

AJ Planning and Development Ltd

Office 3, 11 Park Square, Newport, NP20 4EL

E-Mail: [REDACTED]

PLANNING STATEMENT

**IN SUPPORT OF A FULL APPLICATION
FOR RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT**

AT

**DEANS YARD, SOUTH ROAD,
BALDOCK, HERTFORDSHIRE, SG7 6PD**



AJ PLANNING REFERENCE: AJ/BD/HOUS-001

AUGUST 2025

Director: A.J.Ayles BA (Hons) BTP MRTPI

AJ Planning and Development is the trading name of AJ Planning and Development Limited. Reg. No. 10318286

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Statement is prepared on behalf of the applicant, in support of a full application proposal for the demolition of the existing buildings and for a new residential development, comprising the erection of 9 dwelling houses, access, parking, landscaping and associated development thereto at Deans Yard, South Road, Baldock, Hertfordshire, SG7 6PD.
- 1.2 In preparing this Statement, regard has been had to the development plan, (the North Hertfordshire District Council Local Plan 2011-2031); the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and associated/supplementary guidance, including the Design Supplementary Planning Document and Vehicle Parking Provision at New Developments SPD.
- 1.3 Prior to the submission of the residential redevelopment scheme the applicant submitted a pre-application enquiry to North Herts Council (Local Planning Authority Reference: 25/00813/PRE, dated 18th May 2025). The LPA's enquiry response confirmed in principle support for the redevelopment of the site for housing, noting that in the context of Local Development Plan (LDP) policy the site is within the Settlement Boundary (Policy SP2 applies) with the land part of an allocated housing site under Policy BA11. Furthermore, the enquiry response provided helpful design advice and confirmed the information requirements for formal application stage.
- 1.4 The full application is supported by planning drawings and supporting information, to be read in parallel with the Planning Statement, including:
- Application Form.
 - Site Location Plan, existing building and topographical survey plans.
 - Proposed Plans and visuals, as prepared by Ms4 Architects Ltd.
 - Design and Access Statement, as prepared by MS4 Architects Ltd.
 - Combined FCA & Drainage, prepared by Civilistix.
 - Contaminated Land Desk Top Survey, as prepared by Subadra Consulting Ltd
 - Heritage Statement, prepared by JM Heritage Services.
 - Landscaping Strategy, Bradford Smith Landscape Architect.
 - Preliminary Ecological Appraisal, Biodiversity Gain Plan, and Stat Metric, as prepared by Crossland Ecology; and
 - Transport Statement, prepared by DW Transportation.

2.0 APPRAISING THE CONTEXT

Site Location

- 2.1 As shown on the recent photographs below, the site at Deans Yard, South Road in Baldock is commercial land currently accommodating 'InHerts Motors' workshop and used car dealer, set within a yard. In planning terms, the application site, as demarcated with a red line boundary on the site location plan, is classed as 'previously developed land' and is within the urban boundary.
- 2.2 The site photographs confirm that the established built form of single storey industrial units are dated and the redevelopment option for housing will enhance the appearance of the land within the street scene. These existing garage blocks, car sales and workshop units within the site boundary are to be demolished under the scheme.

Site Photographs



2.3 In assessment of local character, it is observed that the surrounding area accommodates a mix of land uses with the Whitehorse petrol service station and an industrial unit, both accessed from Clothall Road to the north boundary; The Hen & Chickens public house fronting South Road neighbours the application site entrance on South Road; residential development to the south, with flatted development adjacent to the roundabout junction of South Road, Clothall Road and Wallington Road. An individual home (No. 53 South Road), which is a 'Building of Local Interest' in heritage terms, lies to the north-east.

2.4 An aerial view and photographs within the local context (as above) are provided below.

Aerial View of Subject Site

The application site comprises of a broadly rectangular plot of land, accommodating several large workshop industrial units with cars parked within the site boundary.

(site demarcated with yellow star)



**Local Context: neighbouring residential and commercial buildings
at South Road and Clothall Road**

Whitehorse Petrol
Station, Clothall Road



No. 53 South Road
(Building of Local
Interest)



Traditional housing
types on South Road

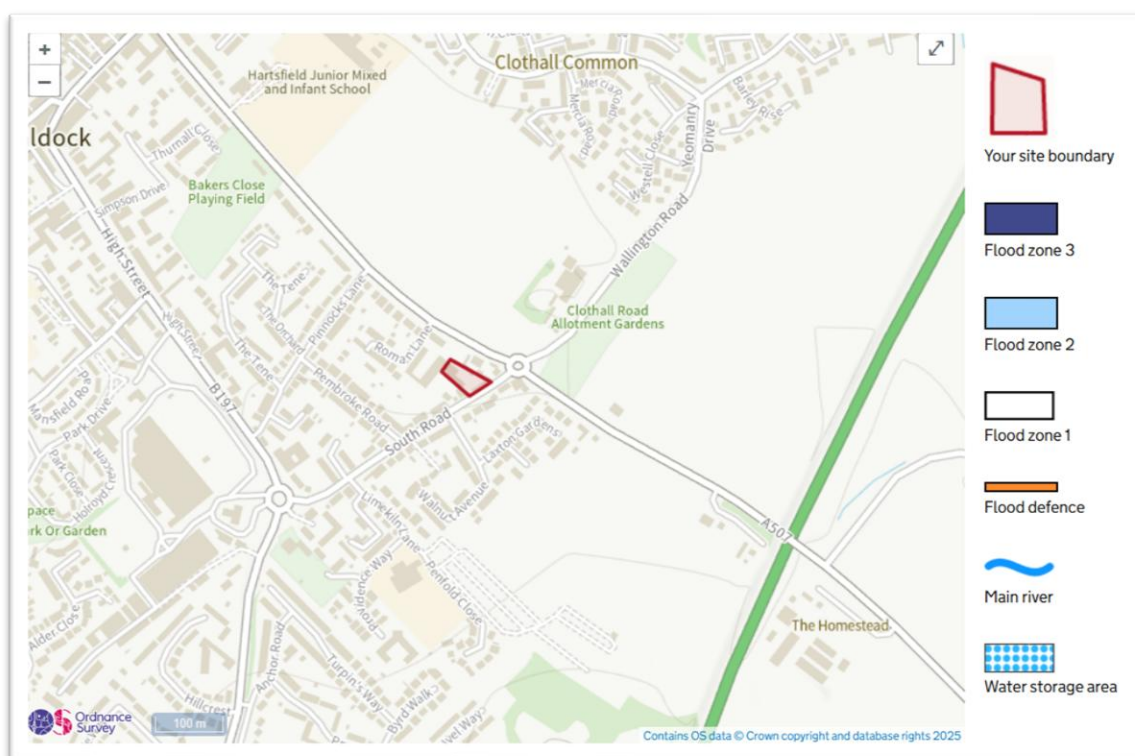


	
<u><i>The Hen and Chickens Public House, South Road on the southwest border</i></u>	
<u><i>Modern flatted and housing development at the roundabout junction of South Road and Clothall Road.</i></u>	

- 2.5 As above, the LPA in the pre-application enquiry response, the site lies “*within the built-up area of Baldock where residential development is generally supported within the settlement boundary under Policy SP2 of the Local Plan. The site, including the petrol station to the north is an allocated housing site within the Local Plan under Policy BA11....*” Therefore, it is established that the redevelopment of the subject land for appropriately designed housing development will reinforce the adjoining housing area and enhance local character.

Environmental Agency Flood Maps Extract

- 2.6 The Environment Agency flood maps confirm that the subject land (demarcated in red outline) is within Flood Zone 1 classified as at a low probability of flooding from rivers and the sea.



- 2.7 The application is supported by drainage details within the attached report entitled ‘Combined Flood Risk and Drainage Strategy’ , as prepared by Civilistix. The consultant report confirms that the proposed development will be a ‘low risk’ of surface water flooding and confirms that the proposed housing development can be satisfactorily drained without increasing flood risk onsite and elsewhere.

Heritage Assets

- 2.8 The pre-application discussions establish that the local area is within the defined ‘Area of Archaeological Significance’ (Policy HE6 applies).
- 2.9 In this context, as acknowledged by the planning case officer at pre-application stage, the land is previously developed, accommodating a small complex of industrial units and associated sales yard. The officer response confirms that the site is considered acceptable in principle for residential development.
- 2.10 Considering “heritage assets” within the locale, the pre-application guidance has been duly considered to ensure that the residential building beyond the application site boundary at 53 South Road is respected. This property lies to the north-east and is a Building of Local Interest (BLI).
- 2.11 Given the site is fully developed with existing industrial units and associated hardstand, it is considered that the redevelopment option for housing is acceptable and indeed, the enhancement of the unattractive and dated units for attractive, modern homes would raise the site aesthetic to the benefit of No. 53; the local pub building adjacent to the yard access; and adjoining land uses. It is considered that the redevelopment application, as presented, will offer a more complementary use in the context of the established heritage asset when assessed in comparison with the established car sales/service centre use and associated buildings (to be demolished).
- 2.12 The above matters are assessed in detail within the attached Heritage Statement (JM Heritage Services), as submitted with and forming part of the application.

Planning History

- 2.13 Further to the pre-application enquiry and development plan designation for housing, formal applications relating to the Deans Yard site are listed below, including three applications relating to ongoing commercial use, as follows:-
- An application was submitted for the ‘*Continued use of workshop as a car dealership with 12 car parking spaces*’ (Reference: 22/03131/FP) permission was granted on 21st February, 2023.

- An application for the ‘*Refurbishment and alterations to building including removal of cladding, insertion of roller shutter doors, new windows and door*’, (Reference: 93/00482/1) was granted permission on Monday 19th July, 1993.
- An application for the ‘*Retention of prefabricated office on a permanent basis*’ (Reference: 78/01572/1) was granted permission on 3rd November, 1978.

3.0 **DESIGN AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

3.1 Guidance within the National Planning Policy Framework (the NPPF), as consistent with the LPA’s design policy, confirms that any development proposal should have specific regard to its potential for improving the character and quality of the area and the way that it functions. Paragraph 131 informs that, “*The creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities.*”

3.2 As reviewed in the project architects Design and Access Statement (Ms4 Architects), as submitted with and forming part of the application, key factors that have informed the design process include but are not limited to the following:-

- a) The design of the homes and housing layout, as proposed, is respectful of the character of the area, including local distinctiveness. The buildings will blend in with the immediate character of residential property along South Road and as noted above the immediate neighbouring buildings at No. 53 and the local public house. As set out in Section 2, the local context comprises residential development of mixed character, height and appearance, including traditional and modern built form, running parallel to South Road and adjacent to the nearby roundabout junction with Clothall Road.
- b) The scale, density, visual and other impacts in relation to neighbouring land uses would deliver a positive relationship, observing that the buildings to be demolished are all of dated and unattractive appearance. These units are to be replaced by attractive residential form with the new buildings being of an appropriate height, scale, density, layout and appearance.

- c) The housing layout delivers appropriate access, parking and servicing relationships in consideration of highways safety. A Transport Statement is submitted (as prepared by DW Transport) which confirms that no significant transport issues have been identified to prevent the proposed development from being recommended for planning permission. The new access, parking and servicing arrangements all duly considered in accordance with council policy guidance requirements.

3.3 Paragraph 135 of the NPPF, and local policies D1: Sustainable Design, advise that planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments:

- (a) Will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development. The new homes, as proposed, will reinforce the residential area which has several examples of new properties that complement the more traditional homes established within the South Road and Clothall Road street scene and adjacent to Deans Yard.
- (b) Are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping. It is considered that the new residential buildings as presented will greatly improve the aesthetic of the site and has incorporated amendments as suggested by the Council in accordance with these requirements. The application is supported by a Design and Access Statement (Ms4 Architects Ltd.) confirming the principles of good design.
- (c) Are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change. It is considered that the proposal would duly consider impact on the building of local historic interest (No. 53), as identified on the proposals map. In this regard, the new development will enhance and preserve the BLI setting and will have recognisable adverse impacts upon any neighbouring land use. The application is supported by a Heritage Statement confirming an acceptable position regarding historic environment considerations.

- (d) Establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit. It is presented that the replacement of the existing industrial use for residential development would deliver an enhanced aesthetic and appropriate use. The LPAs pre-application enquiry response recognised that the existing built form comprises of dominant industrial form with low ecological value; to be replaced by a housing development that would be served by welcome landscaped setting. The application is supported by a landscape strategy as prepared by Bradford-Smith Landscape Architects confirming this position.
- (e) Create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible, which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users; and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience. There are no recognisable adverse impacts in consideration of crime and disorder presented by the residential redevelopment proposal. The residential layout would provide a good level of natural surveillance within the site and positively to the site frontage at South Road generally. Homes would be afforded a good level of security, domestic lighting.

3.4 All the above factors are relevant to considerations of the application scheme with the design and appearance of the new residential units considered to be wholly in keeping with the natural and built environment, reinforcing the immediately residential setting. The new family market homes (9 x 3-bedroom dwellings) would be of a high quality, offering an enhanced aesthetic as viewed within the street scene and from views in the short to medium distance view beyond the site boundary.

3.5 As shown on the plan extracts overleaf, the material palette utilises an attractive mix of facing brickwork and render, slate roof tile, terracotta tile hang, with PVCu double glazed windows and doors. The finish and detailing as shown providing visual interest and ensuring that the housing development would blend in seamlessly with the established built form at South Road.

Proposed Dwellings - House Types 1-4 (inclusive)



4.0 Planning Policy

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

- 4.1 The NPPF maintains the Statutory status of the development plan, but also states under Paragraph 10 that, “*At the heart of the National Planning Policy Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development...*”. The LPA have agreed in their pre-application response that the site is considered suitable in principle for residential dwellings, noting that Deans Yard is a designated housing allocation with reference to the local development plan context.
- 4.2 Paragraph 8 sets out three dimensions to sustainable development: economic, social and environmental. These dimensions give rise to the need for the planning system to perform a number of roles:
- an economic role** – contributing to building a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right

places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure.

The residential development will deliver positive ‘economic’ benefits during the build, seeking to make the best use of previously developed land through investment in the local housing stock. In accordance with government NPPF policy, the application scheme will boost the supply of housing significantly. Development on the site will also help support the construction industry during these uncertain economic times and acknowledged national housing supply shortfall.

a social objective – supporting strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering well-designed, beautiful and safe places, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities’ health, social and cultural well-being.

Social benefits will include support to local service provisions by future occupiers, and the accessible location within the urban area meaning that the residents will have access to full range of everyday service provisions and public transport links.

an environmental objective – protecting and enhancing the natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, improving biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.

In terms of environmental benefits, the proposal makes the best use of the industrial land (currently accommodating ‘InHerts Motors’ workshop and used car dealer). In design terms, the new building will be a visual improvement upon the local environment. The new homes would be built to modern construction standards, delivering high energy performance; the housing development replacing a yard with a positive housing scheme.

As above, the LPA confirmed at pre-application stage that the site is covered by hardstanding and of limited ecological value. The application, as presented is supported by a Landscape Strategy (Bradford-Smith Landscape Architect) and Preliminary Ecological Appraisal and associated details (Crossland Ecology)

confirming due consideration of biodiversity and delivering natural enhancement to the subject land through appropriate landscaping provision.

- 4.3 As confirmed in the Council’s pre-application feedback regarding Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG), *“The existing site features little ecological space and is predominantly hardstanding with some trees / shrubs to the northern boundary. As such, biodiversity net gain would not be required on the basis that the site does not exceed the threshold of 25 sqm of on-site habitat, or and/ less than 5 meters of linear habitats. This application is therefore exempt from BNG legislation defined under article 2(1) of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015”*. The application is supported by a Biodiversity Gain Plan and The Statutory Biodiversity Metric as prepared by the project ecologist, noting that it is considered that the on-site measures can deliver a biodiversity net gain in adhering to local and national development plan policy and the Environment Act (2021).
- 4.4 Paragraph 135 advises that *“planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding environment and landscape setting ...”*. The high-quality design, as presented, is sympathetic to local character and history and will enhance the built form at the established site. As confirmed within the Council’s pre-application feedback, *“...the residential scheme is visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping. the proposed landscaping to the front of the site and within the parking court would be a welcome addition and would respond positively to the street scene. A comprehensive landscaping scheme would be welcomed in any subsequent application, or these details could be reserved via condition.”* As above, to supplement the planning drawings and visuals, a Landscape Strategy is presented for approval.
- 4.5 Paragraph 24 of the NPPF states that *“Effective strategic planning across local planning authority boundaries will play a vital and increasing role in how sustainable growth is delivered, by addressing key spatial issues including meeting housing needs, delivering strategic infrastructure and building economic and climate resilience”*.

- 4.6 Paragraph 85 informs that “*Planning policies and decisions should help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt. Significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development. The approach taken should allow each area to build on its strengths, counter any weaknesses and address the challenges of the future*”. The housing development will deliver an acceptable housing scheme within the urban area, positively supportive of local services, including schools, shops, community enterprises and business.
- 4.7 Chapter 5 of the NPPF includes the following statement: “*To support the Government’s objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes, it is important that a sufficient amount and variety of land can come forward where it is needed, that the needs of groups with specific housing requirements are addressed and that land with permission is developed without unnecessary delay. The overall aim should be to meet an area’s identified housing need, including with an appropriate mix of housing types for the local community.*” (Paragraph 61). The Council confirm Deans Yard to be appropriate for housing under policy BA1; furthermore, in consideration of policy SP2 the LPA confirmed in principle support for the redevelopment of the site for housing.
- 4.8 Regarding the government’s aim to ensure making effective use of land, paragraph 124 informs that “*Planning policies and decisions should promote an effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses, while safeguarding and improving the environment and ensuring safe and healthy living conditions. Strategic policies should set out a clear strategy for accommodating objectively assessed needs, in a way that makes as much use as possible of previously developed or ‘brownfield’ land*”. The development proposal accords with these strategic aims and objectives.

North Hertfordshire District Council Local Plan 2011-2031

- 4.9 The following policies are relevant to the application proposal, and this sub-section provides a summary of considerations regarding an evaluation of policy information:

Policy SP1: Sustainable Development in North Hertfordshire Policy

- 4.10 In accordance with government policy aim to support the achievement of sustainable development, this policy sets out guiding principles for planning in the District over the period to 2031. This policy includes the statement that the Council will take a

positive approach that ensures the authority continue to permit the significant majority of planning applications for new development (paragraph 4.1-4.2). The residential redevelopment schemes will support growth which provides opportunities for new residents, providing the necessary infrastructure required to support an increasing population, in the form of high quality family homes that respect and improve their surroundings. As positively acknowledged in the Council's pre-application response, *"....the site is therefore considered acceptable in principle for residential development."*

Policy SP2: Settlement Hierarchy Policy and Spatial Distribution and Policy SP8: Housing Policy

- 4.11 Policy SP2 confirms that, over the period 2011 and 2031, the plan makes provision for at least 13,000 new homes and housing growth will be supported across the District. It states that approximately 80% of the District's housing development will be located within the adjusted settlement boundaries of towns including Baldock (2,198 homes). This residential development proposal will provide a new development which will make maximum use of existing previously developed land and maximise opportunities to deliver new infrastructure.
- 4.12 Paragraph 4.117 of the supporting text within the local plan informs that *"small developments, often delivered by local builders and companies, have historically made a valuable contribution to housing land supply in North Hertfordshire"*. The new homes at Deans Yard represent best use of the application land within the urban settlement boundary.
- 4.13 The NHDC Annual Monitoring Report 2023-2024: In terms of housing distributions, the AMR, as provided on the Council's website, states, with reference to Policy SP2 regarding housing completions for settlement type, that 175 housing completions occurred within identified towns, which amounted to 40% of development in the last monitoring year; and their actions/next steps/anticipated performance in future years of *"As development sites identified in the Local Plan progress, the figure should become more balanced"* (page 39).

Policy SP8: Housing

- 4.14 Policy SP8 relates to housing growth over the period 2011 to 2031, noting that sufficient land will be provided for 11,500 net dwellings, including 2,800 homes north of Baldock (BA1 applies). Criteria (d) seeks to maintain a 5 year housing land supply

on previously developed land in delivering support for a range of housing tenure type and size (criteria f applies).

- 4.15 The latest Annual Monitoring Report, as published on the LPA website, informs that the housing completion target for this monitoring year was 500 dwellings, which was recorded as 436 completions (gross). On page 47 of the report, it is stated that since 2011, 4610 new dwellings (net) have been developed in North Herts against an annualised target of 5,150 dwellings. A further 8,390 are required by 2031 to meet the NHLP target of 13,000 new homes). The application provides a valuable contribution to the Council's aims in this regard, having noted that the target figures, as reported, have not been met. In a time of economic uncertainty across the UK, the delivery of housing is a very important material consideration, in favour of the development proposal.

Policy SP7: Infrastructure Requirements and Developer Contribution

- 4.16 Policy SP7 informs that the Council will require developers to provide, finance and/or contribute towards provision which is fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development. The residential development of 9 market dwellings will provide on-site improvements and modern enhancement of land which will ensure appropriate infrastructure for new residents (criteria a) following the removal of the unattractive and dated units for attractive, modern homes. Given the small scale of development and allocation for housing, the scheme is supportive of local service provisions and there are no recognisable adverse impacts in this regard.

Policy SP9: Design and Sustainability

- 4.17 This policy states that the Council considers good design to be a key aspect of sustainable development and confirms it will support new development where it is well designed and located and responds positively to its local context. As illustrated on the planning drawings and reviewed above, the high quality, inclusive design in the layout and family dwellings makes the most of opportunities to improve the character and quality of the site and locale.

Policy T1: Assessment of Transport Matters and T2 Parking

- 4.18 Policy T1 aims to ensure quality and consistency in terms of highways and Hertfordshire's Road network. In review of access and parking arrangements to serve the new housing development, the Transport Statement (DW Transport) concludes that

the development would not lead to highway safety problems or cause adverse impacts upon the highway network. In terms of parking provisions and Policy T2 the new development would also be served by appropriate car and cycle parking provisions. The final housing layout having taken into account the feedback received at pre-application stage.

Policy D1: Sustainable Design Policy

- 4.19 Policy D1 aims to ensure the high quality and inclusive design for development. The redevelopment will complement the environment both during construction and throughout the life of the development whilst creating development that responds to and enhances its surroundings. The family homes and landscaping scheme contribute positively to the site and the local context taking into consideration position, orientation, scale, height, layout, massing, detailing and use of materials.

Policy D3: Protecting Living Conditions

- 4.20 The aim of Policy D3 is to protect living conditions and details the care that is needed to ensure that potential adverse impacts of a development on neighbouring residents is minimised. The Council's pre-application response, in assessment of the amenity for future occupiers and neighbours, positively confirmed that "*The proposed layout of the scheme would provide the dwellings with small rear gardens which would be walled and fenced off to allow for privacy. The orientation of the dwellings would see them all benefit from acceptable levels of daylight/sunlight*". The response additionally stated their view that "*.. residential dwellings in these positions would be unlikely to harm neighbouring amenity and would not be considered overbearing*".

4.21 Policy NE4: Biodiversity and Geological Sites

Policy NE4 aims to ensure the enhancement and management of biodiversity in accordance with hierarchy and status of designations. In accordance with the Council's requirements, a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (Crossland Ecology) is submitted with this application, which concluded that. "*Through incorporation of relevant recommendations, it is considered that the proposals can deliver positive residual impacts in line with current wildlife legislation, chapter 15 of the NPPF (MHCLG, 2024); and local planning policies relevant to nature conservation*".

- 4.22 As acknowledged above, the existing site features little ecological space and is predominantly hardstanding. As stated within the pre-application response from the Council, *“biodiversity net gain would not be required on the basis that the site does not exceed the threshold of 25 sqm of on-site habitat, or and/ less than 5 meters of linear habitats. This application is therefore exempt from BNG legislation defined under article 2(1) of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015”*.
- 4.23 As above, in support of the residential scheme an experienced landscape architect has designed an attractive hard and soft landscaping strategy scheme (Bradford-Smith Landscape Architect), which will benefit the future occupiers, the local setting and environment.

5.0 IDENTIFYING THE DESIGN PRINCIPLES AND CREATING SOLUTIONS

- 5.1 The Government’s agenda is to make the system pro-growth with a strong presumption in favour of a sustainable development. The NPPF encourages the planning system to facilitate and promote sustainable and inclusive patterns of development in line with economic, social and environmental objectives to improve quality of life, ensuring high quality development and efficient use of resources and encouraging sustainable, mixed communities, with good accessibility. This includes delivering housing development within urban settlement boundaries in support of local service infrastructure.
- 5.2 The application proposes the erection of 9 x 3 bedroom dwellings with suitable access, landscaping, parking, bin and cycle store provision. The scale, design and appearance of the proposed development is appropriate to its residential setting. The buildings will be in keeping with the surrounding properties observed within the residential locale including the properties shown in the photographs at pages 5 and 6 above.
- 5.3 In review of the planning drawings and assessed in the project architect’s Design and Access Statement (Ms4 Architects Ltd), it is evident that the modern, sympathetic aesthetic of dwellings accords with the established development plan policy aims and objective (both national and local) on the following basis:-
- The housing layout scheme would provide for a density, scale and character of the residential development, which would be appropriate to its location and surroundings.

Proposed Housing Layout: Deans Yard



- Paragraph 111 of the NPPF this informs that “*Development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on high safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe*”; the development resulting in fewer transport movements to and from site than the current industrial use, with appropriate site access, car/cycle parking arrangements deliverable. The Transport Statement submitted with the application confirms that no significant transport issues have been identified to prevent the proposed development from being recommended for planning permission.
- The site is previously developed land, currently accommodating unattractive dated industrial units of no architectural merit. The proposal presents an improved site aesthetic through the residential scheme, to the benefit of views within the street scene and beyond the site boundary in all orientations.

- The redevelopment scheme would deliver 9 new homes, creating a high-quality development that respects and improves their surroundings and will provide the infrastructure required to support an increasing population.
- The residential development respects and enhances the townscape character, including the setting of the adjacent BLI (No. 53 South Road). In addition, the yard will be replaced with a housing layout accommodating appropriate landscape strategy, to the benefit of biodiversity/local environment.
- In accordance with design policy, the residential buildings will deliver an attractive palette of materials, responding to the wider residential setting, making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.
- In consideration of neighbour impact, the residential use is considerate to neighbouring land uses including residential property, the neighbouring petrol filling station and public house. Due consideration of construction management will ensure that the build phase is duly managed in consideration of neighbouring land use and highway management.

5.4 Further to design considerations, it is asserted that there is a well acknowledged national housing shortage and in line with Local Plan Policy SP2 '*Settlement Hierarchy and Spatial Distribution*' the scheme is supportive of the council's requirement to make provision for at least 13,000 new homes during the plan period to 2031. It is understood that as part of the strategy 2,198 homes are sought within Baldock, in assisting with the housing target delivery. Deans Yard is recognised and presented for housing development under the pre-application enquiry for 9 x 3-bedroom private market homes.

5.5 In review of local and national design policy, good design represents a key aspect of sustainable development. As such, well designed, new development, which positively responds to local character, is supported. The development proposal for a small-scale housing development on land at Deans Yard, South Road in Baldock is thus four-square with design policy aims and objectives of the LDP and NPPF and associated guidance.

6.0 **SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS**

- 6.1 The application relates to a development proposal for the demolition of the existing buildings and for a new residential development, comprising the erection of 9 dwelling houses, access, parking, landscaping and associated development thereto at Deans Yard, South Road in Baldock.
- 6.2 Preparation of this application has been informed by the aims and objectives of the site and locality and those contained within national guidance and the Local Development Plan; together with the positive advice and guidance received from the LPA in relation to the applicant's pre-application enquiry.
- 6.3 Regard has also been given to the policy provisions and, where appropriate, the balance has been struck between these policies and competing considerations. The overall conclusion is that, in light of these considerations, the residential redevelopment proposal complies with relevant policies in national guidance and local development plan.
- 6.4 The proposal includes the benefit of additional housing in Baldock, in which there a notable shortfall in the borough and nationally. Also, the government is focused on a ***'strong presumption in favour of sustainable development'*** which supports the granting permission for this application. The application scheme is considered to present no adverse impacts which outweigh the benefit of providing much needed residential dwellings in a sustainable location on previously developed land.
- 6.5 Taking all these factors into account, it is considered that permission should be granted for this residential development on its merits and having regard to all relevant material considerations, including conditions as necessary.