

DELEGATED FILE NOTE

CASE OFFICER: ...Tabitha Kaye.....

**APPLICATION
REFERENCE**

**BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF
DEVELOPMENT**

APPLICATION SITE

26/02176/PIP

Erection of two dwellings

Land North Of 79 Ashwell Road

Bygrave

Baldock

Hertfordshire

SG7 5EB

Submitted Plan Nos

Site location plan SK01

1.0 Policies

SECN4

Achieving sustainable development

SECN14 Achieving well-designed places

SP2 Settlement Hierarchy and Spatial Distrib

CGB1 Rural Areas beyond the Green Belt.

2.0 **Relevant Site History**

2.1 No relevant site history.

3.0 **Representations**

3.1 **Neighbour Consultation** – No comments received.

3.2 **Bygrave Parish Council** – No comments received.

3.3 **NHC Ecology** – No objection in principle.

3.4 **NHC Environmental Health** – No objection in principle.

3.5 **Archaeology** – No comments received.

3.6 **Highways** – No objection in principle.

3.7 **Waste and Recycling** – No comments received.

4.0 **Planning Considerations**

4.1 **Site and Surroundings**

4.1.1 The application site is situated immediately north of no.79 Ashwell Road, Bygrave, Baldock. The application site is within the 'Rural Area Beyond the Green Belt'. The site is not within a defined settlement boundary.

4.2 **Proposal**

4.2.1 Erection of two dwellings.

4.3 **Key Issues**

4.3.1 Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) explains that permission in principle is an alternative way of obtaining planning permission for housing led development as part of a two-stage procedure. Permission in principle applications involve two stages. Stage 1 ('permission in principle stage'), is limited to the consideration of location, land use and the amount of development which, in the event of an approval, would leave the remaining matters to be considered in a technical detail application (Stage 2) (i.e. the 'technical details consent').

4.3.2 Therefore, the key issues for consideration are as follows: location, land use, and amount of development.

Location and Land Use

4.3.3 An indicative site plan has been provided, showing the provision of 2no. detached dwellings in a plot of land immediately north of no.79 Ashwell Road. The site is not within a defined settlement boundary and is within the 'Rural Area Beyond the Green Belt'. Policy S5, *Principle of Development Outside Settlements*, of the National Planning Policy Framework 2026 (NPPF) states that "only certain forms of development should be approved outside settlements," including paragraph (j):

Development which would address an evidenced unmet need (including, but not limited to, development proposals involving the provision of housing where the local planning authority cannot demonstrate a five year supply of deliverable housing sites or scores below 75% in the most recent Housing Delivery Test), and where the development would:

- (i) Be physically well-related to an existing settlement (unless the nature of the development would make this inappropriate) and be of a scale which can be accommodated taking into account the existing or proposed availability of infrastructure.*

Footnote 28 clarifies that additional consideration as to whether the location is appropriate for residential development should be applied to sites which are "separated from the existing built-up area".

4.3.4 North Hertfordshire District Council cannot demonstrate a five year supply of deliverable housing sites, meaning that there is an evidenced 'unmet need' for residential development in the district.

4.3.5 The site would immediately adjoin the Bygrave settlement boundary and would continue the existing building line of Ashwell Road. Policy SP2 of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011-2031 (NHLP) identifies Bygrave as a 'Category C' settlement, meaning that infrastructure is limited. However, the Inspector for a 2025 appeal decision (APP/X1925/W/24/3347012) identified that Bygrave was a sustainable

location on account of its established public transport links and proximity to the town of Baldock. Highways have not raised any sustainability concerns. Therefore, the requirements of limb (i), paragraph j, Policy SP5 of the NPPF are satisfied.

- 4.3.6 It should be noted that there is conflict between Policy SP5 of the NPPF 2026 and Policy CGB1 of the NHLP. Policy CGB1 states that:

Planning permission will be granted provided that the development:

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

The proposal does not satisfy any of the above requirements and is contrary to Policy CGB1 of the NHLP. However, Annex A of the NPPF 2026 outlines that local plan policies which are materially inconsistent to national decision making policies should be given “very limited weight.” As the proposal complies with Policy SP5 of the NPPF 2026, Policy CGB1 of the NHLP will therefore be given very limited weight in the planning balance.

Amount of Development

- 4.3.7 The indicative site plan shows 2no. dwellings, accessed from Ashwell Road. The dwellings are shown to benefit from front and rear amenity space. Given the well-proportioned plots of the indicative plan, the development would not result in over-development of the site.

Other Matters

- 4.3.8 Matters such as noise assessments, vehicular and pedestrian access, parking, scale, design and appearance, landscaping, relationship with neighbours and environmental matters such as land contamination, flood risk and ecological issues will be considered at the technical details stage should permission in principle be granted.

Procedural Matters

- 4.3.9 The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities sets out guidance (Gov.uk) on what is required in the determination of a ‘permission in principle’ application. No conditions can be attached to the grant of permission only confirmation

of site location, the type of development and the amount of amount development (Paragraph: 020 Reference ID: 58-020-20180615).

4.3.10 The default duration of a permission in principle is 3 years therefore there is no requirement to specify the time limit (Paragraph: 014 Reference ID: 58-014-20180615).

4.3.11 Local Planning Authorities can inform applicants at what they expect to see at the technical details stage (Paragraph: 045 Reference ID: 58-045-20180615). It is recommended that this can be done by attaching an informative to the grant of permission in principle. In this case the following matters would be expected to form part of a technical details consent application:

- ☐ Scaled drawings showing all floor plans and elevations and slab levels of the proposed dwellings
- ☐ External materials and details of hard and soft landscaping including boundary treatment
- ☐ Preliminary Risk Assessment concerning land contamination
- ☐ Noise Impact assessment and if necessary, details of mitigation
- ☐ Provision of electric vehicle re-charging infrastructure
- ☐ Pedestrian and vehicular visibility splays
- ☐ Vehicle tracking to demonstrate safe and usable parking spaces
- ☐ Construction management statement
- ☐ Cycle parking
- ☐ Drainage details
- ☐ Details of refuse and recycling provision
- ☐ BNG

4.4 **Conclusion**

4.4.1 In the absence of material planning reasons to the contrary it is my view that planning permission is **GRANTED**.

4.5 **Alternative Options**

4.5.1 None applicable.

5.0 **Recommendation**

5.1 That planning permission be **GRANTED**.

Proactive Statement:

Planning permission has been granted for this proposal. Discussion with the applicant to seek an acceptable solution was not necessary in this instance. 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.

Signed  Sarah Kasparian	Development Management North Hertfordshire District Council Council Offices Gernon Road Letchworth Herts SG6 3JF
Determining Officer Date: 29 September 2026	