way for the archaeological investigation of the site. It has been deemed impractical to meet the mandatory 10% gain in Biodiversity onsite, due to the site's limited size and the need for residential gardens to be of a suitable size for the houses to have sufficient amenity space. Consequently, it is proposed to offset the loss in Biodiversity by purchasing sufficient Biodiversity Credits. This can be secured by suitably worded condition.
- 6.56 The above measures and credits are sufficient to ensure that the proposed scheme complies with Policies SP12 and NE4 of the Local Plan, and Section 15 of the NPPF. For further detail, please see the Biodiversity Net Gain Statement prepared by Maydencroft, submitted in this application.

#### Heritage and Archaeology

- 6.57 The pre-app response (ref: 24/02649/PRE) stated that Policy SI2 required that an archaeological survey be completed prior to development. The reasoning for this became clear upon reviewing the neighbouring site's planning history under application ref: 19/01669/FP, which revealed that the remains of an iron age village lie to the south of the site, and had potential to extend into the site. This archaeological area is not mapped on the local authority's web map.
- 6.58 Accordingly, a scheme of archaeological investigation was undertaken on the site to ascertain what archaeological assets may be present. This investigation was undertaken by Archaeology South East, and the findings from this investigation may be viewed in detail within the Archaeological Evaluation Report submitted alongside this statement.
- 6.59 The summary of the findings is as follows: *"Two archaeological evaluation trenches were excavated within the footprints of proposed new dwellings at the site. No truncation was recorded in either trench and the archaeological horizon is considered to be intact within the evaluated areas. No archaeological features, deposits or finds were encountered, and therefore the site almost certainly lies beyond the Iron Age and Roman settlement areas known to the west of the site"*.



- 6.60 Development on this site would therefore comply with Policy HE4: Archaeology.
- 6.61 The site is over 270m from the edge of St Ippolyts Conservation Area. It cannot be seen from the Conservation Area. As such, the site would have little to no impact on this asset or its setting, and thus Policy HE1 should not be applied. Should the council disagree, it should be noted that in the Officer's Report for the application for 14 dwellinghouses at the neighbouring site (under application ref: 19/01669/FP), the impact of that proposal upon the conservation area was not considered. That site is closer to the conservation area than this one, and the proposal was for a far more substantial development. It is therefore clear that this proposal will not impact the Conservation Area or its setting, and thus it should not be considered against Policy HE1.

### Trees

- 6.62 A Tree Survey and Arboricultural Impact Assessment (ref: 02193AIA/CJO/0610) has been carried out by OMC Associates and submitted with the application. This identifies that the proposed site has several trees present, with 2 trees along the northern boundary of the site protected via Tree Preservation Orders. A copy of the confirmation of the TPO Confirmation Letter, dated 16 September 2025, is appended to this statement (Appendix 3). The protected trees are labelled as T28 and T32 in the Arboricultural Impact Assessment, prepared by OMC associates and based on the tree survey carried out 10 September 2024. The TPO'd trees are labelled as T28 and T32.
- 6.63 The root protection zones for these two trees may be seen in the Site Layout Plan (drawing ref: 224338 DWG 002). An excerpt of this plan may be seen below with the relevant root protection zones shaded in yellow; this shading is not included in the original drawing and has been added for ease of comprehension. The proposed development shall not affect the root protection zones of the 2 TPO'd trees.

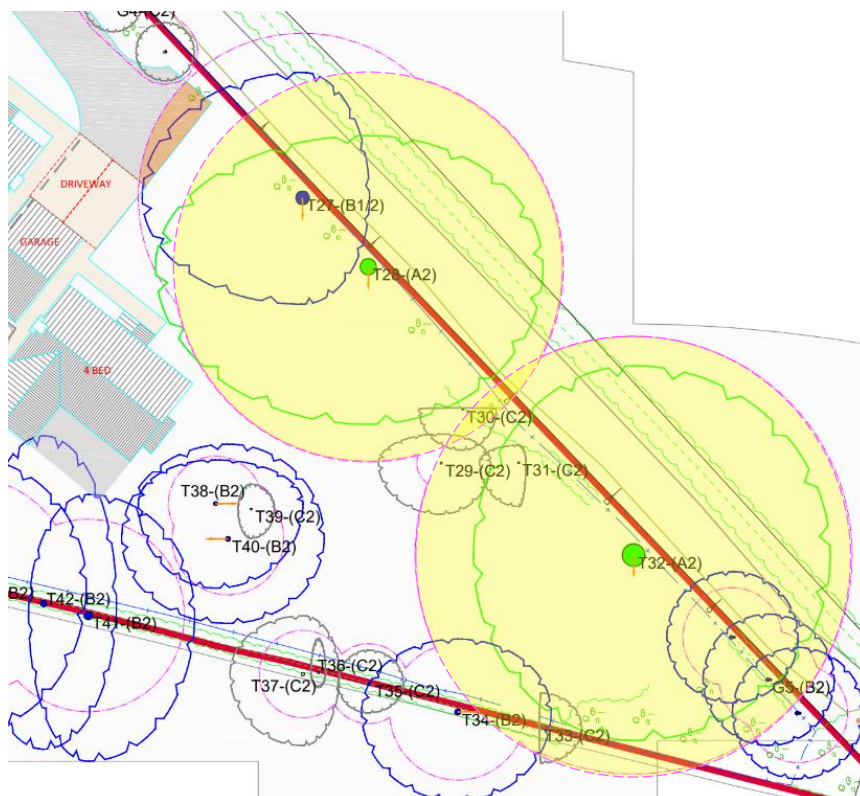


Figure 9: Excerpt of Tree Constraints Plan (Appendix E of Arboricultural Impact Assessment prepared by OMC Associates), with RPAs of Tree References T28 and T32 highlighted yellow

- 6.64 9 category C trees and 1 category A tree have previously been removed in order to facilitate an archaeological investigation of the site. None of these trees were protected, and all could have been removed as part of ordinary gardening works, not subject to planning control. As such, they have not been factored into the Arboricultural Impact Assessment, although they have been included in the calculation of the Biodiversity Metric.
- 6.65 This proposal will require the removal of one C grade tree, the Cyprus hedge G2. 1 B Grade ash tree (T25) will also need to be crown-lifted, and 2 C grade hawthorns (T24 and T26, both in poor condition) will need to be cut hard back to 0.5m stumps, in order to accommodate the new drive. The cutting back of the two latter trees will have the added benefit of allowing for the regeneration of the dense native species hedge on the site border. The RPAs of T24, T25 and T26 will be notably incurred upon, but this would be represented entirely by new hard standing rather than by structures and, as such, should allow for a significant proportion of the overlain roots to continue growing.
- 6.66 Such hard surfacing as crosses into the RPAs shall be formed of a no-dig cellular confinement system such as *geoweb*, infilled with no-fines stone to preserve infiltration and the RPAs.



During construction a combination of ground protection and protective fencing will be used to protect the RPAs of all trees to be maintained. These mitigation measures, along with the relatively insignificant nature of the trees that will be subject to works, mean that the proposal will not have significant impacts on trees.

#### Flooding

- 6.67 The application site lies in Flood Zone 1 and therefore has a low probability of flooding. It is not within an area of surface water flooding (although there is a small area of low-to-medium chance of surface water flooding along Stevenage Road, to the front but outside of the application site). The proposed dwellings will not be at an unacceptable risk of flooding, and details of drainage can be secured at a later date via condition. It should be noted that no risk of flooding was considered in the pre-app advice received under local authority reference: 24/02649/PRE
- 6.68 The proposal is therefore considered to be compliant with Policy NE7.

#### Contamination

- 6.69 The site is not known to be contaminated and has been used as residential garden. No risk of contamination was considered in the pre-app advice received under local authority reference: 24/02649/PRE.

### **7.0 PLANNING BALANCE AND CONCLUSIONS**

- 7.1 This proposal is for the demolition of a detached garage and the erection of two detached dwellinghouses and one detached garage at Ryefield, Stevenage Road, St Ippolyts, Hitchin, Herts, SG4 7PE.



- 7.2 The site is in a sustainable location, within the development boundary of St Ippolyts. The presumption in favour of sustainable development applies, no conflict has been identified in relation to policies that protect areas or assets of particular importance, and any minor adverse impacts of the development do not significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits. As such the presumption in favour of sustainable development applies, and the principle of development in this location is supported by both local and national policy.
- 7.3 It is also a material consideration that permission has previously been granted for 14 dwellings to the west (under application ref: 19/01669/FP), and that the proposed two dwellinghouses would be constructed in the garden of an existing dwellinghouse. Development of housing in this area is thus highly unlikely to have impacts on the conservation area.
- 7.4 The site will remain well-screened, with no harm to trees on the boundary of the site. Special care shall be taken to preserve the trees protected by TPO on the north of the site, and no development shall occur within their RPAs. No harm will arise in relation to ecology, highways, design, or neighbour impact.
- 7.5 The scheme will offer several benefits, including the delivery of two market dwellings in a sustainable location to contribute towards the Council's housing need. New residents will support local services and support social sustainability. The proposal will also offer economic benefits through the construction phase. The proposal offers a number of environmental benefits, including highly energy-efficient dwellings in a sustainable location, and an enhancement to Biodiversity in the area via the purchasing of credits.
- 7.6 Officers are therefore respectfully requested to support this application, subject to conditions as deemed reasonable and necessary.

## **Appendix 1**

Pre Application Advice Letter, relating to Local Authority

Ref: 24/02649/PRE

Tom Allington  
3 The Gatehouse  
Hadham Hall  
Little Hadham  
Ware  
Herts  
SG11 2EB  
FAO: Sworders

Our Ref: 24/02649/PRE  
  
Contact: Melissa Tyler 01462 474245  
Direct Line: [melissa.tyler@northherts.gov.uk](mailto:melissa.tyler@northherts.gov.uk)  
Email: 20 March 2025  
Date:

Dear Tom Allington

**Pre Application Advice : Two detached dwellings**

Ryefield, Stevenage Road, St Ippolyts, Hitchin, Hertfordshire, SG4 7PE,

**Please quote the following reference: 24/02649/PRE on all correspondence.**

I refer to your request for pre-application advice regarding the aforementioned site; I am writing to you following an assessment of the supporting documents submitted and a site visit. I would emphasise that this document does not constitute a formal determination and is without prejudice to any subsequent planning application.

The following assessment is based upon the following submitted details:

- Application form
- Covering Letter;
- Site Location Plan;
- Site Layout Plan;
- Floorplans and elevations

For your information the relevant government guidance and policies from the development plan are as follows:

**North Herts Local Plan 2011 - 2031**

Policy SP1: Sustainable development in North Hertfordshire  
Policy SP2: Settlement Hierarchy and Spatial Distribution  
Policy SP6: Sustainable Transport  
Policy SP7: Infrastructure requirements and developer contributions  
Policy SP8: Housing  
Policy SP9: Design and Sustainability  
Policy SP10: Healthy communities  
Policy SP11: Natural resources and sustainability  
Policy SP12: Green Infrastructure, landscape and biodiversity  
Policy SP13: Historic Environment  
Policy T1: Assessment of Transport matters  
Policy T2: Parking  
Policy HS1: Local Housing Allocations  
Policy HS2: Affordable housing

Policy HS3: Housing mix  
Policy HS5: Accessible and adaptable housing  
Policy D1: Sustainable Design  
Policy D3: Protecting living conditions  
Policy D4: Air Quality  
Policy NE2: Landscape  
Policy NE4: Biodiversity and geological sites  
Policy NE6: New and improved open space  
Policy NE7: Reducing flood risk  
Policy NE8: Sustainable drainage systems  
Policy NE11: Contaminated land  
Policy HE1: Designated heritage assets Policy  
HE4: Archaeology

## **National Planning Policy Framework**

Section 5 – Delivering a sufficient supply of homes  
Section 8 – Promoting healthy and safe communities  
Section 9 – Promoting sustainable transport  
Section 11 – Making effective use of land  
Section 12 – Achieving well-designed and beautiful places  
Section 14 – Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change  
Section 15 – Conserving and enhancing the natural environment  
Section 16 – Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

## **Supplementary Planning Documents**

Vehicle Parking at New Developments SPD - November 2011  
Design SPD - July 2011  
Sustainability SDP - September 2024

## **Site**

The proposed site is in the south east of St Ippolyts within the large garden of Ryefield.

The site lies between two public highways to its north and south (Stevenage Road, and Sperberry Hill, respectively). Stevenage Road is narrow for much of its length. Vehicular access from Stevenage Road to Sperberry Hill is closed by barriers at the south point of the site.

## **Proposal**

Pre-application advice is sought for a residential development of 2 dwellings with associated parking, landscaping and ancillary works.

The submitted layout shows one dwelling comprising four bedrooms and the other five. Each dwelling has been provided with a garden. One has been provided with a detached garage to replace the one already on site and the other denotes a integrated garage.

## **Principle of Development**

The site lies within the settlement boundaries of St. Ippolyts as defined by the Local Plan. Policy SP2 of the Local Plan designates St Ippolyts is a Category A village, where general development will be allowed within village boundaries. On this basis, the development that is proposed is acceptable in principle.

## **Character and appearance, layout, size, scale and design**

Design is central to good planning. The achievement of high quality, sustainable design is required by Government guidance. Planning policies should promote high quality, inclusive design in layouts and buildings in terms of function and impact. Design which does not make the most of opportunities to improve the character and quality of an area should be refused. Policy SP9

(Design and Sustainability) considers that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development and that proposals will be supported if the development is well designed and located and responds positively to its local context.

The proposal would result in new residential development on undeveloped land, which would change its character and appearance significantly through urbanisation. However, the application site is within the settlement boundary of St Ippolyts, where new housing development is permitted by the relevant LP policies and is also required to deliver new housing by Policy SP8. The urbanisation of the site is therefore considered acceptable due to these policies.

Development proposals must respond positively to the sites local context and be in-keeping with the character and appearance of the area. The proposed subdivision of the existing plot, although a substantial size, into three in my opinion with the proposed two new large dwellings would conclude in a form of cramped development that would increase the pressure on the removal on more trees to incorporate the two dwellings on this site. It is of my view that the addition of a single dwelling here would decrease the potential pressures on the trees and create a more spacious dwelling and amenity area.

The proposed development of the site for two houses would lead to increased pressure on the existing trees, and could jeopardizing the delicate balance of the local ecosystem. The quest for space could result in the removal of mature trees, impacting not only the aesthetic appeal of the area but also disrupting the ecological equilibrium.

Overdevelopment not only compromises the environmental benefits provided by trees but also contributes to a loss of biodiversity. Striking a harmonious balance between housing needs and environmental preservation is imperative to mitigate the adverse effects of overdevelopment on existing green spaces and foster sustainable urban growth. Additionally, the close proximity of both the proposed dwellings and the nearby trees may limit access to natural light and ventilation, affecting the overall comfort and well-being of residents.

I am on the view that the proposal for two dwellings on the site could increase the pressure on future owners and occupiers to remove more trees to increase light and increase the proposed garden areas for a more formal garden area. The proposed dwellings are located very close to some of these trees and therefore the construction of two dwellings in close proximity may cause undue harm to the existing trees.

I would therefore be inclined to support 1 dwellinghouse on the site or two smaller dwellinghouse that would not have a negative impact of the trees located on the boundaries.

Whilst the layout and massing and appearance of the dwellings are only indicative at this stage, the scale, form, design and materials palette should reflect local context. In regards to materials I would take a view that the use of buff brick walls and grey roof tiles would be the predominant external materials and would reflect Ryefield to the east, and contextually appropriate.

Any subsequent application should be supported by a full Design and Access Statement and Planning Statement.

### **Amenity of Future Occupiers/Neighbours**

Paragraph 130 (f) of the NPPF states that “*decisions should ensure that developments... create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and wellbeing, with a high standard of amenity of future and existing users*”. This is largely reflected in Policies D1 and SP9 of the Local Plan. A criterion of Policy SI2 is that appropriate noise mitigation measures, to potentially include insulation and appropriate orientation of living spaces, should be provided. The main noise generating development in the vicinity of the application site is Wymondley Substation. A Noise Assessment Report must be submitted with any future application. The Council’s Environmental Health Officer would be consulted and consider the proposed mitigations, which would be given significant weight, in line with LP Policy SI2.

The layout of the scheme exemplifies that all dwellings will have access to suitably sized private amenity space. The orientation of the dwellings would see them all benefit from acceptable levels

of daylight/sunlight. The dwellings should be designed to meet or exceed the Nationally Described Space Standards.

Local Plan policy D3 Protecting Living Conditions states that:

*“Planning permission will be granted for development proposals which do not cause unacceptable harm to living conditions. Where.....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.”*

Given the distances between the scheme and its proposed boundaries treatment, the flat topography of the site, and the scale and layout, it is not considered that this proposal will give rise to any materially adverse harm upon the reasonable living conditions and well-being of neighbouring dwellings.

### **Access, Parking and Highways**

Local Plan Policy T1 Assessment of transport matters states that planning permission will be granted provided that:

*“a) Development would not lead to highway safety problems or cause unacceptable impacts upon the highway network”.*

Policy T2 states that planning permission will be granted provided that:

*“a) Parking for residential development is provided in accordance with the minimum standards set out in Appendix 4 of this Plan”.*

Hertfordshire County Council would be consulted on any forthcoming application as a statutory consultee. They would assess the impact of the proposals on the local road network and assess the acceptability of the new access. The Highway Authority do offer pre-application services.

The Council's residential parking standards are for dwellings with 2 or more bedrooms to have a minimum of two parking spaces. Council minimum cycle parking standards are for 1 secure covered space per dwelling, with none if a garage or secure area is provided within the curtilage of each dwelling. The dwellings would need to have cycle parking in sheds or their own garages.

Visitor parking provision requirements in the Local Plan are between 0.25 and 0.75 spaces per dwelling (rounded up to nearest whole number) with the higher standard being applied where there are no garages in the schemes and the lower standard applied where every dwelling in the scheme is to be provided with a garage.

The dwellings will need to provide suitable levels of parking for future occupiers and their visitors, in accordance with the details set out in Appendix 4 of the Local Plan. Moreover, the scheme will need to provide suitable levels of cycle parking in accordance with the aforementioned guidance. These should be demonstrated on any future proposed plans.

### **Landscaping**

The indicate layout plan shows the extent of amenity area provision as well as retained/proposed landscaping. On the whole, the broad details of landscaping appear reasonable, showing the existing trees being retained where possible. A comprehensive landscaping scheme would be welcomed in any subsequent application, or these details could be reserved via condition.

### **Biodiversity and Ecology**

Local Plan Policy NE4 states that planning permission will only be granted for development proposals that appropriately protect, enhance and manage biodiversity and that all development should deliver measurable net gains for biodiversity amongst other factors. Any future planning application would need to address the biodiversity loss of the garden area and provide a net gain for biodiversity. Consideration would also need to be given to the potential for the outbuildings to accommodate bats and birds.

Any future planning application should be supported by an ecological appraisal. This would indicate any potential protected species interest on the site. Should such an interest be found it may be necessary to undertake further surveys to determine the level of use. The results of these surveys and details of proposed mitigation would need to accompany an application.

There is now a mandatory requirement to deliver 10% Biodiversity Net Gain as such a completed Statutory Metric calculation will need to be provided. This should be informed by the biodiversity baseline as determined in the ecological appraisal.

The proposal will need to comply with Policies SP12 and NE4 of the Local Plan, and Section 15 of the NPPF.

### **Drainage and flood risk**

The site is in Flood Zone 1, therefore the proposed development is not considered to be at risk of flooding from waterways. The key material consideration is therefore whether the development would be able to provide acceptable drainage that would not result in detrimental surface water flooding inside and outside the site.

### **Climate Change Emergency**

On 21 May 2019, the Council passed a Climate Emergency motion which pledged to do everything within the Council's power achieve zero carbon emissions in North Hertfordshire by 2030. As one of the first councils to pass this motion, NHDC is leading the way on climate action. This declaration asserted the Council's commitment toward Climate Action beyond current government targets and international agreements. Climate action has been a long-term corporate priority area for the Council, and has been pursued through our objective to Prosper and Protect North Hertfordshire:

This objective informs our commitments to: ☐

Green space provision.

- Representing the Climate Change interests of North Hertfordshire residents on county and regional plans, policies and aspirations.
- Supporting initiatives that increase the energy efficiency of residents' homes, reduce resource waste, and increase our sustainability for the longer term.
- Protecting our physical heritage.
- Finding environmentally sustainable solutions to the challenges

Along with the inclusion of EV charging points which are now a requirement on all new dwellings, other mitigation should be considered in order to make a positive contribution to the mitigation of the climate emergency in line with the new Sustainability SPD. This might be achieved through layout and design of the proposed dwellings, maximising solar gain where possible. This would be seen as a positive attribute of any scheme alongside the inclusion of renewable energy technology. A detailed Energy Assessment will be required in any subsequent planning application, identifying which sustainable measures will be incorporated into the scheme.

### **Archaeology**

Policy SI2 states that an archaeological survey should be completed prior to development.

### **Conclusion**

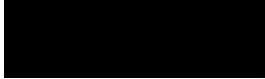
In conclusion, the principle of development of this site is supported within the settlement of St Ippolyts. However, to reduce the impact on a number of high quality trees I would take the view that one dwellinghouse on the side garden is preferable.

Any subsequent planning application should be supported by a robust and comprehensive Design and Access Statement, Planning Statement, Landscaping Plan/Details, Bio-diversity Net Gain Statement, and an Energy Statement. Consultation with the Highway Authority is encouraged to ensure the proposed access is acceptable in highways terms.

Any advice given by Council Officers for pre-application enquiries does not constitute formal response or decision of the Council with regards to future planning permission or consents. Kind regards

**Melissa Tyler Senior Planning Officer**

Yours sincerely

A black rectangular box used to redact the signature of Ian Fullstone.

Ian Fullstone  
Service Director – Regulatory

**The Council's Privacy Notice is available on our website:**

**<https://www.northherts.gov.uk/home/council-data-and-performance/data-protection/informationmanagement-gdpr>**

## **Appendix 2**

Officer's Report from Application Ref: 19/01669/FP

Location:

**Land West Of Ryefield  
Stevenage Road  
St Ippolyts  
Hertfordshire**

Applicant:

**Valais Ltd**

Proposal:

**Erection of 14 dwellings including new vehicular access off Sperberry Hill (serving 4 dwellings) and new vehicular accesses off Stevenage Road (serving 10 dwellings) (amended plans received 12/01/2023 and 15/08/23)**

Ref. No:

**19/01669/FP**

Officer:

**Andrew Hunter**

**Date of expiry of statutory period:**

9 October 2019

**Extension of statutory period:**

31 March 2020

**Reason for referral to Committee:**

The application is to be determined by Planning Control Committee by reason of the development being residential development with a site area of 0.5 hectares or greater, as set out in 8.4.5 of the Council's Scheme of Delegation.

**1.0 Relevant Site History**

1.1 01/00348/1 - 5 Detached dwelling houses (Outline Application - All matters reserved) - Refused 31/05/01 for:

1. The proposed dwellings are in an area that is designated in the approved County Structure Plan Review 1991-2011 and the North Hertfordshire District Local Plan No 2 with Alterations as Green Belt. Within that area there exists a general presumption against new housing development. In the view of the Local Planning Authority the nature of the proposal does not justify that strong presumption being overridden. Additionally, the proposal would be viewed as encroaching into the surrounding countryside, thereby

having an adverse impact from the visual amenities and landscape of this part of the Green Belt contrary to paragraph 1.5 of Planning Guidance Note 2 (Green Belts).

Appeal dismissed 26/10/01.

- 1.2 90/01554/1 - Outline Application for three detached dwellings – Refused 09/07/91.

Appeal dismissed.

## 2.0 **Policies**

### 2.1 **North Herts Local Plan 2011 - 2031**

Policy SP1: Sustainable development in North Hertfordshire

Policy SP2: Settlement Hierarchy and Spatial Distribution

Policy SP6: Sustainable Transport

Policy SP7: Infrastructure requirements and developer contributions

Policy SP8: Housing

Policy SP9: Design and Sustainability

Policy SP10: Healthy communities

Policy SP11: Natural resources and sustainability

Policy SP12: Green Infrastructure, landscape and biodiversity

Policy SP13: Historic Environment

Policy T1: Assessment of Transport matters

Policy T2: Parking

Policy HS1: Local Housing Allocations

Policy HS2: Affordable housing

Policy HS3: Housing mix

Policy HS5: Accessible and adaptable housing

Policy D1: Sustainable Design

Policy D3: Protecting living conditions

Policy D4: Air Quality

Policy NE2: Landscape

Policy NE4: Biodiversity and geological sites

Policy NE6: New and improved open space

Policy NE7: Reducing flood risk

Policy NE8: Sustainable drainage systems

Policy NE11: Contaminated land

Policy HE1: Designated heritage assets

Policy HE4: Archaeology

Policy SI2: Land south of Stevenage Road

### 2.2 **National Planning Policy Framework**

Section 5 – Delivering a sufficient supply of homes

Section 8 – Promoting healthy and safe communities

Section 9 – Promoting sustainable transport

Section 11 – Making effective use of land

Section 12 – Achieving well-designed and beautiful places

Section 14 – Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change

Section 15 – Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

Section 16 – Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

## 2.3 **Supplementary Planning Documents**

Developer Contributions SPD (2023)

## 3.0 **Representations**

### 3.1 **Neighbouring Properties:**

The application has been advertised via neighbour notification letters, the display of a site Notice, and a press notice. At the time of finalising this report, 20 objections in total had been received, for the original and later amended plans. The objections received were on the following grounds:

- Providing vehicular access from Stevenage Road. It's a single track road with no pavement, busy at peak times.
- Stevenage Road can't support more traffic. Has a school and children using it.
- It would make most sense for all vehicular access to be via Sperberry Hill.
- Pedestrian walkways for the whole area need attention.
- Stevenage Road access onto Sperberry Hill closed in 1976 due to increased traffic and safety issues.
- All construction traffic should be via Sperberry Hill. Disruption elsewhere in the village from other building work.
- Sperberry Hill is a rat run and would need to be widened. Potential damage.
- Height of dwelling overlooking Lannacombe.
- Double storey garages should be single level.
- Predict our fences will be damaged.
- Would like new planting to conceal the dwellings.
- Plans don't show right of way to Lannacombe and other houses.
- Local schools all oversubscribed.
- No indication that the houses would be energy efficient.
- Amendments not satisfactory due to traffic and safety concerns.
- Notification letter inadequate.
- No objection in principle.

## **Consultees**

### 3.2 **Parish Council**

There is a need to consider the installation of rooftop solar, speed limit lowered to 30mph on Sperberry Hill and tree planting to adjacent property for privacy.

It is noted all the dwellings will be heated by air source heat pumps.

### 3.3 **HCC Growth and Infrastructure**

Based on the information to date for the development of 14 dwellings we would seek financial contributions towards the following projects:

*Primary Education* towards the expansion of St Ippolyts Primary School and/or provision serving the development (£161,066 index linked to BCIS 1Q2022) *Secondary Education* towards the expansion of The Priory Secondary School and/or provision serving the development (£214,533 index linked to BCIS 1Q2022)

*Childcare Service* towards St Ippolyts Primary School and/or provision serving the development (£228 index linked to BCIS 1Q2022)

*Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)* towards the new East Severe Learning Difficulty school and/or provision serving the development (£19,681 index linked to BCIS 1Q2022)

*Library Service* towards increasing the capacity of Hitchin Library and/or provision serving the development (£3,718 index linked to BCIS 1Q2022)

*Youth Service* towards the delivery of a new centre serving Hitchin and the surrounding area and/or provision serving the development (£6,218 index linked to BCIS 1Q2022)

*Monitoring Fees* – HCC will charge monitoring fees. These will be based on the number of triggers within each legal agreement with each distinct trigger point attracting a charge of £340 (adjusted for inflation against RPI July 2021). For further information on monitoring fees please see section 5.5 of the Guide to Developer Infrastructure Contributions.

#### 3.4 Herts County Council highways officer

*(E-mail 27 June 2024)*

I've reviewed the revised tracking and they're satisfactory.

I'll look to put together the approval with conditions.

*(Comments 14 November 2023)*

Full comments are in Appendix 1 to this report.

Recommends that permission be refused.

#### 3.5 Waste Officer

No objections.

#### 3.6 Housing Supply Officer

The affordable housing requirement is 25% on sites which will provide between 11 and 14 dwellings, in accordance with the Local Plan.

Based on the provision of 14 dwellings, 25% affordable housing equates to 4 affordable dwellings. Within the overall affordable housing the council requires a 65% rented / 35% intermediate affordable housing tenure split, in accordance with the and the council's Developer Contributions SPD, supported by the 2016 Stevenage and North Hertfordshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) Update. So three affordable units for rent and one for intermediate affordable tenure/ shared ownership.

A rural Housing Needs Survey (HNS) was undertaken in St Ippolyts in 2012. We consider that HNSs have a 5-year life span, so this could now be considered very out of date.

The HNS identified a need for 18 units over a five year period; including a mix of mainly one bedroom and two bedroom homes and one x three bedroom house predominately for rent. The HNS concluded that a scheme of 9 dwellings: 3 x 1 bedroom; 5 x 2 bedroom and 1 x 3 bedroom homes could be considered to meet immediate housing need.

Following my advice of 18th May 2023 the applicant is proposing the affordable housing provision of 2 x 2 bed houses, 1 x 2 bed bungalow and 1 x 3 bed house, with access to all 4 dwellings from Stevenage Road (not Sperberry Hill as indicated above).

### 3.7 Hertfordshire Ecology

No objections. Full comments are in Appendix 1 to this report.

### 3.8 Lead Local Flood Authority

A Flood Risk and Drainage Technical Note was submitted to respond to comments, which includes an updated drainage layout that incorporates an infiltration basin to provide additional storage, amenity and biodiversity benefits. The LLFA is satisfied that the drainage strategy proposed is suitable and recommend conditions if the application were to be approved.

### 3.9 NHC Grounds Maintenance Green Spaces

NHC does not undertake any maintenance of the greenspace within the village of St Ippolyts except on behalf of Settle Housing. Therefore, it is assumed that the open spaces, trees, and woodland would be adopted by the Parish Council who maintain the play area etc locally.

Suggests that the Parish Council also seek an off-site contribution towards the upgrading of their local play area due to the increased demand this development will bring to the locality.

With regards the woodland, trees and other habitats expect Biodiversity Net Gain targets to be met on site and that these obligations are going to be clarified within a suitable management plan and will have financial provision to cover estimated costs for the next 30 years - again anticipate that the Parish Council would be adopting responsibilities for maintaining these areas.

### 3.10 Environmental Health Noise

No objection.  
3.11 Herts County Council Archaeology

No objections. Full comments are in Appendix 1 to this report.

3.12 Environmental Health Land Contamination

No objection.

3.13 Herts CC Minerals and Waste

No objection.

3.14 Environmental Health Air Quality

No objection.

3.15 Anglian Water

No objection.

3.16 Sport England

The proposed development does not fall within either our statutory remit (Statutory Instrument 2015/595), or non-statutory remit (National Planning Policy Guidance (PPG) Par. 003 Ref. ID: 37-003-20140306), therefore Sport England has not provided a detailed response in this case.

3.17 HCC Fire and Rescue

Based on the information provided to date we would seek the provision of fire hydrant(s), as set out within HCC's Planning Obligations Toolkit.

3.18 Urban Designer and Landscape Architect Planning Policy NHDC

Full comments are in Appendix 1 to this report.

3.19 Herts and Middx Wildlife Trust

Objection. Full comments are in Appendix 1 to this report.

4.0 **Planning Considerations**

4.1 **Site and Surroundings**

4.1.1 The site is approx. 1.2 ha in size, in the south-east of St Ippolyts. The site is not in use for any purpose, was former nursery land (stated in the appeal decision of 01/00348/1) and is largely overgrown (it was also the case when 01/00348/1 was under consideration). Ground levels fall gradually from west to east. The south and east boundaries are

comprised of continuous trees and vegetation. The north and west boundaries are comprised of smaller numbers of trees, 1.8m close-boarded fencing, and lower vegetation.

4.1.2 The site lies between two public highways to its north and south (Stevenage Road, and Sperberry Hill, respectively). A public footpath runs along the east side of the site and connects the two above public highways. Stevenage Road is narrow for much of its length, with pedestrian footways approx. 330m to the NW. Vehicular access from Stevenage Road to Sperberry Hill is closed by barriers near dwelling Ryefield to the east.

4.1.3 The site is adjacent to two storey dwellings to the east, west and north. To the NE is the Wymondley Electrical sub-station. To the south is an agricultural field. The site is allocated Housing Site SI2 within the settlement boundary of St Ippolyts and Gosmore, which is a Category A village in the Local Plan.

## 4.2 **Proposal**

4.2.1 Planning permission is sought for:

Erection of 14 dwellings including one new vehicular access off Sperberry Hill (serving 10 dwellings) and one new vehicular access off Stevenage Road (serving 4 dwellings).

4.2.2 The development would be wholly within the area of Local Plan housing site allocation SI2. It would have one vehicular entrance off Sperberry Hill, allowing access to 10 of the dwellings. One vehicular entrance is proposed off Stevenage Road to access the other 4 dwellings. Internally, the dwellings would be largely arranged around an area of public open space and SuDS drainage basin in a central area of the site, with the outer 5

dwellings nearer the footpath and Stevenage Road. The five southern dwellings would be accessed by internal roads branching off the main road.

4.2.3 The dwellings would all be two storeys, apart from Plot 14 which would be a bungalow. All dwellings would have pitched roofs. Ten of the dwellings would have detached double garages with pitched roofs, with the garage for Plot 4 including first floor workspace accommodation with two front dormers. Four of the dwellings would have sheds in their rear gardens.

4.2.4 The dwelling mix is proposed to be 10 market units, and 4 affordable units. The 10 market units would comprise nine 4 bed units, and one 5 bed unit. The affordable units would comprise two 2 bed houses, one 2 bed bungalow, and one 3 bed house. Three of the affordable units would be for rent, and one for intermediate affordable tenure/shared ownership.

4.2.5 The dwellings and garages would all have pitched gabled roofs. External materials are proposed to be a mix of red bricks and buff stock bricks, with the red brick dwellings having brown tiles, and the buff brick dwellings having grey tiles.

4.2.6 The development would include new hard and soft landscaping, with new trees and other planting throughout the site. Some trees and vegetation at the front and rear of the site would be removed to build the accesses and provide visibility. An area of public open space including a Local Area for Play (LAP) and SuDS infiltration basin would be located

centrally within the site. Smaller strips of landscaping and planting would be spread around the site. The public footpath will be re-aligned and upgraded to provide an improved surface and new external lighting. A fenced pedestrian access route to dwelling Lannacombe would be provided in the northern part of the site.

#### 4.3 **Key Issues**

##### 4.3.1 The key issues for consideration are as follows:

- The principle of the proposed development in this location.
- The design of the proposed development and its resultant impact on the character and appearance of the area;
- The effect upon archaeology;
- The effect upon living conditions of occupiers of neighbouring properties;
- Whether the proposal would provide an acceptable standard of accommodation for future occupiers of the dwellings;
- The acceptability of the proposed development with regards to parking, sustainable transport, and impacts on the public highway
- The quality of landscaping proposed and the impact the proposed development would have on trees.
- The impact that the proposed development would have on ecology and protected species.
- The impact of the proposal on drainage and flood risk; and
- The appropriateness of the planning obligations proposed.

##### Principle of Development:

##### 4.3.2 The site lies within the settlement boundaries of St. Ippolyts as defined by the Local Plan and is allocated for residential development. Local Plan (LP) Policy SI2 allocates the site for an estimated of 12 homes and sets out the following criteria:

- Archaeological survey to be completed prior to development;
- Trees should be incorporated into the design of the development;
- Maintain the existing right of way through the site; and
- Appropriate noise mitigation measures, to potentially include insulation and appropriate orientation of living [accommodation].

In addition, Policy SP2 of the Local Plan designates St Ippolyts is a Category A village, where general development will be allowed within village boundaries. On this basis, the development that is proposed is acceptable in principle as it complies with LP Policy SP2 of the recently adopted Local Plan. LP Policy SI2 sets out several criteria and these are considered under several of the subject headings below.

##### Character and appearance, layout, size, scale and design, and archaeology:

##### 4.3.3 The proposal would result in new residential development on undeveloped land, which would change its character and appearance significantly through urbanisation. However, the application site is allocated for housing and is within the settlement boundary of St Ippolyts, where new housing development is permitted by the relevant LP policies and is also required to deliver new housing by Policy SP8. The urbanisation of the site is therefore considered acceptable due to these policies.

- 4.3.4 The application proposes 14 dwellings, which is 2 dwellings more than the dwelling estimate of 12 homes for Policy SI2 and is a 16.6% increase on that figure. Policy HS1 a) states that development on allocated housing sites such as SI1 should broadly accord with the indicative number of homes shown. 'Broadly' is not defined in the Local Plan, therefore the number of dwellings for an allocated site could be more or less than a dwelling estimate. Para. 8.3 (supporting text of HS1) of the Local Plan states, "*we will take a design-led approach to each site as schemes are brought forward. This may result in housing numbers changing in response to the pre-application and planning application process and our policy approach allows for development to fall within a reasonable range of our initial expectations*".
- 4.3.5 Therefore, whilst the proposed number of dwellings is slightly higher than the estimate for the site in LP Policy SI2, this does not render the proposed development unacceptable or result in conflict with LP Policies HS1 and SI2.
- 4.3.6 The density of the proposed development would be 11.6 dwellings per hectare within the site, and slightly higher if the undeveloped strips on the south and east of the site are excluded. This is a low density for a new housing scheme. However, the density of the dwellings to the north and west of the site between Stevenage Road and Sperberry Hill (with Churchfields and Gaddesden used as the westernmost of these dwellings) is approx. 6.6/ha, which is a very low density and inefficient density. This density would increase to 9.4/ha if the three dwellings west of the site were excluded and would be higher still if only counting Nos. 1 to 6 The Glebe Stevenage Road north of the site. The density of the proposal is overall considered contextually appropriate in St Ippolyts and is acceptable.
- 4.3.7 The overall layout of the proposed development would be like that of a cul-de-sac, not dissimilar to nearby cul-de-sac East View a short distance to the NW of the site. Plot 14 would follow the line of the front of Nos. 1 to 6 The Glebe with a similarly sized plot, with Plots 11 to 14 considered to be of a pattern and grain similar to nearby dwellings on Stevenage Road to the NW.
- 4.3.8 The layout of the development would relate well to the shape of the site and maintain the trees and footpath on its south and east sides. All of the proposed dwellings apart from three would be detached, and they would be spaced out within the site such that the spacious character of the of this part of St Ippolyts.
- 4.3.9 The proposed SuDS infiltration area and the main area of public open space are in acceptable locations which will enable the built form of the development to be largely built around them. The location, design, and integration of these areas into the development will also help to provide a sense of place. The proposed dwellings would be located a sufficient distance from the boundaries of the site to avoid appearing cramped, to provide space for soft landscaping, which would minimise the visual impacts of the development when viewed from Sperberry Hill.
- 4.3.10 The sizes of the individual plots would vary; however, it is considered that they would be comparable to plots of dwellings to the north and NW, which also vary. The dwellings are not considered to appear cramped in their individual plots due to the amount of spacing proposed around and between them.

- 4.3.11 The dwellings would all be detached, apart from Plots 11 to 13, which is considered in keeping with the character of the locality where there are primarily a mix of detached and semi-detached nearest the site, albeit there are some terraced dwellings in East View further away to the north. The dwellings would all be two storeys, apart from Plot 14 which would be a bungalow, which is also considered in keeping with the locality which is primarily of two storey dwellings with a few bungalows. The dwelling mix would be 21% smaller units (1 or 2 beds) and 79% larger units (3+ beds), which is considered acceptable in this location, reflecting the rural character of the locality, where there are numerous larger detached dwellings nearby.
- 4.3.12 The footprints and floor spaces of the dwellings are considered comparable to other nearby dwellings and are acceptable. The bungalow would have a height of approx. 5.3m, the two storey dwellings would vary in height from 8.5m to 9.9m (of these, only Plot 4 would be 9.9m, Plots 1 and 5 would be 9.2m, and the other dwellings would be between 8.5m and 8.7m high), and the detached garages would be 4.7m (with the garage for Plot 4 being 7.4m high).
- 4.3.13 The Plot 14 bungalow will be the closest of the proposed dwellings to Stevenage Road and will have the most immediate impacts on that street scene due to their proximity and visibility from the public highway. The bungalow would have a pitched roof with a front gable end and open pitched-roof porch, which are features of other dwellings nearby in Stevenage Road, and would be of a height that would appear comparable to other bungalows nearby and which appears reasonable and not excessive for such a dwelling type. The detailed design approach and use of red bricks and brown tiles would be similar to others in the street scene and is acceptable.
- 4.3.14 Plots 11 to 13 would be set further back from Stevenage Road than Plot 14 and would also be more obscure by trees, and therefore will have less impacts on the street scene. The design approach, size, and external materials will however be similar to Nos. 1 to 6 The Glebe nearby to the NW, therefore Plots 11 to 13 are considered of an acceptable design in relation to the street scene of Stevenage Road and the wider locality. The other 10 dwellings would be considered to have more limited and acceptable impacts on the street scene of Stevenage Road as they will be set back further into the site and obscured more by buildings and trees.
- 4.3.15 Dwelling Lannacombe adjacent to the west boundary of the site has a height of approx. 8.5m, dwelling West Orchard west of Lannacombe has a height of approx. 7.2m, and dwelling Churchfields west of West Orchard is considered to have a height of 9m. The heights of 8 of the two storey dwellings will vary from 8.5m to 8.7m, with the second highest being 9.2m, which are all considered of an acceptable height given the heights of the three existing dwellings to the west. The Plot 4 dwelling that would be adjacent to Lannacombe would be higher than all nearby dwellings at just under 10m high to the ridge. However, it is considered that this dwelling would not appear unduly tall within its context given its location at the head of the cul-de-sac and screening by trees and buildings.
- 4.3.16 The proposal to use one vehicular access from Sperberry Hill, setting the development behind existing and new planting, will help to minimise the visibility and visual impacts of the development in the wider locality as it will be extensively obscured. The ten dwellings

that would be accessed from Sperberry Hill would be of a traditional appearance, would be an acceptable approach in this location. Buff brick walls and grey roof tiles would be the predominant external materials and would reflect Ryefield to the east, and contextually appropriate. The proposed garages would be of an acceptable size and design.

4.3.17 Policy SI2 states that an archaeological survey should be completed prior to development. Such a survey was submitted with the application, which revealed archaeological remains across much of the site. The County Council Archaeologist has considered the methodology and findings of the survey acceptable, concluding that the quality and density of those remains indicate any part of the site requires preservation in situ. The impact of the development may then be mitigated by a programme of archaeological excavation prior to development. Such a programme can then be specified by appropriate conditions requiring an Archaeological Written Scheme of Investigation to be submitted to the LPA and agreed in writing, to then be implemented. This is therefore considered to comply with Policy SI2.

4.3.18 It is considered that permitted development rights relating to roof extensions and alterations should be removed by condition in the interests of maintaining control over the appearance of the development, potential impacts on dwellings outside the site, and on future occupiers of the development. The amount, size, scale, layout and design of the proposed development is considered acceptable. The proposal is considered acceptable with regards to archaeological assets. The proposal complies with Policies SP9, SP13, D1, HE1 and HE4 of the Local Plan; and Sections 12 and 16 of the NPPF.

#### Impacts on Residential Amenity:

4.3.19 There is one dwelling to the east that adjoins the site, known as Ryefield. The proposed dwelling on Plot 10 would be the closest at a distance of approx. 15.5m from the curtilage of Ryefield, with Plot 11 being the next closest at 21.2m away. At these distances, and due to existing trees to be retained, it is considered that the proposed dwellings would not result in harm to the living conditions of occupiers of Ryefield. The public footpath would be upgraded with new lighting, however due to the number of trees and amount of vegetation between it and Ryefield it is not considered that the lighting will result in harm. Details of lighting will also be controlled by condition.

4.3.20 There are no dwellings to the south that will be affected by the development. Dwelling Lannacombe and its curtilage adjoins the west boundary of the site. The Plot 1 dwelling will be approx. 13.8m from the boundary with Lannacombe, and due to this distance and as it would be substantially obscured by trees, Plot 1 would not harm the amenity of Lannacombe. The garage outbuilding for Plot 1 will be closer to Lannacombe than the main Plot 1 dwelling, however as the outbuilding would be smaller, and would also be set away from the boundary and obscured by trees, the outbuilding will not harm the amenity of that dwelling.

4.3.21 Plot 4 would be the most visible to Lannacombe, more so as it would be on higher ground and there are less trees to the rear. The two-storey part of Plot 4 would be approx. 7m from the boundary and would then taper away from Lannacombe and its curtilage, such that it is not considered that it would appear overbearing or cause loss of light. A single storey rear projection of Plot 4 would be 4.7m from the boundary and substantially obscured by an outbuilding in the curtilage of Lannacombe, and as such would not cause

unacceptable loss of amenity. A first-floor side window of Plot 4 could cause loss of privacy and amenity to Lannacombe. However, as this would be a secondary bedroom window it can be required by condition to be obscure glazed.

- 4.3.22 The garage outbuilding for Plot 4 would be approx. 6.3m from the boundary with Lanacombe, which as it would also be substantially obscured by trees, and would not have any rear openings, is not considered harmful to the amenity of that dwelling. Some concerns have been raised by Lanacombe that a right of way isn't shown. This is not a public right of way, and it is not clear from the comments precisely where the claimed right of way is. From a site visit there didn't appear to be any signs of a right of way onto Stevenage Road and Sperberry Hill apart from the public footpath and given the overgrown condition of the site and its boundaries near Lanacombe it does not appear that any such right of way is in use or would serve any purpose. It is considered that impacts on this right of way can be dealt with outside of the planning process as this is essentially a private civil matter between Lanacombe and the applicant.
- 4.3.23 The other closest dwellings to the site are on Stevenage Road that adjoin the site boundary or are near the site. The development would be largely obscured from dwelling Wainwood and its rear garden to the NW by trees, with the closest proposed dwelling being approx. 24.6m away, therefore the amenity of Wainwood would not be harmed.
- 4.3.24 The two closest proposed dwellings to dwelling The Vicarage east of Wainwood would be approx. 14m and 18.5m from the rear boundary of The Vicarage and would also be obscured by trees. Therefore, it is not considered that harm to the amenity of The Vicarage would occur.
- 4.3.25 The other closest dwellings on Stevenage Road to the site are 1 to 6 The Glebe, three pairs of semi-detached dwellings. The curtilage of No. 1 is approx. 15m from the site and further from the proposed buildings and will not be affected. The curtilage of No. 2 is approx. 1.5m from the site however it faces trees that will provide screening and the proposed buildings will be at oblique angles and set away from the boundary, therefore the amenity of No. 2 will not be harmed.
- 4.3.26 No. 3 partially shares its rear boundary with the site. The rear of No. 3 is approx. 14.8m from its rear boundary, with a proposed double garage and Plot 5 being 3.1m and 14m further away respectively from the boundary and at oblique angles, which is considered sufficient to avoid harm to No. 3. The rear garden of No. 4 is shorter than No. 3 at approx. 11m in depth at its shortest, however the two closest dwellings Plots 5 and 6 would be sited sufficiently far from the boundary and would be at oblique angles and designed such that they would not cause loss of amenity to No. 4. The closest proposed building is a detached double garage for Plot 5 but is not considered harmful to No. 4 as it would be single storey and 3.1m from the boundary. Impacts on the amenity of No. 4 are considered acceptable.
- 4.3.27 No. 5 is closer to the boundary at a minimum distance of approx. 9.2m. The proposed Plot 6 dwelling would be approx. 10.3m from this boundary and at an oblique angle, with no first-floor rear openings on its rear projection, therefore that dwelling will not harm the amenity of No. 5. The detached garages for Plots 5 and 6 will have limited visibility and

impacts on No. 5 and are not considered harmful. Impacts on the amenity of No. 5 are considered acceptable.

- 4.3.28 No. 6 The Glebe is close to the boundary of the site, at a minimum of approx. 4.2m from the boundary. The closest proposed building to the rear of No. 6 is a detached double garage for Plot 6, however as it would be approx. 2.9m from the boundary, obscured by vegetation and single storey, this garage building is not considered harmful. The Plot 6 dwelling would be a minimum of 10.8m from the rear boundary with No. 6 and at an oblique angle and is not considered harmful to No. 6.
- 4.3.29 The Plot 7 dwelling would be a minimum of approx. 14.3m from the boundary with No. 6 and would not have rear upper floor openings in its two-storey rear projection, therefore it is not considered that Plot 7 will harm the amenity of No. 6. The other closest proposed dwelling to No. 6 is Plot 14, a bungalow. This dwelling will be approx. 8m from the boundary, and will be partially obscured by a tree, vegetation, and fencing. Due to the lower single storey height of the bungalow, and it being to the side of the curtilage of No. 6, it is not considered that the amenity of No. 6 would be harmed.
- 4.3.30 It is considered that most of the objections and concerns from neighbours have been addressed elsewhere in this report. It should be noted that most objections were to the original plans, with the latest amended plans receiving only three objections. The main original concerns related to traffic impacts on Stevenage Road, which would now be much reduced as most dwellings would be accessed via Sperberry Hill. Any damage to fences would be a civil matter to be resolved between the relevant parties. The proposal is not considered harmful to residential amenity. The proposal complies with Policy D3 of the Local Plan.

#### Amenity of Future Occupiers:

- 4.3.31 Paragraph 130 (f) of the NPPF states that “*decisions should ensure that developments... create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and wellbeing, with a high standard of amenity of future and existing users*”. This is largely reflected in Policies D1 and SP9 of the Local Plan. A criterion of Policy SI2 is that appropriate noise mitigation measures, to potentially include insulation and appropriate orientation of living spaces, should be provided. The main noise generating development in the vicinity of the application site is Wymondley Substation, located approximately 140m to the east of the site at its closest point. A Noise Assessment Report submitted with the application proposes double glazing, and mechanical ventilation for first floor bedrooms where external noise levels exceed 30 dB at night. The Council’s Environmental Health Officer considers this acceptable, which is given significant weight, and on that basis that part of LP Policy SI2 is considered complied with.
- 4.3.32 Policy D1 of the Local Plan states that residential development should meet or exceed the nationally described space standards. The individual rooms and overall living space of the dwellings accord with or exceed these standards. Therefore, the internal living space proposed is considered acceptable. A condition requiring obscure glazing of some first floor side windows of some of the dwellings will ensure no harmful overlooking within the site (this will apply to Plot 5 – west side window, Plot 6 – west Bed 2 window and east Dressing room window, Plot 7 – west Dressing room window, Plot 13 – west side window, Plot 8 – south elevation dressing room window, Plot 1 – east elevation Bathroom window).

- 4.3.33 Each dwelling would have its own private garden. The Local Plan does not specify minimum private and communal garden sizes; however, it is considered that these gardens would be of an acceptable size and quality for potential occupants of the dwellings.
- 4.3.34 Due to the siting of the proposed dwellings, it is considered that future occupants would not be adversely affected by uses, buildings, structures, trees and vegetation outside the site. It is also not considered that the new dwellings proposed would adversely affect each other in terms of visual impacts, being overbearing, loss of light, noise, and privacy.
- 4.3.35 The development includes one main area of public open space in the central area. There are also smaller landscaping strips around and near the open space, public footpath and SW site boundary. Policy NE6 of the Local Plan relates to new and improved open space, which refers to Fields in Trust (FT) guidance.
- 4.3.36 Under the FT guidance, a new development of the scale proposed is recommended to provide a Local Area for Play (LAP), and a Locally Equipped Area for Play (LEAP). A LAP is provided in the site on its west side with further open space around it as a buffer and meets the FT guidance in this respect. A LEAP is not included in the development, however due to the amount of public open space proposed in the site (approx. the size of two LAP's), the smaller size and scale of the development and the site itself, maintaining the public footpath and more significant areas of trees near the SW and SE boundaries, and an existing play area with equipment in a larger area of open space a short distance to the NW up Stevenage Road, it is considered that the provision of a LEAP is not necessary in this case.
- 4.3.37 The amount and quality of public open space for the development is considered acceptable and would be accessible within the site to residents. The open space will be maintained and managed in accordance with a submitted Landscape Management Plan to be managed by a Management Company as part of a S106 legal agreement, which complies with Local Plan Policy NE6. Living conditions for future occupants are considered acceptable. The proposal complies with Policies D1, NE6 and SI2 of the Local Plan, and Section 12 of the NPPF.

Parking, Sustainable Transport, and Highways:

- 4.3.38 The Council's residential parking standards are for dwellings with 1 bedroom to have one space minimum, and for dwellings with 2 or more bedrooms to have a minimum of two parking spaces. All dwellings would have two or more bedrooms and would have at least two parking spaces (with additional space in the proposed garages).
- 4.3.39 Council minimum cycle parking standards are for 1 secure covered space per dwelling, with none if a garage or secure area is provided within the curtilage of each dwelling. The dwellings would have cycle parking in sheds or their own garages, which is acceptable. Cycle parking is therefore acceptable.
- 4.3.40 Visitor parking provision requirements in the Local Plan are between 0.25 and 0.75 spaces per dwelling (rounded up to nearest whole number) with the higher standard being applied

where there are no garages in the schemes and the lower standard applied where every dwelling in the scheme is to be provided with a garage.

- 4.3.41 The total number of visitor parking spaces proposed is 6. The development proposes 10 dwellings with garages, and 4 dwellings without garages, which combined is a minimum requirement of 5.5 spaces. The amount of visitor spaces proposed would therefore be acceptable. The location of the visitor spaces is considered acceptable, as they would be spread around the site and within walking distance of the dwellings.
- 4.3.42 The proposed internal road and driveway arrangement is considered satisfactory, on the basis of the absence of objections from the highways officer, which means that large refuse vehicles would be able to access all parts of the site required to reach refuse collection points. The application also includes a Refuse Plan that is considered demonstrates that the proposed dwellings would be able to store refuse bins within or near their curtilages and that they would be within reasonable distances of refuse collection vehicles.
- 4.3.43 Pedestrian connectivity within the site would be via shared surface driveways, and the existing public footpath with a new footpath link in front of Plots 9 and 10. No pedestrian footways are proposed adjacent and alongside the driveways, however this is not considered unacceptable as the shared driveways are short, would have lower traffic flows, and areas of grass would provide additional areas for pedestrians if necessary.
- 4.3.44 The public footpath within the site would remain but would be re-surfaced and widened to approx. 2.1m to also allow for more pedestrian and cycle access to and through the site. The altered footpath would have landscaped strips, planting, and existing trees alongside it, and would also include wider more open entrances on Stevenage Road and Sperberry Hill. The proposed alterations to the footpath remain under consideration, however recent correspondence from the highways officer does not suggest there are objections to this and is considered acceptable.
- 4.3.45 Vehicular access to the development would be via new accesses to be created onto Stevenage Road and Sperberry Hill. The last formal comments from the highways officer (dated 14 November 2023) recommended refusal on the basis that further information of a speed survey carried out by the applicant should be provided.
- 4.3.46 The applicant has since then provided further information as requested, which is considered is acceptable to the highways officer on the basis of recent correspondence from 27 June. Formal comments confirming this have not been received at the time of writing this report, therefore there is some uncertainty relating to potential conditions and planning obligations that could be requested. On this basis, approval is recommended subject to these highway matters being resolved to the satisfaction of the LPA with the imposition of additional heads of terms, planning conditions and/or amendment of recommended planning conditions as necessary.
- 4.3.47 Details of construction can be required by a Condition requiring a Construction Management Plan. The proposed development is considered acceptable regarding parking provision, layout, and impacts on the public highway network. The proposal complies with Policies SI2, T1 and T2 of the Local Plan, and Section 9 of the NPPF.
- Trees and Landscaping:

- 4.3.48 The site is primarily open but overgrown, with more notable vegetation including mature trees on or near its east, SW and SE boundaries. None of the trees are protected by Tree Preservation Orders or by virtue of being in a Conservation Area.
- 4.3.49 The majority of the proposed development would be outside the root protection areas (RPA's) of the trees and would be considered to be sufficiently far from them to not affect their canopies or result in future pressures for their removal. Part of the driveway for proposed dwellings 11 to 14 would project into the RPA of one tree near the NE boundary, however the extent of this projection would be small and is not considered harmful.
- 4.3.50 The most significant tree removal is proposed at the SW of the site, primarily in association with the proposed Sperberry Hill access and its visibility splays. Some trees near the north boundary are also proposed to be removed, however they are small and make only a limited contribution to the character of the locality, therefore there are no objections to their removal. The trees to be removed near the SW boundary are not considered individually significant, although they contribute to the character of this part of Sperberry Hill by being part of a continuous row of trees that is more like a hedge. It is considered that the loss of these trees will be compensated by new tree planting near the SW boundary and within the site as a whole, therefore the proposed loss of these trees is considered acceptable.
- 4.3.51 The development includes comprehensive hard and soft landscaping throughout the site. The amount of hard landscaping is not considered excessive given the amount of development. Details of the materials of the various hard surfaces have not been specified, however it is considered that they can be required to be so by condition. Proposed boundaries comprising of walls and railings are considered acceptable.
- 4.3.52 The proposed soft landscaping and planting details have been fully specified and are considered acceptable. The proposal would also allow the development to comply with one of the objectives of Policy SI2 in incorporating trees into the design of the development. The proposal is considered to comply with Local Plan Policies SP9, SP12, D1, SI2 and NE2; and Sections 12 and 15 of the NPPF.

Ecology:

- 4.3.53 The application was submitted with a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) report with biodiversity net gain calculation, and existing and proposed plans showing biodiversity enhancements.
- 4.3.54 The PEA did not find protected species in the site, with no significant impacts on biodiversity. This is supported by Herts Ecology, which is given significant weight. The site has the potential to support breeding birds, and a pre-development search before the removal of trees/vegetation can be advised to be undertaken by an informative.
- 4.3.55 Hedgerows in the site are to be mostly retained. The most important of these should be protected from construction activities, therefore prior to such works, all relevant protection measures should be in place. It is considered that tree protection plan drawing WHK21863-03 shows this would be achieved through protective fencing and will be required to be adhered to by condition.

- 4.3.56 Given the known presence of bats nearby and suspected use of the proposed development site, it is likely that a reasonable population of bats utilise the land within and beyond the red line boundary for foraging, commuting and potentially roosting. All will be potentially vulnerable to insensitive lighting, and it is imperative this does not reduce the ability of the site and boundary features to maintain their ecological function. Similarly, it should ensure the ability of the proposed bat boxes is not restricted. The production and implementation of a sensitive lighting strategy will therefore be required and secured by condition. Bird and bat boxes will be required on each dwelling by condition.
- 4.3.57 The development should deliver a biodiversity net gain as required by Policy NE4 of the Local Plan. The Policy does not specify a minimum % required, and due to the age of the application it is exempt from being required to provide a mandatory 10% BNG under the provisions of the Environment Act 2021.
- 4.3.58 The application was submitted with a biodiversity net gain calculation that states there would be an overall gain of 26.5% for habitat units and a 32.72% gain for hedgerows/linear features. This has not been disputed by Herts Ecology, therefore the biodiversity net gain put forwards is considered accurate and would deliver a net gain in excess of the 10% requirements. These gains should then be delivered by a Biodiversity Net Gain Management Plan condition. Impacts on ecology are considered acceptable. The proposal complies with Policies SP12 and NE4 of the Local Plan, and Section 15 of the NPPF.

#### Drainage and flood risk

- 4.3.59 The site is in Flood Zone 1, therefore the proposed development is not considered to be at risk of flooding from waterways. The key material consideration is therefore whether the development would be able to provide acceptable drainage that would not result in detrimental surface water flooding inside and outside the site.
- 4.3.60 The application was submitted with a Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy. The Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) had not objected to the application on 17 January 2024, and have recommended four conditions be attached to any planning permission granted.
- 4.3.61 Since the 17 January comments from the LLFA, the applicant has provided amended plans and further details relating to drainage. The LLFA have been re-consulted on them and maintain their position of having no objections. It is therefore considered that the proposed development is acceptable regarding flood risk and drainage, subject to the conditions recommended by the LLFA. The proposal therefore complies with Policy NE8 of the Local Plan and Section 14 of the NPPF.

#### Planning obligations

- 4.3.62 The recommendation is subject to several planning obligations, which have been agreed with the applicant. As set out in paragraph 57 of the NPPF and Regulation 122 of the Community Infrastructure Regulations (CIL Regs.), planning obligations must only be sought where they meet all the following tests:
- a) necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms;
  - b) directly related to the development; and

c) fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development.

Therefore, such contributions should only seek to address the impacts of the proposed development upon infrastructure, services and facilities and not address an existing need or impact by existing or other future housing development.

Following detailed negotiations with the applicant, agreement has been reached on a range of matters that are included in a draft S106. All the S106 obligations are listed in the following table:

| <b>Element</b>                                                  | <b>Detail and Justification</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Affordable Housing (NHDC)                                       | On site provision of 4 affordable dwellings based on 65% rented tenure (3 x 2 bed houses), and 35% intermediate affordable housing tenure (1 x 3 bed house)<br><br>NHDC Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document<br><br>Local Plan Policy HS2 'Affordable Housing'               |
| Open space/ SUDS management and maintenance arrangements (NHDC) | Open Space Management Company and SUDS Management Scheme to secure the provision and long-term management and maintenance of the open space, play space and SUDS on-site                                                                                                                     |
| Primary education (HCC)                                         | Contribution of £161,066 (index-linked) towards the expansion of St Ippolyts Primary School and/or provision serving the development<br><br>Local Plan Policy SP7 'Infrastructure requirements and developer contributions'<br><br>NHDC Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document |
| Secondary education (HCC)                                       | Contribution of £214,533 (index-linked) towards the expansion of the Priory Secondary School and/or provision serving the development                                                                                                                                                        |
|                                                                 | Local Plan Policy SP7 'Infrastructure requirements and developer contributions'<br><br>NHDC Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document                                                                                                                                             |

|                                                  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|--------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Childcare Service (HCC)                          | <p>Contribution of £228 (index-linked) towards St Ippolyts Primary School and/or provision serving the development</p> <p>Local Plan Policy SP7 'Infrastructure requirements and developer contributions'</p> <p>NHDC Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document</p>                           |
| Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (HCC) | <p>Contribution of £19,681 (index-linked) towards the new East Severe Learning Difficulty school and/or provision serving the development</p> <p>Local Plan Policy SP7 'Infrastructure requirements and developer contributions'</p> <p>NHDC Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document</p>    |
| Library Services (HCC)                           | <p>Contribution of £3,718 (index-linked) towards increasing the capacity of Hitchin Library and/or provision serving the development</p> <p>Local Plan Policy SP7 'Infrastructure requirements and developer contributions'</p> <p>NHDC Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document</p>         |
| Youth Services (HCC)                             | <p>Contribution of £6,218 (index-linked) the delivery of a new centre serving Hitchin and the surrounding area and/or provision serving the development</p> <p>Policy SP7 'Infrastructure requirements and developer contributions'</p> <p>NHDC Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document</p> |
| Fire Hydrants (HCC)                              | Provision of fire hydrants for the development                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| Monitoring Fees (HCC)                            | <p>Monitoring Fees – HCC will charge monitoring fees.</p> <p>These will be based on the number of triggers within each legal agreement with each distinct trigger point attracting a charge of £340 (before adjusting for inflation).</p>                                                                |
|                                                  | HCC Guide to Developer Infrastructure Contributions (July 2021)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |

(Indexation is to BCIS 1Q2022 unless otherwise stated)

- 4.3.63 These obligations have been agreed by the applicant and all relevant parties, and a draft S106 has been submitted to the LPA. These obligations are considered to meet the relevant tests in 4.3.60 and make the development acceptable in planning terms through acceptable mitigation of its impacts on relevant infrastructure.

Climate Change Mitigation:

- 4.3.64 The NPPF supports the transition to a low carbon future and the increased use of renewable energy sources. North Hertfordshire District Council has declared itself a Climate Emergency authority and its recently adopted Council Plan (2020 – 2025) seeks to achieve a Council target of net zero carbon emissions by 2030 and protect the natural and built environment through its planning policies. Local Plan Policy D1 seeks to reduce energy consumption and waste. To assist in achieving these aims, Electric Vehicle Charging points will be required by condition to be installed on each of the proposed new dwellings. The application was also submitted with an Energy and Climate Statement setting out various energy saving measures that will mean each dwelling as a minimum would achieve a 52% reduction in expected carbon emissions while also complying with the latest Building Regulations requirements, therefore further helping to minimise climate change.

**4.4 Balance and Conclusion**

- 4.4.1 This application was submitted before December 2023. Therefore, under the provisions of the NPPF the exemption from the requirement to identify a 5-year supply of deliverable housing sites does not apply to this application. It is estimated that the current housing supply is about 4 years and consequently in this case the tilted balance set out at paragraph 11 (d) of the Framework applies. It is considered that the adverse impacts of granting planning permission would not significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits of providing 14 new dwellings on an allocated housing site in a sustainable location, when assessed against the policies of the NPPF as a whole.

- 4.4.2 The proposed development is considered acceptable and is considered to comply with the necessary provisions of both the adopted Local Plan policies and the National Planning Policy Framework. Grant conditional permission.

**4.5 Alternative Options**

- 4.5.1 None applicable

**4.6 Pre-Commencement Conditions**

- 4.6.1 Pre-commencement conditions as below are recommended, which have the agreement of the applicant.

**5.0 Legal Implications**

- 5.1 In making decisions on applications submitted under the Town and Country Planning legislation, the Council is required to have regard to the provisions of the development plan and to any other material considerations. The decision must be in accordance with the plan unless the material considerations indicate otherwise. Where the decision is to

refuse or restrictive conditions are attached, the applicant has a right of appeal against the decision.

## 6.0 **Recommendation**

6.1 That planning permission is resolved to be **GRANTED** subject to the following:

- A) The completion of a satisfactory legal agreement and the applicant agreeing to extend the statutory period in order to complete the agreement if required; and
- B) The resolution of the highway matters to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority with the imposition of additional heads of terms, planning conditions or amendment of planning conditions as necessary; and C) Conditions and Informatives as set out below:

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of 3 years from the date of this permission.

Reason: To comply with the provisions of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

2. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out wholly in accordance with the details specified in the application and supporting approved documents and plans listed above.

Reason: To ensure the development is carried out in accordance with details which form the basis of this grant of permission. To comply with Policy D1 of the Local Plan.

3. Details and/or samples of materials to be used on all external elevations and the roofs of the development hereby permitted shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority before the development is commenced above ground and the approved details shall be implemented on site.

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

4. The approved details of landscaping shall be carried out before the end of the first planting season following either the first occupation of any of the buildings or the completion of the development; and any trees or plants which, within a period of 5 years from the completion of the development, die, are removed or become seriously damaged or diseased, shall be replaced during the next planting season with others of similar size and species, unless the Local Planning Authority agrees in writing to vary or dispense with this requirement.

Reason: To safeguard and enhance the appearance of the completed development and the visual amenity of the locality, and to comply with Policy NE2 of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011 to 2031.

5. None of the trees to be retained on the application site shall be felled, lopped, topped, uprooted, removed or otherwise destroyed or killed without the prior written agreement of the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To safeguard and enhance the appearance of the completed development and the visual amenity of the locality, and to comply with Policy NE2 of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011 to 2031.

6. Any tree felled, lopped, topped, uprooted, removed or otherwise destroyed or killed contrary to the provisions of the tree retention condition above shall be replaced during the same or next planting season with another tree of a size and species as agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority, unless the Authority agrees in writing to dispense with this requirement.

Reason: To safeguard and enhance the appearance of the completed development and the visual amenity of the locality, and to comply with Policy NE2 of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011 to 2031.

7. Works to trees and protection of existing trees shall be in accordance with the submitted Arboricultural Impact Assessment & Method Statement (Revision B:25/04/2024) and drawing WHK21863-03 Rev B (both received 03/06/24), unless otherwise agreed in writing with the LPA.

Reason: To prevent damage to or destruction of trees to be retained on the site in the interests of the appearance of the completed development and the visual amenity of the locality, and to comply with Policy NE2 of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011 to 2031.

8. Prior to the occupation of each dwelling hereby permitted, the car parking spaces shown for that dwelling on the approved plans shall be marked out and made available and shall thereafter be kept available solely for the parking of motor vehicles.

Reason: To ensure the provision of satisfactory car parking facilities clear of the public highway to meet the needs of the development and to comply with Policy T2 of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011 to 2031.

9. The use of the garages hereby permitted shall remain at all times incidental to the enjoyment of the dwellinghouses to which they relate and shall not be used in connection with any form of trade, business or commercial activity (aside from the temporary sales suite).

Reason: To safeguard the residential character of the locality and the amenities of nearby residents, both of which would be prejudiced by the activities and visual intrusion likely to be associated with a commercial activity on the site and to comply with Policy D1 and/or Policy D3 of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011 to 2031.

10. Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015 as amended no development as set out in Class B of Part 1 of Schedule 2 to the Order, (or any subsequent Statutory Instrument which revokes, amends and/or replaces those provisions) shall be carried out without first obtaining a specific planning permission from the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: Given the nature of this development, the Local Planning Authority considers that development which would normally be "permitted development" should be retained within planning control in the interests of the character and amenities of the area, neighbouring dwellings and future occupiers and to comply with Policy D1 and Policy D3 of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011 to 2031.

11. Land Contamination Condition:

- (a) No development approved by this permission (other than that necessary for the discharge of this condition) shall be commenced until a Remediation Method Statement report has been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority.
- (b) This site shall not be occupied, or brought into use, until:
  - (i) All works which form part of the Remediation Method Statement report pursuant to the discharge of condition (a) above have been fully completed and if required a formal agreement is submitted that commits to ongoing monitoring and/or maintenance of the remediation scheme.
  - (ii) A Remediation Verification Report confirming that the site is suitable for use has been submitted to, and agreed by, the Local Planning Authority.
- (c) Any contamination, other than that reported in the Paddock Geo Engineering Reports dated March 2019 (P18-184pra & P18-184gi), encountered during the development of this site shall be brought to the attention of the Local Planning Authority as soon as practically possible; a scheme to render this contamination harmless shall be submitted to and agreed by, the Local Planning Authority and subsequently fully implemented prior to the occupation of this site.

Reason: To ensure that any contamination affecting the site is dealt with in a manner that safeguards human health, the built and natural environment and controlled waters. To comply with Policy NE11 of the Local Plan.

12. Prior to occupation, each approved new dwelling shall incorporate an Electric Vehicle (EV) ready domestic charging point.

Reason: To contribute to the objective of providing a sustainable transport network and to provide the necessary infrastructure to help off-set the adverse impact of the operational phase of the development on local air quality. To comply with Policy D4 of the Local Plan.

13. No development shall commence until an Archaeological Written

Scheme of Investigation has been submitted to and approved by the local planning authority in writing. The scheme shall include an assessment of archaeological significance and research questions; and:

1. The programme and methodology of site investigation and recording
2. The programme for post investigation assessment
3. Provision to be made for analysis of the site investigation and recording
4. Provision to be made for publication and dissemination of the analysis and records of the site investigation
5. Provision to be made for archive deposition of the analysis and records of the site investigation
6. Nomination of a competent person or persons/organisation to undertake the works set out within the Archaeological Written Scheme of Investigation.

Reason: In the interests of assessing impacts on assets of archaeological interest. To comply with Policy HE4 of the Local Plan.

14. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the programme of archaeological works set out in the Written Scheme of Investigation approved under condition 13.

Reason: In the interests of assessing impacts on assets of archaeological interest. To comply with Policy HE4 of the Local Plan.

15. The development shall not be occupied/used until the site investigation and post investigation assessment has been completed in accordance with the programme set out in the Written Scheme of Investigation approved under condition 13 and the provision made for analysis and publication where appropriate.

Reason: In the interests of assessing impacts on assets of archaeological interest. To comply with Policy HE4 of the Local Plan.

16. Prior to first occupation of the development a scheme of external lighting shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall be designed to ensure public safety and to minimise the potential effects upon the ecology of the site and its surroundings. The scheme shall include details of external lighting of the Public Right of Way No. 17 within the site. The strategy shall be designed to minimise the potential adverse effects of external lighting on the amenity and biodiversity of the site and its immediate surroundings. The scheme shall be implemented as approved and in accordance with an agreed programme/strategy, and the arrangements shall be maintained and retained thereafter.

Reason: In the interests of biodiversity and local amenity. To comply with Policies D1 and NE4 of the Local Plan.

17. Prior to the commencement of these parts of the development, full details shall be provided of sheds as shown on drawing 18142-1006 Rev G. These details shall then be approved, and the sheds erected and completed before occupation of each dwelling they would be in association with.

Reason: In the interests of providing adequate cycle storage and sustainable transport. To comply with Policies T1 and T2 of the Local Plan.

18. These first floor openings of the approved dwellings shall be obscure glazed: Plot 4 – SW side window, Plot 5 – west side window, Plot 6 – west Bed 2 window and east Dressing room window, Plot 7 – west Dressing room window, Plot 13 – west side window, Plot 8 – south elevation dressing room window, Plot 1 – east elevation Bathroom window.

Reason: In the interests of privacy and amenity. To comply with Policies D1 and D3 of the Local Plan.

19. Development shall not commence until a biodiversity net gain management plan (BNGMP) has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the local planning authority. The content of the BNGMP shall ensure the delivery of the agreed number of habitat and hedgerow units as a minimum (+0.69 net habitat units 3.31 units total; +0.41 net hedgerow units, 1.65 units total) to achieve a net gain in biodiversity and include the following.

- (a) Description and evaluation of habitat parcels to be managed, cross referenced to individual lines in the metric.
- (b) Maps of all habitat parcels, cross referenced to corresponding lines in the metric.
- (c) Appropriate management options for achieving target condition for habitats as described in the approved metric.
- (d) Preparation of an annual work schedule for each habitat parcel (including a 30 year work plan capable of being rolled forward in perpetuity).
- (e) Details of the body or organisation responsible for implementation of the plan.
- (f) Details of species selected to achieve target habitat conditions as identified in approved metric, definitively stated and marked on plans.
- (g) Ongoing monitoring plan and remedial measures to ensure habitat condition targets are met.
- (h) Reporting plan and schedule for informing LPA of condition of habitat parcels for 30 years. The BNGMP shall also include details of the legal and funding mechanism(s) by which the long-term implementation of the plan will be secured by the developer with the management body(ies) responsible for its delivery. The plan shall also set out (where the results from monitoring show that conservation aims and objectives of the BNGMP are not being met) how contingencies and/or remedial action will be identified, agreed and implemented so that the development still delivers the fully functioning biodiversity objectives of the originally approved scheme.

Reason: To enhance biodiversity in accordance with the NPPF and the North Hertfordshire Local Plan Policy NE4.

- 20. No above ground development shall commence until details of 2 integrated bird boxes per dwelling and 2 integrated bat boxes per dwelling have been submitted and approved by the LPA. These devices shall be fully installed prior to occupation and retained as such thereafter.

Reason: To enhance biodiversity in accordance with the NPPF and the North Hertfordshire Local Plan Policy NE4.

- 21. During the construction phase no activities should take place outside the following hours:  
Monday to Friday 08:00-18:00hrs; Saturdays 08:00-13:00hrs and Sundays and Bank Holidays: no work at any time.

Reason: To protect the residential amenity of existing residents. To comply with Policy D3 of the Local Plan.

- 22. Mechanical ventilation shall be installed in first floor bedrooms as detailed in Section 6 and Figure 4B of "Proposed Residential Development at Stevenage Road /Sperbery Hill St Ippolyts, Noise Assessment" Report reference 2019-05-31a dated 31 May 2019 by Auracle Acoustic.

Reason: To protect the residential amenity of future residents. To comply with Policies D1 and SI2 of the Local Plan.

- 23. No development shall take place before details of the proposed finished floor levels; ridge and eaves heights of the buildings hereby approved have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The submitted levels details shall be measured

against a fixed datum and shall show the existing and finished ground levels, eaves and ridge heights of surrounding property. The development shall be carried out as approved.

Reason: To ensure that the finished appearance of the development will enhance the character and visual amenities of the area and to comply with Policy D1 of the Local Plan.

24. No development shall commence until a Construction Traffic Management Plan has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Thereafter the construction of the development shall only be carried out in accordance with the approved Plan.
- The Construction Management Plan shall consist of:
- (a) Construction vehicle numbers, type, routing;
  - (b) Access arrangements to the site;
  - (c) Traffic management requirements
  - (d) Construction and storage compounds (including areas designated for car parking, loading / unloading and turning areas);
  - (e) Siting and details of wheel washing facilities;
  - (f) Cleaning of site entrances, site tracks and the adjacent public highway;
  - (g) Timing of construction activities (including delivery times and removal of waste) and to avoid school pick up/drop off times;
  - (h) Provision of sufficient on-site parking prior to commencement of construction activities;(i) Post construction restoration/reinstatement of the working areas and temporary access to the public highway;
  - (j) where works cannot be contained wholly within the site a plan should be submitted showing the site layout on the highway including extent of hoarding, pedestrian routes and remaining road width for vehicle movements.

Reason: In order to protect highway safety and the amenity of other users of the public highway and rights of way in accordance with Policies 5, 12, 17 and 22 of Hertfordshire's Local Transport Plan (adopted 2018). To comply with Policy T1 of the Local Plan.

25. Prior to the commencement of the hard landscaping works, details of all hard surfacing to be used in the development hereby permitted shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall thereafter be carried out and completed in accordance with the approved details.

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

26. Prior to the commencement of development, construction drawings of the surface water drainage network, associated sustainable drainage components and flow control mechanisms and a construction method statement shall be submitted and agreed in writing by the local planning authority. The scheme shall then be constructed as per the agreed drawings, method statement, FRA & Drainage Strategy (Revision B, August 2023), Flood Risk and Drainage Technical Note (November 2023) considering additional requirements below (I, II) and remaining in perpetuity for the lifetime of the development unless agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. No alteration to the agreed drainage scheme shall occur without prior written approval from the Local Authority. The

Drainage Strategy shall include;

i. Additional infiltration testing (to BRE 365 standards and at the depth of all the proposed infiltration features) should be carried out to clarify the rates across the site in the strata which will be utilised for discharge. ii. Updated hydraulic calculations (following the updated infiltration testing results) to ensure the scheme can cater for all events up to and including the 1% AEP (plus appropriate climate change event).

Reason: To ensure that the development achieves a high standard of sustainability and to comply with NPPF Policies of North Herts Council. To comply with Policy NE8 of the Local Plan and Section 14 of the NPPF.

27. The development hereby approved shall not be occupied until details of the maintenance and management of the sustainable drainage scheme have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The drainage scheme shall be implemented prior to the first occupation of the development hereby approved and thereafter managed and maintained in accordance with the approved details in perpetuity. The Local Planning Authority shall be granted access to inspect the sustainable drainage scheme for the lifetime of the development. The details of the scheme to be submitted for approval shall include: I. a timetable for its implementation. II. details of SuDS feature and connecting drainage structures and maintenance requirement for each aspect including a drawing showing where they are located. III. a management and maintenance plan for the lifetime of the development which shall include the arrangements for adoption by any public body or statutory undertaker, or any other arrangements to secure the operation of the sustainable drainage scheme throughout its lifetime. This will include the name and contact details of any appointed management company.

Reason: To ensure that the development achieves a high standard of sustainability and ensure the flood risk is adequately addressed for each new dwelling and not increased in accordance with NPPF and Policies of North Herts Council. To comply with Policy NE8 of the Local Plan and Section 14 of the NPPF.

28. Upon completion of the surface water drainage system, including any SuDS features, and prior to the first use of the development; a survey and verification report from an independent surveyor shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The survey and report shall demonstrate that the surface water drainage system has been constructed in accordance with the details approved pursuant to condition 1. Where necessary, details of corrective works to be carried out along with a timetable for their completion, shall be included for approval in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Any corrective works required shall be carried out in accordance with the approved timetable and subsequently re-surveyed with the findings submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure the flood risk is adequately addressed, not increased and users remain safe for the lifetime of the development in accordance with NPPF and Policies of North Herts Council. To comply with Policy NE8 of the Local Plan and Section 14 of the NPPF.

29. Development shall not commence until details and a method statement for interim and temporary drainage measures during the demolition and construction phases have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. This information shall provide full details of who will be responsible for maintaining such temporary

systems and demonstrate how the site will be drained to ensure there is no increase in the off-site flows, nor any pollution, debris and sediment to any receiving watercourse or sewer system. The site works and construction phase shall thereafter be carried out in accordance with approved method statement, unless alternative measures have been subsequently approved by the Planning Authority

Reason: To prevent flooding and pollution offsite in accordance with the NPPF. To comply with Policy NE8 of the Local Plan and Section 14 of the NPPF.

### **Pro-active Statement**

Planning permission has been granted for this proposal. The Council acted proactively through positive engagement with the applicant during the determination process which led to improvements to the scheme. The Council has therefore acted proactively in line with the requirements of the Framework (paragraph 38) and in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015.

### **Informatives:**

Any vegetation clearance should be undertaken outside the nesting bird season (March to August inclusive) to protect breeding birds, their nests, eggs and young. If this is not practicable, a search of the area should be made no more than two days in advance of vegetation clearance by a competent Ecologist and if active nests are found, works should stop until the birds have left the nest.

### **Appendix 3**

Copy of Letter confirming Tree Preservation Order at  
Ryefield, Stevenage Road, St Ippolyts, Hitchin, Hertfordshire, SG4 7PE  
under Local Authority Ref: TPO/00219 (2025)

Mr T Allington  
Sworders  
3 The Gatehouse  
Hadham Hall  
Little Hadham  
Ware  
Hertfordshire  
SG11 2EB.

SWORDERS

22 SEP 2025

THE GATEHOUSE  
HADHAM HALL

Our Ref : TPO/00219 (2025)  
Contact : Vicki Wood  
Direct Line : 01462 474158  
Email : [vicki.wood@north-herts.gov.uk](mailto:vicki.wood@north-herts.gov.uk)  
Date: 16 September 2025

0116/000032

Dear Sir / Madam

**Tree Preservation Order: North Hertfordshire District Council  
Ryefield, Stevenage Road, St Ippolyts, Hitchin, Hertfordshire, SG4 7PE,**

IMPORTANT THIS COMMUNICATION MAY AFFECT YOUR PROPERTY

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (TREE PRESERVATION)(ENGLAND) REGULATIONS 2012.

Dear Sir / Madam

I refer to my letter dated 27 March 2025 and write to advise you that no objections were made to the making of the Tree Preservation Order and that the above mentioned Tree Preservation Order was confirmed on 11 September 2025 and I enclose a Notice to that effect for your information.

May I also take this opportunity to remind you that in accordance with the terms of the Tree Preservation Order, the Council's written permission is required, should the owners/occupiers wish to cut down, top, lop, or uproot, any of the trees specified in the First Schedule of the Order. Any requests for such consent should be addressed to the Development and Conservation Manager.

The validity of the Order cannot be challenged in any legal proceedings except by way of application to the High Court on a point of law. Section 288 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and the Civil Procedure Rules 1998 set out the application process.

The application to the High Court must be made within 6 weeks of the date the order was confirmed.

Anyone considering challenging the validity of an Order in the High Court is advised to seek legal advice.

If you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact the case officer on the above direct line.



**TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (TREES) REGULATIONS 2012  
TREE PRESERVATION ORDER**

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**Town and Country Planning Act 1990  
North Hertfordshire District Council**

**Ryefield, Stevenage Road, St Ippolyts, Hitchin, Hertfordshire, SG4 7PE TPO/00219  
(2025)**

The North Hertfordshire District Council, in exercise of the powers conferred on them by sections 198 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 hereby make the following Order—

**Citation**

**1.**—This Order may be cited as North Hertfordshire District Council  
Ryefield Stevenage Road St Ippolyts Hitchin Hertfordshire SG4 7PE TPO/00219 (2025)

**Interpretation**

**2.**—(1) In this Order “the authority” means the North Hertfordshire District Council.  
(2) In this Order any reference to a numbered section is a reference to the section so numbered in the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and any reference to a numbered regulation is a reference to the regulation so numbered in the Town and Country Planning (Tree Preservation)(England) Regulations 2012.

**Effect**

**3.**—(1) Subject to article 4, this Order takes effect provisionally on the date on which it is made.

(2) Without prejudice to subsection (7) of section 198 (power to make tree preservation orders) or subsection (1) of section 200 (tree preservation orders: Forestry Commissioners) and, subject to the exceptions in regulation 14, no person shall—

(a) cut down, top, lop, uproot, wilfully damage, or wilfully destroy; or

(b) cause or permit the cutting down, topping, lopping, wilful damage or wilful destruction of,

any tree specified in the Schedule to this Order except with the written consent of the authority in accordance with regulations 16 and 17, or of the Secretary of State in accordance with regulation 23, and, where such consent is given subject to conditions, in accordance with those conditions.

**Application to trees to be planted pursuant to a condition**

**4.** In relation to any tree identified in the first column of the Schedule by the letter “C”, being a tree to be planted pursuant to a condition imposed under paragraph (a) of section 197 (planning permission to include appropriate provision for preservation and planting of trees), this Order takes effect as from the time when the tree is planted.



## CONFIRMATION OF ORDER

**TPO/00219 (2025)  
Ryefield  
Stevenage Road  
St Ippolyts  
Hitchin  
Hertfordshire  
SG4 7PE**

This Order was confirmed by the North Hertfordshire District Council without modification on the 11<sup>th</sup> September 2025



.....  
Authorised by the Council to sign in that behalf

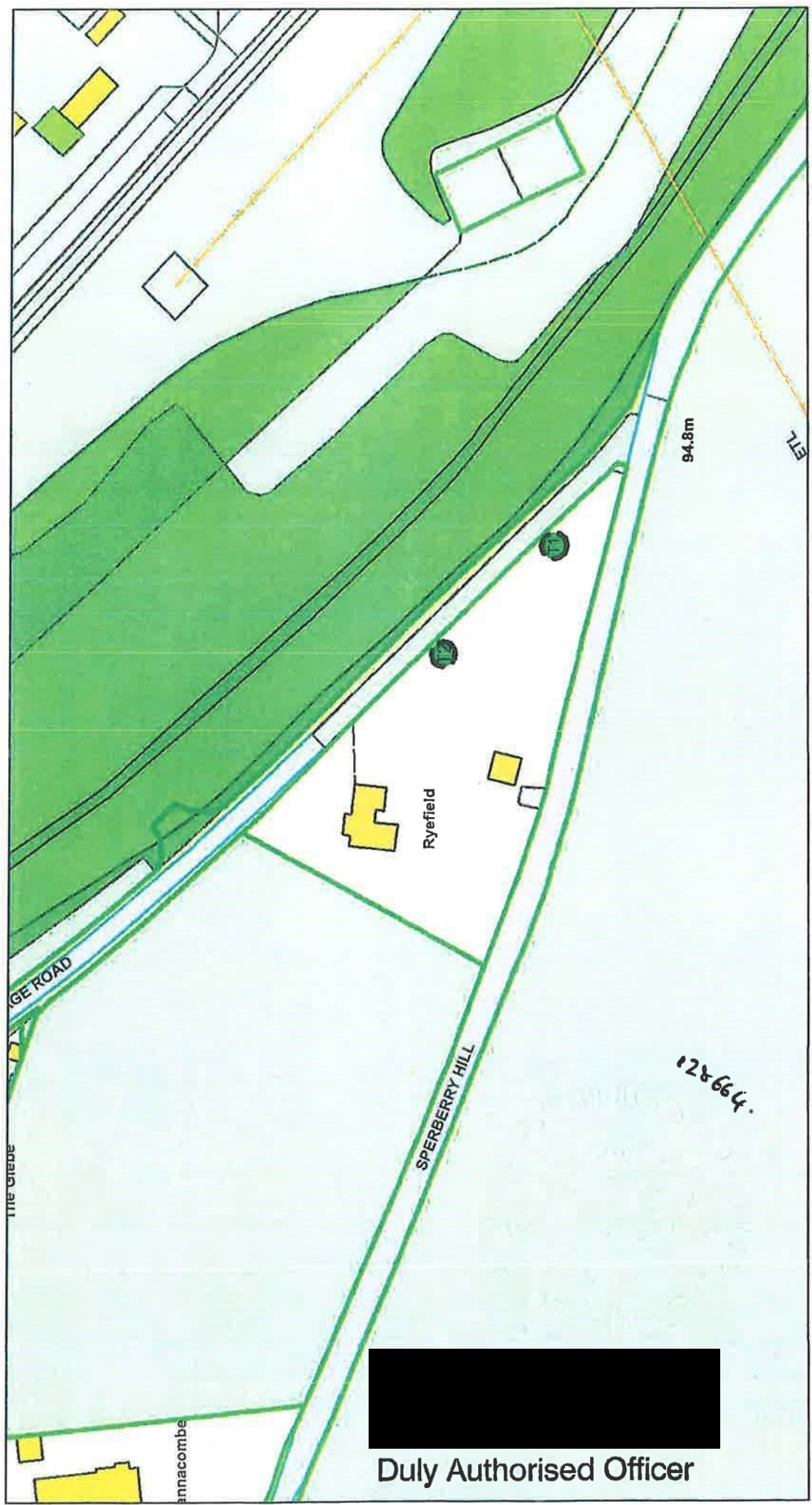


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# NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

TPO/00219 (2025) Ryefield, Stevenage Road, St. Ippolyts, Hitchin, Hertfordshire SG4 7PE



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Scale 1:1250  
Date: 27/03/2025

[Redacted Signature]  
Duly Authorised Officer