



Applicant

Trustees of The Turney Trust

Site

Land at Blacksmiths Lane, Reed, Royston, SG8 8AX

Date

December 2025 (V2)

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 Cheffins has been instructed by the Trustees of The Turney Trust (herein referred to as "**the Applicant**") to prepare a Planning Statement to accompany a full planning application for the following development:

'Erection of 21 dwellings, internal roads and footpaths, new access points, plus associated works and infrastructure' on land at Blacksmiths Lane, Reed, Royston, SG8 8AX (herein referred to as "**the Site**").

- 1.2 The Site is owned entirely by the Applicant (Trustees of the Turney Trust) and Cheffins are not aware of any leases or ransoms that would impede development of the land or impact housing delivery. Furthermore, the Applicant is seeking to retain a number of dwellings under their charitable status for the benefit of their existing tenants and local residents, where applicable.
- 1.3 The Turney Trust is regulated by the Charity Commission. As such the Charity is a housing charity but with the preference for beneficiaries being parishioners of Reed and Therfield. The Charity currently has old housing stock consisting of five houses which are dated and now require capital investment. The charitable homes to be retained are to provide accommodation for local people who otherwise would likely be priced out of the market, the Charity can provide accommodation at a discounted rent to those who qualify.
- 1.4 The Turney Trust was formed by the late John Turney who lived at Mardlebury Manor who like his family before him farmed in the locality. John Turney wanted to leave a lasting legacy for the community and by his will donated money, property and land to form the Charity with the objective of; make provision of accommodation for needy persons in particular and in priority those individuals who have been resident in the parishes of Reed or Therfield.

Structure of the Statement

- 1.5 This Statement has been produced to assist North Hertfordshire District Council (herein referred to as "**the Council**") by assessing the proposal against both local and national planning policy guidance. This Statement is structured as follows:
- Section 2 provides a description of the site and the development and heritage context;
 - Section 3 details the proposed development works;
 - Section 4 reviews relevant local and national planning policy, and provides an assessment of the proposal's acceptability in planning terms; and
 - Section 5 presents the conclusion.

2. Site Description and Development Context

- 2.1 The Site comprises a rectangular parcel of agricultural land located to the north of Blacksmiths Lane and east of London Road (A10) in Reed, near Royston. It lies wholly within the defined settlement boundary of the village and is allocated for housing under Policy RD1 of the adopted North Hertfordshire Local Plan (November 2022).
- 2.2 Site RD1 is bounded by existing residential development to the south and east, the A10 to the west and countryside to the north. To the south, properties are predominantly semi-detached and set in long, narrow plots. To the east, properties are mainly semi-detached and terraced single-storey dwellings, also set in long, narrow plots.
- 2.3 The Site and surrounding area are within Flood Zone 1 as identified by the Environment Agency's Flood Maps (low probability of flooding). Full geo-technical investigations have been conducted which have informed the proposed development.

Heritage Context

- 2.4 The proposed development is located in close proximity to several designated heritage assets, including:
- Reed Conservation Area
 - The Woolpack – Grade II listed building
- 2.5 Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas are afforded statutory protection under the provisions of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. Section 66 requires that local planning authorities have special regard to the desirability of preserving the heritage significance of listed buildings and their setting when determining planning applications.
- 2.6 Section 72 requires that the decision maker must pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of conservation areas. The setting of conservation areas is protected through local and national planning policy.

Reed Conservation Area

- 2.7 Reed Conservation Area was designated by North Hertfordshire District Council in 1974 with a boundary amendment occurring in 1979. A Conservation Area Appraisal was adopted in November 2019. The statement of special interest is set out in the appraisal thus:

"Apart from occasional modern housing, the form and layout of Reed has remained intact. There is a prevalence in the northern and western parts of the Conservation Area for one and a half storey, timber-framed buildings that have been rendered or

weatherboarded, with steeply thatched roofs, spaced well apart and set in commodious plots. Conversely, large farmsteads and former manorial sites are common in the southern and western areas.

The area of central open agricultural land, surrounded by country lanes and historic cottages, farm buildings and moated sites, is a focal point for the Conservation Area. Additional surrounding farmland bounds the village and provides a countryside setting. The confined country lanes, tightly bounded by thick hedgerows and veteran tree coverage, creates a peaceful experience which positively contribute to the rural character of Reed Conservation Area.

The Conservation Area preserves several highly designated heritage assets including scheduled monuments and the grade I listed church."

- 2.8 The appraisal notes a key view from outside of the conservation area looking towards the village:

"View from the north-western edge of the Conservation Area, looking eastwards down Blacksmith's Lane towards Reed. This key view highlights the distinctively open and rural setting of Reed, with no kerbs or pavements on the margins of the lanes. The large, green is on the right (KV1)"

- 2.9 The proposed development will not introduce built form into this view.

The Woolpack – Grade II Listed

- 2.10 The Woolpack, a Grade II listed 17th century timber framed house. Its significance is primarily derived from its materials and construction techniques which can help us to understand the vernacular of the area. Its former use as a public house contributes to its historic interest as a focal point within the village. The asset is located along London Road and as a former public house this location is important to understanding its historic use.
- 2.11 The Site is located c.50m to the north of the asset. In its current form, the Site forms part of the wider agricultural landscape surrounding the asset along the road. Views from this heritage asset are partially obscured by a modern detached single storey building on the corner of London Road (A10) and Blacksmiths Lane. Any oblique views of the south-western corner of the Site would be further screened by the hedgerow and trees on the southern boundary.
- 2.12 The indicative plans for the Site have taken these views into account through careful consideration of the layout, retaining the western area of the Site as green open space and parking, limiting the appearance of built form in the area closest to the asset. Furthermore, the retained vegetation and mature trees is such that

the proposed development will be well screened. Whilst the plans are still at an early stage, the harm to the setting of the asset is considered to be limited.

Summary

- 2.13 Further assessment of the impact of the proposals on the identified assets has been undertaken in line with Historic England guidance. A heritage statement accompanies the planning application and demonstrates that the proposal will not result in harm caused to the listed heritage asset in proximity nor to the Reed Conservation Area. As such, the proposed development is deemed to be appropriate and sensitive to the heritage context of the site.
- 2.14 The emerging proposal is considered to be in accordance with Policy HE1: Designated heritage assets and Policy SP13: Historic environment of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan (November 2022), in addition to the policy tests set out in the 1990 Act and Chapter 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (December 2024).

Relevant Planning History

- 2.15 According to the Council's Public Access System, the Site has only been subject to one planning application in recent years:
- [11/01819/1](#) | Creation of a new field access | **Status:** Approved 09 September 2011*

**There are no documents available on the public access system at the time of review.*

Pre-Application Discussions

- 2.16 Pre-application discussions took place in 2024 with the Local Highway Authority (Hertfordshire County Council) and separated discussions with the Local Planning Authority (North Hertfordshire Council) took place in 2024 and 2025, of which is summarised below:
- All access points should be given consideration to safe pedestrian crossing and must demonstrate the required visibility splays for both directions.
 - The highway will ask to provide a tactile paving crossing onto the junction of Blacksmith Lane and A10.
 - Parking areas should not obstruct forward visibility requirements, turning areas or inhibit the movement of refuse vehicles, buses or the emergency services.
 - For cycle parking, provision of well-located, safe, and secure cycle parking for residents and visitors is a key factor in encouraging people to cycle as

an alternative to using the private car. So, details of location and type of proposed cycle parking spaces for this development should be provided in according to Table 11-1 of the DfT's LTN 1/20 Cycle Infrastructure Design (July 2020).

- The highway authority would not raise any objection to the correction of the definitive map to reflect the true location of Reed Footway 003 as long as the HCC's Rights of Way teams are satisfied.

2.17 Written response from North Hertfordshire Council on 22 of May 2025 confirmed support for the reduction in the number of dwellings to be provided, thus resulting in the removal of rear parking courts, a reduction in hard standing/pavements and the number of visitor parking spaces being provided within the scheme with land returning to green space.

2.18 The Council also expressed a desire for the scheme to create focal points/ vistas at the end of the 'streets', with enhanced links to the public footpath being supported. Parking provision on the frontages of plots with sufficient landscaping and footpaths to break up these areas to improve the street scene was recommended.

2.19 Support was also gained for the sizing of the gardens with suitable rear access provided for all dwellings, the inclusion of sedum roofs on the cycle stores and for swales, rain gardens and other SuDS to add ecological benefits. The scheme presented included a single plot, no. 21 located next to the existing neighbour to the east with a good separation distance to allow for significant landscaping along the boundary as a buffer. This has been retained in the revised layout of the scheme.

2.20 The Council expressed the following concerns regarding the presented pre-app scheme:

- Location and storage of waste and recycling bins– each dwelling will require 5 bins to be stored on their property. The siting of which will require to be considered to ensure that the street scene is not cluttered or unsightly.
- Policy NE4 requires a 12-metre complimentary habitat buffer around trees and hedgerows to which the access road, visitor/resident parking should avoid.
- Abrupt termination of streets within the scheme: additional landscaping features would aid in reducing the impact of this to create vistas or focal points. Enhanced links to the public footpath were required to be incorporated.
- Private frontage/boundary treatments – key feature of Reed encourages low brick walls with hedges to help define private frontages, creating more

defensible space and foster a sense of ownership and individuality – making the place more unique, distinctive and less homogeneous.

- 2.21 To address the concerns raised by the Council, the revised scheme provides sufficient storage space for the required bins which will be sited within the rear gardens of dwellings in purpose-built outbuildings. The scheme provides a softer transition from the street to the wider landscape with the incorporation of planting to create vistas, the creation of front gardens to plots that front onto London Road with planting and hedgerows to define these spaces and foster individuality whilst being reflective of the local character of Reed.
- 2.22 The application has adequately addressed the key issues of concern raised by the council and has retained the elements that were previously supported by the Council during pre-application advice. The scheme presented before the council is regarded to compliment the local context and to respond to the matters raised during pre-application discussions.
- 2.23 A formal pre-application request was submitted to the Council on the 19 March 2024 for a scheme that comprised 24 new dwellings with three new access points onto Blacksmith's Lane. A Formal meeting and site visit took place with the LPA formally responding on the 25 April 2024 under reference 24/00489/PRE.
- 2.24 The scheme presented to the Council under this application has responded to issues and comments raised on the previously submitted scheme. The layout of the current application has been amended due to a reduction in number of dwellings proposed, which has altered the provision of parking and access arrangements to the site. The site now proposes two accesses off Blacksmith's Lane with frontage parking to plots in most cases.

3. Proposed Development

- 3.1 This Statement accompanies a pre-application enquiry for the following development:
- 3.2 *'Erection of 21 dwellings, internal roads and footpaths, new access points, plus associated works and infrastructure'* at land at Blacksmiths Lane, Reed, Royston, SG8 8AX.
- 3.3 The proposal is to erect 21 dwellings along with the associated access, roads, parking, turning, garden areas and associated infrastructure. An extract from the Proposed Site Plan produced by Twenty Nine Architecture is provided below.
- 3.4 Further information on the design rationale is set out in the accompanying architectural drawings, Design & Access Statement and other supporting documents that accompany this full application.
- 3.5 Of the 21 proposed dwellings, 7 plots will consist of detached properties, and 14 plots will consist of semi-detached with a mix of seven house styles/types that feature a comprehensive pallet of materials. The selected materials are in keeping with the context of Reed consisting of red buff brick and white cement render.

- 3.6 The proposal includes a LAP (Local Play Area) which will feature a native wildflower meadow to encourage outdoor and natural play. This has been situated towards the south-west portion of the site.
- 3.7 Within the village of Reed, there is an extensively well-equipped LEAP (Local Equipped Area for Play) located 300m to the southeast of the application site at Reed Green. This play area can be reached on foot in approximately 5 minutes or by a 1-minute cycle. Therefore, it is reasonably expected that residents of the site will utilise the existing play area present within the village.
- 3.8 The scheme does not propose a lit footpath to the south of the site in accordance with the LPA's desire to maintain a dark and green environment. The importance of the village remaining as a 'dark village' with no additional or unnecessary lighting or disturbance caused is paramount as outlined by the parish council during pre-application discussions. Therefore, the application proposes a connection to the existing footpath that is present to the west of the site that connects to London Road (A10) and this will not be lit by streetlighting. Further pedestrian links from the site to London Road are demonstrated from the western portion of the site.



Figure 1: Indicative Proposed Site Plan

4. Planning Policy & Assessment

- 4.1 Section 38(6) of *The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004)* requires that decisions on planning applications be made in accordance with the adopted Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (December 2024) reinforces this.
- 4.2 The plan-led system contains a hierarchy of national and local policies – referred to as the district’s development plan. The following section explores how the application accords with relevant material considerations, including adopted supplementary planning documents (SPDs) published by the Council. The Planning Policy documents of relevance to the determination of this application include:
- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (December 2024) (“**the NPPF**”)
 - North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011–2031 (November 2022) (“**the adopted Local Plan**”)

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (December 2024)

- 4.3 The NPPF sets out the government’s planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. The document was last revised in December 2024 and, for the purposes of Section 38(6) of *The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004)*, represents a material consideration. The relevant paragraphs are considered in more detail below.

Paragraph 7 & 8

- 4.4 Paragraphs 7 and 8 express the central objective of sustainable development in terms of its socio-economic and environmental roles.
- 4.5 The Site is sustainably located within the settlement boundary of a Category A village. Future occupiers would contribute to the vitality and viability of local services, facilities, businesses and community organisations including the village school, village hall, and church. There would also be temporary economic benefits arising from the construction of the new dwellings. Environmental benefits would be realised through net gains in biodiversity.

Paragraphs 10 & 11

- 4.6 Paragraphs 10 and 11 of the NPPF outline the importance of the presumption in favour of sustainable development. Sustainable development is defined as development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs.
- 4.7 All plans should promote a sustainable pattern of development that seeks to: meet the development needs of the area; align growth and infrastructure; improve the environment; mitigate climate change and adapt to its effects.

- 4.8 The adopted Local Plan includes a settlement hierarchy which guides development to the most sustainable locations within the district. The Site is located within the settlement boundary of Reed – a third-tier settlement (Category A village) – where new residential development will be allowed in principle, subject to detailed considerations. The new dwellings would also have good sustainability credentials.

Paragraphs 39–42

- 4.9 Paragraph 39 of the Framework makes it clear that Local Planning Authorities should approach development in a positive and creative way and work proactively with applicants. Early engagement through pre-application discussions is encouraged (paragraph 40) and developers are encouraged to engage with the local community at an early stage (paragraph 41). The involvement of statutory consultees (paragraph 41) and other consenting bodies (paragraph 42) is also beneficial since it can speed up the development process.
- 4.10 In the spirit of Chapter 4 of the NPPF, the Applicant has sought the views of Reed Parish Council on the current proposals at a recent meeting and was pleased with the positive response overall. A copy of the pre-application written advice is included under Appendix A of this statement.
- 4.11 Pre-application advice has been sought on the proposed development. It is hoped that the pro-active approach being taken by the Applicant will assist the Council in issuing a timely decision at planning application stage and avoid unnecessary costs and delays to both parties.

Paragraph 61

- 4.12 Paragraph 61 highlights the Government’s objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes and the importance of meeting the requirements of groups with specific housing requirements.
- 4.13 The Site is allocated for residential development in the adopted Local Plan, having been assessed as viable and deliverable, and is part of the 5-year housing land supply. The mix of dwelling types, sizes and tenures is appropriate in the local context.

Paragraph 73

- 4.14 Paragraph 73 stresses the important role of small and medium sized sites such as the application Site in contributing to housing requirements which typically are built out relatively quickly.

Paragraphs 131–140

- 4.15 This section of the NPPF focuses on achieving well-designed and beautiful places: *“the creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve”*. This

reinforces the necessity for a robust design development process and a design which is responsive to the local context.

- 4.16 Although there is ambiguity surrounding the definition of a “beautiful place”, the proposed development will add a pleasing diversity to this part of the village, with attractive bespoke dwellings in a range of traditional forms. This would be consistent with the Framework’s provisions of maintaining the prevailing character of the area and achieving a well-designed and beautiful place.
- 4.17 A Design, Sustainability and Access Statement has been produced by Twenty Nine Architecture and accompanies this application, providing further details regarding design of the scheme.

Paragraph 181

- 4.18 Since the Site is not located within a flood risk area, there is no requirement for a site-specific flood assessment, however, there is an opportunity to incorporate a sustainable drainage system to reduce instances of local surface-water flooding (paragraph 181c).

Paragraph 187

- 4.19 Paragraph 187 relates to the conservation and enhancement of the natural environment. In determining planning applications, Local Planning Authority’s should ensure that impacts on biodiversity are minimised, and net gains are provided (paragraph 187d).
- 4.20 A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal, Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment Report and Bat Survey Report produced by Denny Ecology is provided as part of the application. It provides a series of recommendations to minimise, mitigate and compensate the impacts of the development as appropriate. With these measures in place, the proposed development will provide a net gain in biodiversity and is unlikely to have significant residual negative ecological impacts.

Paragraph 202

- 4.21 Paragraph 202 of the NPPF advises that the significance of designated heritage assets can be harmed or lost through alterations or development within their setting. Such harm or loss to significance requires clear and convincing justification.
- 4.22 Please see the Heritage Constraints Section of this report for the assessment of the proposal upon the historic environment. These constraints will be discussed in greater detail within the submitted Heritage Statement that accompanies the application.

North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011–2031 (November 2022)

- 4.23 The adopted Local Plan sets out the planning policies and land allocations to guide the future development of the district up to 2031. An assessment of the compliance with the relevant policies of the development plan is provided in the following section.

Policy SP2: Settlement Hierarchy and Spatial Distribution

- 4.24 Policy SP2 confirms that the Council wishes to focus the majority of growth on the towns. However, growth is also important within the villages, to allow these communities to continue to function.

Policy SP6: Sustainable Transport

- 4.25 Policy SP6 states that proposals will be assessed against the parking standards set out within the local plan and in relevant supplementary advice (e) and should protect existing rights of way, cycling and equestrian routes and should diversion be unavoidable, require replacement routes to the satisfaction of the Council.
- 4.26 The site features an existing Public Right of Way (PRoW) to its north portion. The scheme before the council retains and enhances this PRoW, providing connections from the site to encourage sustainable and active modes of transport. Formalisation of the definitive map to reflect the onsite situation of the Public Right of Way will be dealt with by the relevant submission.
- 4.27 A new pedestrian route will be created along and within the Site frontage to Blacksmith's Lane, as shown on Drawing PL (90) 01.
- 4.28 Each dwelling has been provided with 2 no. car parking spaces on plot, whilst the wider Site benefits from visitor car parking spaces. A garden shed will be provided on each plot to securely store bicycles.
- 4.29 The site is well-related to the settlement and it is regarded that residents will be able to make use of active and sustainable modes of transport for at least some of their journeys, however, given the rural nature of Reed it is not feasible to expect high levels of active/sustainable modes of transport to key facilities as noted by Paragraph 4.75 of the Adopted Local Plan and Paragraph 110 of the NPPF.

Policy SP7: Infrastructure Requirements and Developer Contributions

- 4.30 Policy SP7 sets out the requirements of developers in regard to ensuring additional demand is accommodated and planned for. The policy requires developers to provide, finance and / or contribute towards provision which is fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development.
- 4.31 The scheme proposes a Local Play Area (LAP) on site to aid in providing natural play facilities for the new residents.

Policy SP8: Housing

- 4.32 Policy SP8 sets out how the Council plans to deliver the 11,600 homes needed over the plan period 2011–2031. This includes sites identified within the defined settlement boundaries of Category A villages including Reed. The policy also supports a range of housing tenures, types and sizes measured against targets, including 33% affordable housing for local needs and a broadly even split between 1-2 bed and 3+ bed homes.
- 4.33 In line with these targets, the proposed development will deliver 33% affordable homes (7 dwellings) and 66% Market homes (14 dwellings). The scheme will deliver a mix of 2, 3 and 4 bedroom dwellings.
- 4.34 The delivery of allocated sites like RD1 ensures that sufficient housing is coming forward – which is critical to the delivery of the strategic policies of the adopted Local Plan as a whole. Under-delivery of site allocations and/or slower rates of delivery could result in an increase in speculative development and the application of the ‘tilted balance’ by the Planning Inspectorate on appeal.

Policy SP9: Design and Sustainability

- 4.35 Policy SP9 focuses on the requirements for strategic housing sites (100+ dwellings). Whilst the Site is not a strategic housing site, good design should be embedded into all proposals as a key aspect of sustainable development. The proposed development has been designed in accordance with the Design Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) (July 2011), specifically section 5.15 Reed which while not specific to Blacksmiths Lane states that; *“Developments should maintain the characteristic of being set-back from existing routes to maintain an open feel.”*
- 4.36 The proposed development is a bespoke high-quality design that responds well to its surroundings. The three tenures are evenly split across the Site, with a mix of dwelling types and sizes to meet the needs of current and future residents. The scheme would be sympathetic to the prevailing urban grain and density of surrounding residential development, with similar built footprints and setback from the highway and traditional forms, materials and detailing. Some development in depth is required to achieve the required quantum of development (as set out in Policy RD1), however, this pattern of development is characteristic within the village (for example, development off Brickyard Lane to the north-east). The properties to the rear of the Site will also be largely screened from public view by frontage development and planting.

Policy SP12: Green Infrastructure, Landscape and Biodiversity

- 4.37 Policy SP12 seeks to ensure that the natural environment is protected and enhanced.

- 4.38 A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal, Bat Survey and Reptile Survey have been conducted by Denny Ecology and formed part of the pre-application submission. These studies found the existing habitats across the Site to be of low ecological value. A Bat Survey found limited bat activity, predominantly along the northern woodland edge. There was no evidence of reptile species or badgers using the Site.
- 4.39 Soft landscaping is fully integrated into the proposed development, with new tree planting across the Site, the creation of a balancing pond to aid drainage and create new habitat, private gardens for all residents as well as the introduction of orchard planting in the northern landscape area. The existing landscape buffer to the north and unimproved grassland to the west of the Site is to be retained, with opportunities to enhance its diversity. Three small areas of the southern hedgerow will be removed to facilitate vehicular access into the Site, with new species-rich hedgerows proposed along the west and east boundaries to offset any minor ecological impacts.
- 4.40 The submitting Soft Landscaping plans which accompany the application provide details of the planting scheme to be implemented onsite.

Policy SP13: Historic Environment

- 4.41 This policy sets out a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment. In accordance with national policy, new development should not be resisted on heritage grounds unless it would lead to substantial harm.
- 4.42 The proposed development has been sensitively designed to minimise any impacts on nearby heritage assets. Any views of the development proposal from designated heritage assets would be oblique and largely screened. Plots 1-3 have been sited to the rear of the Site, with landscaping along the Site frontage, further reducing the visual prominence of the development from The Woolpack. Plot 21 is broadly in line with adjacent dwellings to the east, with additional screening provided by new tree planting in the south-eastern corner. As such, it is likely that only a glimpsed view of the development will be possible from the Reed Conservation Area.
- 4.43 Further detailed analysis on the heritage impact of the proposed development will be provided in the submitted Heritage Statement. However, the conclusions of the heritage statement are briefly summarised below:
- The provision of houses behind the roadside hedge present on Blacksmith's Lane, will result in no impact on the conservation area and the proposed design and layout repeats the 'grain' of the form of housing along the road, repeating the views of dwellings at the end of driveways behind roadside vegetation.
 - The proposal will alter but not harm the approach along London Road and will also not harm the Grade II Listed building 'The Woolpack'.

- The level of any harm caused by the proposal to the setting of the listed building is considered to be low. In this case, it is deemed that the public benefits of the provision of 21 dwellings outweigh any harm. The design responds to the existing character along Blacksmiths Lane without causing any harm to the character or setting of the conservation area.

4.44 Therefore, it is regarded that the proposal does not represent any significant harm to the listed building in proximity nor to the Reed Conservation Area and is deemed to be appropriate development within this area of Reed.

Policy T1: Assessment of Transport Matters

4.45 Policy T1 confirms that development should only be refused on highways grounds if it resulted in highway safety problems or unacceptable impacts upon the highway network.

4.46 A transport statement has been prepared to support the proposal, the conclusions of which are summarised as the below:

- The proposed 21 dwellings will be served by 2 no. safe and suitable vehicular access points from Blacksmith's Lane.
- The site's location is deemed to be appropriate for the type and amount of development, and it is considered that future residents would have a wide, realistic choice of travel modes based on the available local transport services.
- A total of 10 no. visitor parking spaces will be provided within the scheme, and each dwelling will be served with 2 parking spaces and a minimum of 1 secure, covered cycle space per dwelling. This equates to a total parking provision of 52 spaces across the development.

4.47 Significant transport implications would not be expected with a 21-dwelling housing development in this location.

4.48 It is considered that the proposed development will not result in unacceptable highway safety problems nor impacts upon the highway considering the type and amount of development proposed and the implementation of 2 no. safe and suitable vehicular access points that can demonstrate sufficient visibility in both directions.

Policy T2: Parking

4.49 Policy T2 requires the level of onsite car parking to be in accordance with the Car Parking Standards set out in Appendix 4 of the adopted Local Plan.

4.50 As proposed, each dwelling has 2 dedicated car parking spaces and there are 10 car parking spaces allocated for visitors within the proposed development.

Adequate car parking can therefore be provided in accordance with the minimum residential car parking standards for 2-3 bedroom dwellings. Further details regarding car parking can be found within the submitted Transport Statement.

Policy HS1: Local Housing Allocations

- 4.51 Policy HS1 states that permission will be granted on allocated sites provided that the development broadly accords with the indicative number of homes outlined and the proposal successfully addresses site specific policy considerations and provides a variety of homes.
- 4.52 The site is allocated under Policy RD1 for c. 22 homes, the policy also outlines three site-specific requirements (1) a detailed drainage strategy, (2) sensitive design where the site affects the Reed Conservation Area and adjacent listed buildings and (3) the incorporation or diversion of the existing public right of way.
- 4.53 In accordance with Policy RD1, the proposed scheme incorporates a balancing pond to manage any excess surface water run-off from the Site. A detailed Flood Risk Assessment and Sustainable Drainage Strategy has been submitted as part of this planning application, which concludes that the site is not at risk of fluvial or surface water flooding. It is proposed to connect to the existing foul sewer in Blacksmiths Lane.
- 4.54 The proposed development is deemed as an appropriate response to the heritage context and is considered to not result in any significant harm upon the heritage asset in close proximity nor the Reed Conservation Area. As shown on the submitted Site plan, the existing public right of way, Reed FP003, is proposed to be retained with numerous links proposed within the site to increase connectivity to, from and beyond the site.

Policy HS2: Affordable housing

- 4.55 Under Policy HS2, seven affordable housing units should be provided for a 21-unit scheme (35%), subject to viability. The proposal demonstrates that this threshold can be met by the proposed scheme layout.
- 4.56 The size, type and tenure of any affordable housing should meet the council's expectation that 65% will be rented and 35% will be other forms of affordable housing.

Policy HS3: Housing mix

- 4.57 Policy HS3 requires an appropriate range of house types and sizes.
- 4.58 The proposed mix of dwellings provides the quantum of development required by Policy RD1, with a high proportion (90%) of smaller 2 and 3 bedroomed units to meet local need. The density, scale and character of development is considered to be appropriate within the local context.

Policy D1: Sustainable Design

- 4.59 Policy D1 encourages proposals to incorporate features of sustainable design into presented schemes including sustainable drainage systems (SuDS), energy efficient designs that reduce energy consumption, retain existing vegetation and propose new appropriate planting, whilst responding positively to the context of the site. Proposals should aim to maximise accessibility, legibility, physical and social connectivity both internally within the site and beyond to the local area.
- 4.60 Proposals should take all reasonable opportunities, consistent with the nature and scale of the scheme, to minimise the visual impact of parking provision and design-out opportunities for crime and anti-social behaviour and create well designed places. Schemes should future proof for changes in technology and lifestyle and should meet or exceed the nationally described space standards and optional water efficiency standards.
- 4.61 The scheme meets and exceeds the Nationally Described Space Standards. To the southwestern portion of the site, a balancing pond is proposed aiding in incorporating sustainable drainage systems into the scheme, as such the scheme is deemed to be suitably future proofed.

Policy NE2: Landscape

- 4.62 Policy NE2 relates to landscape and settlement character to ensure that proposals do not cause unacceptable harm to the character and appearance of the surrounding area or the landscape character area in which it is located.
- 4.63 The application Site is located within the settlement boundary for Reed and is bordered by development on two sides. The proposed development would have a consistent building line with adjacent houses, providing a robust defensible boundary between the village and open countryside beyond. As such, there would be no unacceptable harm to the character and appearance of the surrounding area.
- 4.64 Additional soft landscaping is proposed, the details of which can be observed via the submitted Soft Landscaping plans which accompany this application.

Policy NE4: Biodiversity and Geological Sites

- 4.65 Policy NE4 requires development to protect, enhance and manage biodiversity as appropriate. All development should deliver measurable net gains for biodiversity and geodiversity, contribute to ecological networks and the water environment, and/or restore degraded or isolated habitats where possible.
- 4.66 The application is accompanied by a preliminary ecological appraisal, bat survey and a biodiversity net gain assessment.

- 4.67 A minor enhancement in the ecological value of the Site for commuting and foraging bats can be achieved with sensitive external lighting design and new planting (including wildflower grassland, hedgerow and scrub).
- 4.68 To achieve a net gain in biodiversity, bat roosting provision¹ and nesting features for a range of birds should be provided onsite. Insect nesting boxes and hedgehog holes should also be incorporated as appropriate.

Policy NE7: Reducing Flood Risk

- 4.69 Policy NE7 requires proposals to be located outside of medium and high-risk flood areas and other areas affected by other sources of flooding where possible, and shall be located, designed and laid out to ensure the risk of flooding is reduced whilst not increasing flood risk elsewhere.
- 4.70 In accordance with Policy NE7, a site-specific flood risk assessment has been conducted and is submitted alongside a sustainable drainage strategy with the application. Further details of the assessment and strategy can be found within the relevant documents; however, a brief overview of the conclusions is provided below:
- The site is situated within Flood Zone 1, where 'more vulnerable development' should be directed to therefore the Exception Test and Sequential Test is not required to be satisfied.
 - There are no significant flood risks to the site, and no finished floor levels or specific flood resistant/resilient construction methods are required in this instance.
 - Surface water drainage will continue to be drained to the adjacent watercourse along the southern boundary.
 - Based upon the indicative layout the required attenuation volume of 312m³ can be comfortably provided within the site.
- 4.71 The proposed development is considered to be in accordance with local and national policy and there are no flood risk or drainage related grounds on which the proposed development should be objected upon.

Policy NE8: Sustainable Drainage Systems

- 4.72 Policy NE8 supports the inclusion of sustainable drainage solutions to reduce the risk of surface water flooding, enhance biodiversity, water quality and provide amenity benefits.

¹ This can include integrated bat bricks, bat tiles or bat boxes.

- 4.73 The Site is located in Flood Zone 1, an area with a low probability of flooding from rivers and the sea, and 'very low' risk of surface water flooding, meaning the Site has a chance of surface water flooding of less than 0.1% each year (the lowest tier), according to the Environment Agency's online flood mapping tools.
- 4.74 A balancing pond has been proposed in the south-western corner of the Site to manage this risk as well as creating an attractive natural feature.
- 4.75 The accompanying Flood Risk Assessment and Sustainable Drainage Strategy demonstrates that the site will remain safe in all events and that the required attenuation volume of 312m³ can be appropriately provided within the site.

Policy HE1: Designated Heritage Assets

- 4.76 Policy HE1 requires a Heritage Assessment to be submitted alongside applications which may affect a designated heritage asset or its setting.
- 4.77 A Heritage statement has been undertaken as part of this application to identify the significance of key heritage assets and inform the design response for the Site. Please see the Heritage Constraints section of this report and the accompanying Heritage Statement for more detail in regard to Heritage.
- 4.78 The scheme has been deemed not to result in any significant harm to the heritage asset in proximity nor to the Reed Conservation Area.

Policy RD1: Land at Blacksmiths Lane

- 4.79 The Site is allocated for c. 22 homes under Policy RD1. There are three site-specific requirements: (1) a detailed drainage strategy, (2) sensitive design where the site affects the Reed Conservation Area and adjacent listed buildings and (3) the incorporation or diversion of the existing public right of way.
- 4.80 In accordance with Policy RD1, the proposed scheme incorporates a balancing pond to manage any excess surface water run-off from the Site. A site-specific Flood risk Assessment and Sustainable Drainage Strategy has been submitted as part of this planning application. As detailed above, the proposed development is an appropriate response to the heritage context. As shown on the submitted Site plan, the existing public right of way, Reed FP003, is proposed to be retained with numerous links proposed within the site to increase connectivity to, from and beyond the site.

5. Conclusion

5.1 This Planning Statement has been produced to accompany a pre-application enquiry for the following development:

'Erection of 21 dwellings, internal roads and footpaths, new access points, plus associated works and infrastructure' at land at Blacksmiths Lane, Reed, Royston, SG8 8AX.

5.2 The application Site lies within the settlement boundary of Reed and is allocated for 22 dwellings under Policy RD1 of the adopted Local Plan. As such, the principle of development is acceptable, subject to detailed considerations.

5.3 Pre-application advice was sought on the draft proposals for the Site, including:

- The mix of uses, and their distribution across the Site.
- The proposed design approach, including the impact on the setting of nearby heritage assets, the layout, scale and appearance of the dwellings, amenity space, parking provision, and hard and soft landscaping.
- Drainage proposals and ecological mitigation measures.

5.4 Written advice was received by the Council on 22 May 2025, that provided comments on the design and layout of the scheme. This application addresses the issues raised by the Council in regard to:

- Storage and location of waste and recycling bins for each dwelling;
- Reduction in the amount of visitor parking;
- Enhanced links to the public footpath; and
- Creation of focal points/ vistas at the end of the 'streets'.

5.5 The pre-app advice supported the reduction down to 21 dwellings, the removal of parking courts and incorporation of landscaping to break up frontage parking on plots and provide a sufficient buffer to the east of the site adjacent to the existing residential property. The application has addressed the key issues of concern and has retained the elements that were previously supported by the Council during pre-application advice.

5.6 This statement should accompany the full application for the aforementioned development at the site and should be read in conjunction with the associated reports and documents to support the application.

5.7 It is regarded that the proposed development has adequately addressed issues raised by the Council and provides a scheme that is complimentary to the local context and in accordance with both National and Local Policy. As such, it is

deemed that the proposal will not present significant adverse impacts and would aid in providing much-needed housing within the district, therefore it should be approved without delay.

6. Appendices

Appendix A – Pre-application written response (22.05.2025)



www.north-herts.gov.uk

Chris Anderson
Barkers Farmhouse
Grange Road
Duxford
Cambridge
CB22 4QF

Our Ref : 25/00673/PRE
Contact : Anne McDonald
Direct Line : 01462 474634
Email : anne.mcdonald@north-herts.gov.uk
Date : 22nd May 2025

Dear Sir / Madam,

**Pre Application Advice : Erection of 21 residential dwellings, including affordable housing with access, parking, landscaping and associated infrastructure (follow up revised proposal in relation to previous pre-app 24/00489/PRE)
Land On The North Side Of, Blacksmiths Lane, Reed, Royston, Hertfordshire, SG8 8AX**

Thank you for your pre-application submission, named above, which was received on the 11th March 2025 and I write in response following a consideration of the submitted information. I apologise for the delay in responding to you.

Please note that this reply is an officer opinion only and is not a formal determination of the Council, and is without prejudice to any subsequent planning application that may be submitted.

This pre-application submission is a revised scheme further to the scheme submitted and considered under ref. no. 24/00489/PRE. As a result, this has been submitted as a be-spoke pre-app and therefore I will not provide a full response as there is no change to the advice given in the previous response regarding the relevant policies, principle and main comments. I will therefore focus on the changes to address the concerns that were previously raised.

I have previously emailed to you the comments from the Council's Ecology, Housing and Urban Design Officer's and I support their comments. I note the Urban Design Officer has recommended a reduction in the amount of visitor parking with some of this land returned to green space, the reduction in the amount of pavement and the creation of focal points / vistas at the end of the 'streets' and enhanced links to the public footpath. I support these recommendations.

With regards to visitor parking, Appendix 4 of the Local Plan states that visitor parking should be a provision of between 0.25 – 0.75 spaces (rounded up) with the higher standard being applied where there are no garages in the scheme and the lower standard being applied where every dwelling is being provided with a garage. In the previous Parking SPD this visitor parking requirement was the other way round, where schemes with no garages required the lower amount of visitor parking, on the basis that on plot parking is used, whilst garages are often used for storage, resulting in parking spilling off plot into the visitor spaces. The LPA is looking to go back to its approach when the parking standards are updated. Given that your

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scheme has no garages and each house has two on plot spaces, then I support the lower amount of visitor parking as recommended by the Urban Design Officer.

I support the reduction in the number of dwellings down to 21 and the removal of the rear parking courts. The reduction in the amount of hardstanding as a result of this is really positive. Again, having the parking in frontages on plot with parking spaces for each dwelling being broken up by landscaping and footpaths is another good design feature and will result in an improved street scene. I also support the good sized gardens and the fact that each house has a side garden access. Having a single plot, no.21, next to the existing neighbour to the east, with a good separation distance to allow for significant landscaping along this boundary is also supported.

Please note that I do have a concern regarding the proposed bin storage provision. As stated in the previous response bin blight is a common and on going issue in all new developments. The Council has changed its bin collection since my last response to you. Since 01/05/25 each house now has four wheelie bins and a food caddy to store on plot which is a large land space for each plot to accommodate. The collection service has also been changed with effect from 01/08/25. Please see this graphic for details:



Whilst I note that each plot is showing bin storage on the rear patio area, my concern is that occupiers will not want five bins in prime position on their rear patio area, where they will want to sit out on a nice day, have space for garden furniture for meals etc. Furthermore, as three of the bins are only being collected every three weeks, it can be anticipated that in warm weather the bins will be smelly and additional bags of waste / recycling will be collecting alongside the main bins to be put out on the right day. In my view I consider that these factors will result in occupiers placing bin the frontage of the houses which will look unsightly. Is there scope for bins to be sited against the side flank walls of the houses with

the side garden gates being brought forward to in front of the bin positions? Or please provide a different alternative for consideration.

Further to the last pre-app consideration, provisional group TPO/00218(2025) has been served to protect the trees to the north of your site. The dark green area between the dotted line on the map below is the protected area:



In conclusion, subject to the issues raised above being addressed, my view is that this proposal can be supported and would be likely to receive an officer recommendation of conditional permission (subject to the S106 Heads of Terms being agreed) to the Planning Control Committee.

Yours sincerely

Anne McDonald

Anne McDonald
Development Management Team Leader

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