

Planning Statement

Planning Application

The Ruddery, Ashwell Street, Ashwell, Herts

Erection of 4 dwellings

DLA Ref: 2025/206

November 2025

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1.0 Background

1.1.1 This Statement relates to a planning application for the erection of 4 detached dwellings at land at The Ruddery, Ashwell Street, Ashwell.

1.2.0 Scope

1.2.1 This document comprises an overarching Planning, Statement. Sections 2 to 4 consider the physical, economic, social and historical context of the site, identifying the relevant local and national planning policy framework; Section 5 provides details of previous consultations; and Section 6 sets out the details of the proposal. All these sections inform the evaluation of the proposal in Section 7 against the identified planning policy framework. The overall conclusions are set out in Section 8 and which are summarised below at paragraph 1.3.0.

1.3.0 Summary

- The site lies within the defined settlement boundary of Ashwell, a Category A village, where Policy SP2 supports general development. The site is therefore an appropriate and sustainable location for new housing.
- The surrounding context is residential with development on both sides of Ashwell Street and limited long-distance views. The proposals respect this pattern by providing a low-density layout with ample spacing, set-back frontage, and retention of mature boundary vegetation.
- The proposals have been shaped directly by ongoing pre-application advice, adopting a reduced number of dwellings, increased separation distances, and an arrangement that reflects the rural-lane character and spacious grain of plots along Ashwell Street.
- Each dwelling exceeds the nationally described space standards, benefits from generous private gardens, and is arranged to maximise natural light and outlook while avoiding overlooking or dominance to neighbouring properties.
- Access can be safely achieved from Ashwell Street, with appropriate visibility and turning space. The scheme provides ample parking per dwelling and secure cycle storage.
- The Arboricultural Impact Assessment confirms that only low-quality Category C trees require removal, with all higher-value boundary trees retained and protected.
- A comprehensive landscaping strategy reinforces boundaries with native hedgerows, new tree planting and meadow areas.

- The Energy Report demonstrates that the dwellings will achieve EPC A ratings and deliver a 95% reduction in carbon emissions through a fabric-first approach, air-source heat pumps and solar panels, meeting NHDC's Sustainability SPD requirements.
- Overall, the proposals accord with national and local planning policy, represents a high-quality, contextually appropriate form of development, and delivers sustainable, energy-efficient homes with no unacceptable impacts on amenity, landscape, or highway safety.

2.0 SITE & CONTEXT ANALYSIS

2.1.0 Location

2.1.1 The Site (as shown in Figure 1 below) is located on the eastern edge of the village, on the southern side of Ashwell Street opposite Ashridge Farm Motorhome and Caravan Club Campsite and to the west of Ashridge Farm.

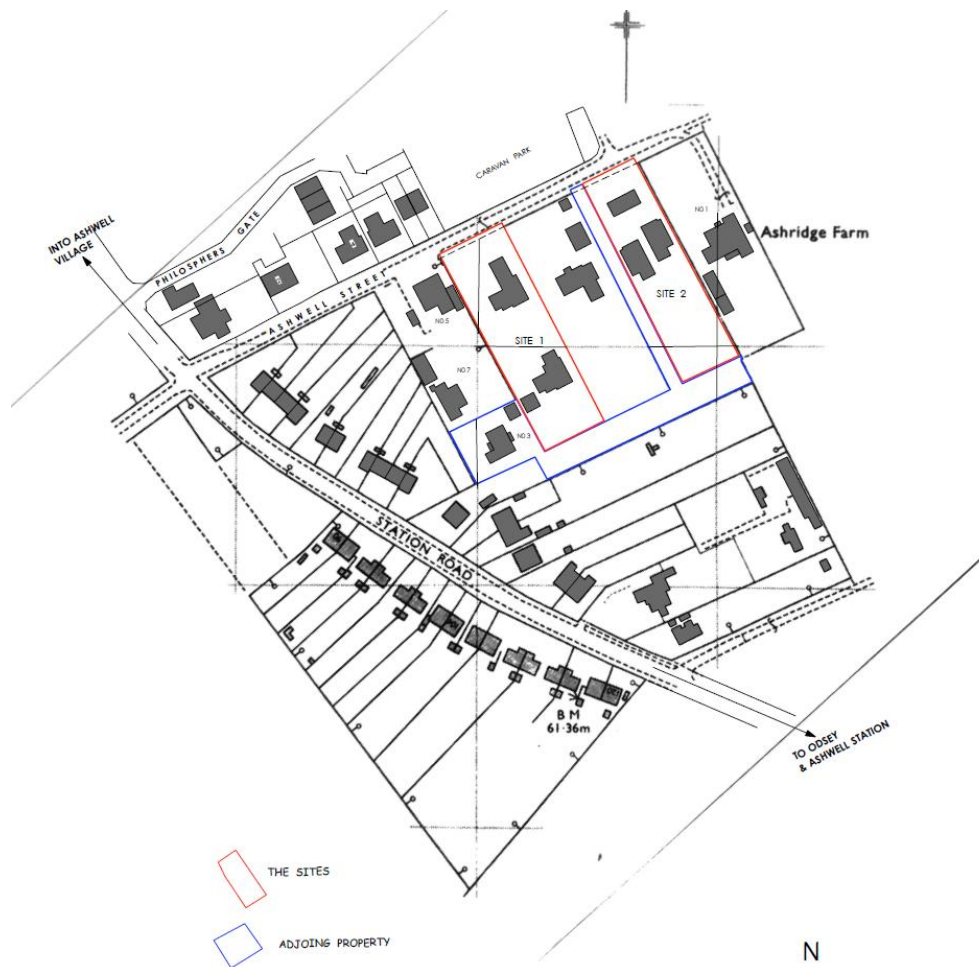


Figure 1: Site location

2.2.0 Application Site

2.2.1 This comprises two rectangular parcels of land as shown in Figure 1 above. The Site is relatively level and mainly set to grass, having a domestic appearance, with mature tree and hedge growth to the site perimeter. There is an existing gravel drive from Ashwell Street, running adjacent to the western boundary of the eastern parcel and along the southern section of the Site, which serves the existing dwelling at No. 3 Ashwell Street.

2.3.0 Proposals Map Notation

2.3.1 The proposals map for the North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011 – 2031 shows the site, as outlined in red on the extract below, within the defined settlement boundary of the village of Ashwell and with no other designation. Ashwell is a Category A village, wherein Local Plan Policy SP2 states that ‘*general development will be allowed*’.



Figure 2: Annotated extract from the Proposals Map of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011 – 2031

2.4.0 Context

2.4.1 The immediate context of the Site is provided by the following elements, as identified on the aerial image at Figure 3 below:

Nos 3, 5 & 7 Ashwell Street: These 3 detached properties abut the western site boundary. No 5 (Alroka House) fronts onto Ashwell Street from where it is accessed. To the west of No 5 is an electricity substation. To the rear of No 5 and the substation is No 7, which has a separate access from Ashwell Street. The rearmost dwelling – No 3 – is accessed via a gravel drive as shown in Figure 1.

New Detached dwelling: As set out in Section 3.2.0 below, planning permission was granted in June 2023 for the erection of a new detached dwelling fronting onto Ashwell Street on the central rectangular parcel of land separating the two sections of the Report Site. The permission has been implemented.

Ashridge Farm Set back from Ashwell Street, Ashridge Farmhouse adjoins the Site to the east, beyond which is an arable field, and which in turn adjoins sports/playing fields and Ashwell Tennis Club.

Ashridge Farm Motorhome and Caravan Club Campsite This motorhome/caravan campsite and storage site is located directly opposite the Report Site and which extends beyond it eastwards. Opposite No 5, to the west of the campsite, is a short residential frontage

including two recently approved detached houses (Nos 4 and 5 Ashwell Street - See 3.2.3 below).



Figure 3: Annotated Aerial view of the Site and surroundings

2.5.0 Local Services

2.5.1 The village of Ashwell has an existing population of approximately 1,900 people and is well supported by a number of key local services, including a primary school, doctors surgery, dental surgery, pharmacy, convenience store, public houses, village hall, church and sports and recreation facilities, the majority of which are within 1 kilometre of the site. Pedestrian access is available to these services via the lit footpaths to Station Road, Lucas Lane and High Street.

2.6.0 Accessibility

2.6.1 The site is well served by public transport. There are bus stops to both sides of Station Road within 370m of the Site, which are served by the number 90 and 91 bus routes providing regular buses throughout the day in both directions Monday to Saturday to Letchworth, Royston and Baldock. The nearest railway station is located at Ashwell and Morden approximately 3km to the south-east of the site, which provides frequent services to London and Cambridge amongst other locations.

3.0 RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

3.1.0 Report Site

3.1.1 Based on a perusal of the LPA's online planning history search, the only previous application relating to the site was for its use for the overspill storage of caravans in 1993, under LPA Ref 93/00873/1.

3.2.0 Relevant Neighbouring Sites

3.2.1 **Land to the east of No 5, Ashwell Street** Further to Section 2.4.0 above, planning permission was granted on 16th June 2023 under LPA Ref 23/00718/FP for the erection of a detached 3-bedroom house with a large detached garage/carport to the front thereof, accessed from Ashwell Street. The permission has been implemented.



Figure 4: LPA Ref 23/00718/FP – Approved layout & elevations

3.2.2 **No 3 Ashwell Street** This detached dwelling and garage to the rear of Nos. 5 and 7, adjacent to the western boundary of the Report Site, was approved under LPA Ref: 02/00278/1 in May 2002.

3.2.3 **Nos 4 and 6 Ashwell Street** Planning permission was granted for the erection of a detached 3-bedroom, 2-storey house, and detached single garage on land adjacent to No 2 Ashwell Street on 7th October 2019 under LPA Ref 19/01809/FP and subsequently varied under LPA Ref 19/02868/S73 on 29th January 2020. Permission was then granted for a further detached 3-bedroom dwelling immediately to the east on 29th June 2022 under LPA Ref 22/00880/FP. The permissions have been implemented.

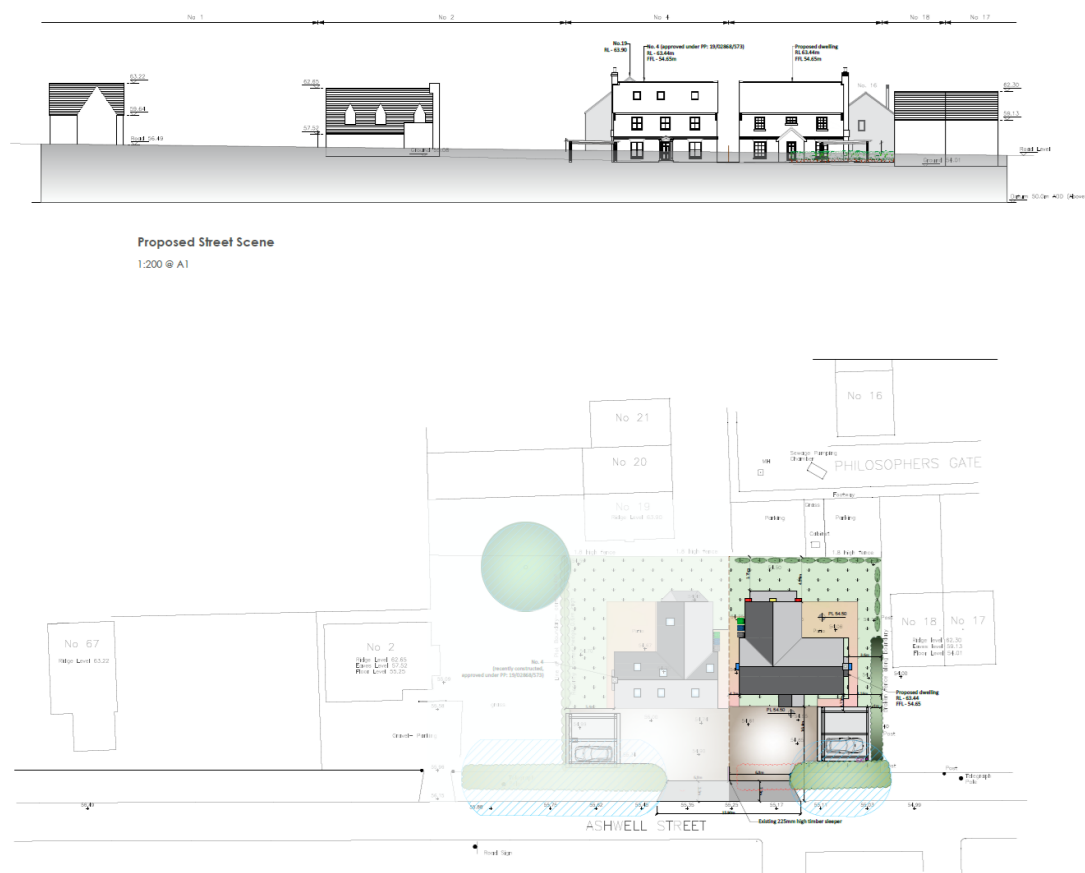


Figure 5: LPA Ref 22/00880/FP – Extract from the approved drawings

4.0 POLICY CONTEXT

4.1.0 National Policy / Guidance

4.1.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2024, sets out the Government's planning policies for England. The following sections are considered directly relevant:

- Section 2: Achieving Sustainable Development
- Section 5: Delivering a sufficient supply of homes
- Section 8: Promoting healthy and safe communities
- Section 9: Promoting sustainable transport
- Section 11: Making effective use of land
- Section 12: Achieving well designed places
- Section 15: Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

4.1.2 The National Planning Policy Guidance contains detailed guidance on the application of the NPPF. Account is also taken of the National Design Guide - Planning practice guidance for beautiful, enduring and successful places, which aims to illustrate how well-designed places that are beautiful, healthy, greener, enduring and successful can be achieved in practice.

4.2.0 Development Plan

4.2.1 Of relevance to this application are the North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011-2031 (November 2022) and the Ashwell Neighbourhood Plan made in 2022.

4.2.2 **North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011-2031** The following NHLP policies are relevant to the proposal:

Policy No.	Title
SP1	Sustainable development in North Hertfordshire
SP2	Settlement Hierarchy and Spatial Distribution
SP6	Sustainable Transport
SP8	Housing
SP9	Design and Sustainability
SP11	Natural resources and sustainability
SP12	Green infrastructure, landscape and biodiversity
D1	Sustainable design
D3	Protecting living conditions
T1	Assessment of transport matters
T2	Parking
HS2	Affordable Housing
HS3	Housing Mix
NE2	Landscape
NE4	Biodiversity and geological sites

4.2.3 **Ashwell Neighbourhood Plan** The following ANP Policies are considered relevant to the application.

Policy No	Title
ASH 1	Location of Development
ASH 2	Housing Mix
ASH 3	Character of Development
ASH 4	Design of Development
ASH 5	Flood Risk
ASH8	Locally significant views
ASH 9	Natural Landscape and Rural Character
ASH 20	Residential and Public Car Parking

4.4.0 **Supplementary Planning Guidance / Documents**

4.4.1 The following LPA guidance is relevant to the application proposal:

- Vehicle Parking at New Development Supplementary Planning Document (September 2011)
- Design Supplementary Planning Document (July 2011)
- Sustainability SPD 2024

5.0 PREVIOUS CONSULTATIONS

5.1.0 Pre-App Scheme August 2021 – LPA Ref: 21/02227/PRE

5.1.1 In August 2021, a pre-application proposal for four detached dwellings on the eastern section of the site was submitted to the Local Planning Authority (LPA). Following initial discussions, an alternative layout featuring three dwellings was also presented. The LPA's response did not object to the principle of development, as the emerging Local Plan (placing the site within Ashwell's settlement boundary) was nearing adoption, and the Council had a limited housing land supply of 1.5 years at the time. The proposed layout for four dwellings was deemed unsuitable for the site's 'edge of village' context, with particular concern about the frontage plot conflicting with the character of the lane. Conversely, the three-dwelling scheme was viewed as more suitable, provided it formed part of a broader, comprehensive redevelopment that included the open fields to the west.

5.2.0 Pre-App Scheme March 2024 – LPA Ref: 24/00603/PRE

5.2.1 In March 2024, a further pre-application proposal was submitted for the residential development of the sites for 6 dwellings, 3 on each site, with associated parking, landscaping and ancillary works. A summary table of the response from the Council is below.

5.2.2 In short, the principle of development on this site in Ashwell is supported, but six dwellings are deemed overdevelopment given the area's character of large single-plot homes.

Issue	LPA Response
Principle	Ashwell is designated as a Category A village under Policy SP2, allowing general development within its defined settlement boundary. The proposed development falls within this boundary and is considered windfall development, as the site is not allocated under Policy SP8. The development is supported in principle under Policy SP2.
Layout	The proposed six dwellings are considered overdevelopment, as they would disrupt the area's rural character of large plots with single dwellings. A reduced proposal of two dwellings (plots 2 and 5) could be supported if slightly repositioned, aligning with Policies SP2 and ASH2. While the indicative design, scale, and materials are positive, a full Design and Access Statement and Planning Statement will be required for any application.
Other Matters	Each house will need to: - meet the minimum size requirements of the Nationally Described Space Standards; - have adequate on plot space for refuse and recycling storage; - deliver 10% Biodiversity Net Gain.

5.3.0 Pre-App Scheme March 2025 – LPA Ref: 24/02778/PRE

- 5.3.1 In March 2025, following the feedback from the earlier pre-application enquires, a further submission was made for the residential development of the site comprising four detached dwellings with associated parking, landscaping and ancillary works. Again this related only to the eastern parcel of land.
- 5.3.2 The principle of development was confirmed as acceptable under Policy SP2 of the NHLP, as the site lies within Ashwell's settlement boundary and is considered a sustainable location for new housing.
- 5.3.3 However, the Council raised concerns regarding the proposed scale and layout. While it was considered that four dwellings would be more in keeping than the previously considered six, the Council advised that the prevailing local character is of large plots with single dwellings. On this basis, the Council considered that two dwellings may be more appropriate.

Issue	LPA Response
Principle	The development is supported in principle under Policy SP2.
Layout	Four dwellings preferable to six, but still raised concerns. Prevailing character is large single-plot dwellings; two units may be more appropriate. Garages on front plots risk suburbanising effect. Careful massing, design and materials required.
Amenity	Each dwelling would have good private amenity space and daylight. Overlooking and dominance concerns, particularly Plot 1's relationship with No. 3 Ashwell Street. Window placement must avoid loss of privacy.
Other Matters	Each house will need to: - meet the minimum size requirements of the Nationally Described Space Standards; - have adequate on plot space for refuse and recycling storage; - have high sustainability expectations – EV charging, renewable energy (solar/heat pumps), Energy Statement required. Must respond to Climate Emergency SPD. - deliver 10% Biodiversity Net Gain.

6.0 DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT

6.1.0 Overview

6.1.1 This application proposes the construction of four detached dwellings, arranged as two dwellings within each parcel of the site. The proposed layout is shown below in Figure 6.

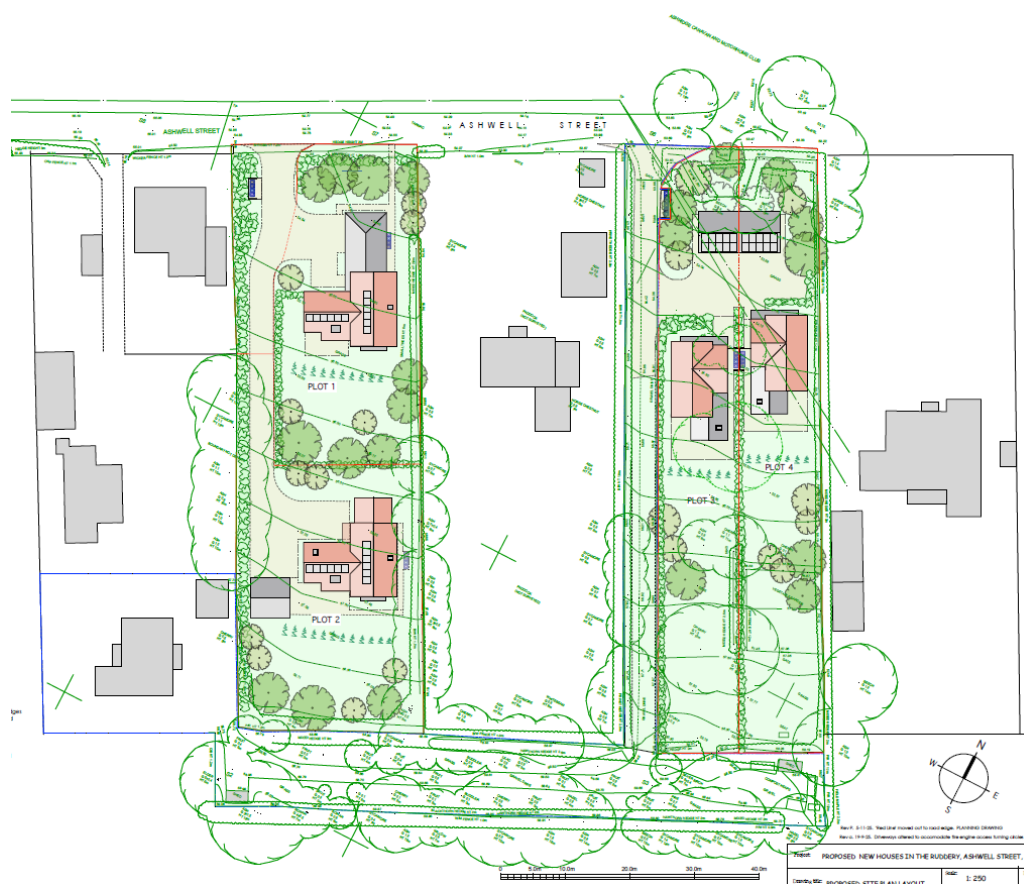


Figure 6: Proposed site layout

6.2.0 Layout & Appearance

6.2.1 The scheme is arranged to reflect the spacious grain of plots along Ashwell Street. On the western parcel, Plots 1 and 2 are positioned centrally within long, landscaped garden plots with garages set back from the street. On the eastern parcel, Plots 3 and 4 follow a similar pattern, arranged around a shared access spine with garages positioned forward of the dwellings. Plots 1 and 2 comprise four-bedroom homes, while Plots 3 and 4 provide three-bedroom accommodation.

6.2.2 Each plot accommodates a two-storey detached dwelling with private amenity space, parking and refuse storage. The dwellings incorporate high-quality materials such as gault brickwork, feather-edge horizontal cladding and pitched clay-tile or natural slate roofs. Contemporary glazing, roof-mounted solar panels, and air-source heat pumps are integrated into the design, and EV charging is provided for each unit.



SOUTH WEST ELEVATION



NORTH WEST ELEVATION



NORTH EAST ELEVATION

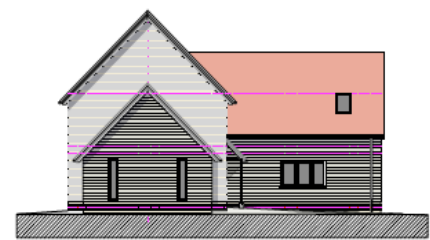


SOUTH EAST ELEVATION

Figure 7: Proposed elevations for Plot 1



SOUTH WEST ELEVATION



NORTH WEST ELEVATION



NORTH EAST ELEVATION



SOUTH EAST ELEVATION

Figure 8: Proposed elevations for Plot 2

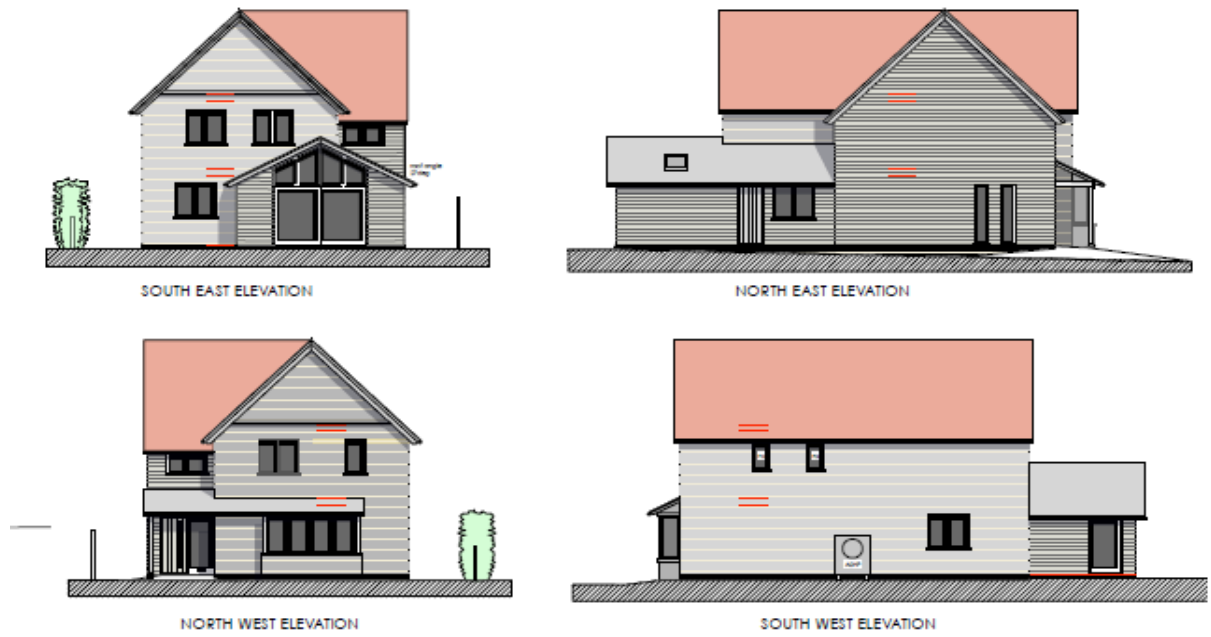


Figure 9: Proposed elevations for Plot 3



Figure 10: Proposed elevations for Plot 4

6.3.0 Landscaping

6.3.1 The proposal includes a comprehensive soft landscaping scheme. Existing hedgerows and mature trees are retained wherever feasible, complemented by new mixed native hedging to strengthen plot boundaries and maintain the rural character of Ashwell Street. The new planting includes a range of native and wildlife-supporting species, with new tree planting.

6.3.2 A small number of trees are proposed for removal, as identified in the Tree Protection Scheme. These include several lower-value Category C specimens and a limited number of Category B trees. A short section of Hawthorn hedge will also be removed to accommodate the site access.

6.4.0 Access & Parking

6.4.1 Vehicular access is taken directly from Ashwell Street, utilising and upgrading the two existing access points that currently serve the parcels. For the western parcel, the existing gate will be repositioned and widened to create a new shared entrance serving Plots 1 and 2. For the eastern parcel, the existing access will be retained and improved, with the driveway widened and turning space increased to accommodate the proposed dwellings on Plots 3 and 4.

6.4.2 Each dwelling will benefit from private off-street parking, with garages and driveways designed to meet parking standards and provide secure cycle storage.

7.0 **PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS**

7.0 **Background**

Based on the analysis set out in Sections 2 to 6, the application proposal raises the following issues, which are considered in turn below:

1. Principle
2. Context
3. Residential Amenity
4. Dwelling Mix
5. Movement
6. Environment

7.1.0 Consideration No 1: Principle

7.1.1 Policy SP2 of the Local Plan states that in Category A villages, general development will be allowed within the defined settlement boundaries. Ashwell is a Category A village and following the adoption of the Local Plan in 2022, the site is now within the settlement boundary. As such, the site is considered sustainable and appropriate for new housing development, in accordance with NHLP Policy SP2 and ANP Policy ASH 1. The principle of development was also confirmed in the previous pre-application, and the most recent pre-application (24/02778/PRE).

7.2.0 Consideration No 2: Context

7.2.1 Policy Backdrop

7.2.2 In general design terms NPPF Section 12 - Achieving well-designed places - states at paragraph 135 that planning policies and decisions ensure that developments - amongst other things – should: add to the long-term quality of the area; be visually attractive; and be sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting.

7.2.3 With regard to the Development Plan, NHLP Policy D1 (Sustainable Design) states that planning permission will be granted for development proposals that: respond positively to the sites local context; create or enhance the public realm; retain existing vegetation and propose appropriate new planting; maximise accessibility, legibility and physical and social connectivity; and minimise the visual impact of street furniture and parking provision. Policy SP9 (Design and Sustainability) further considers that new development will be supported where it is well designed and located and responds positively to its local context. ANP Policies ASH 3 (Character of Development) and ASH 4 (Design of Development) echo these requirements.

7.2.4 Reference is also made to the Design SPD and the appended Village Maps, with the map for Ashwell identifying the Site as falling within a mixed residential lower density area. Account is also taken of the Ashwell Design Guide appended to the ANP.

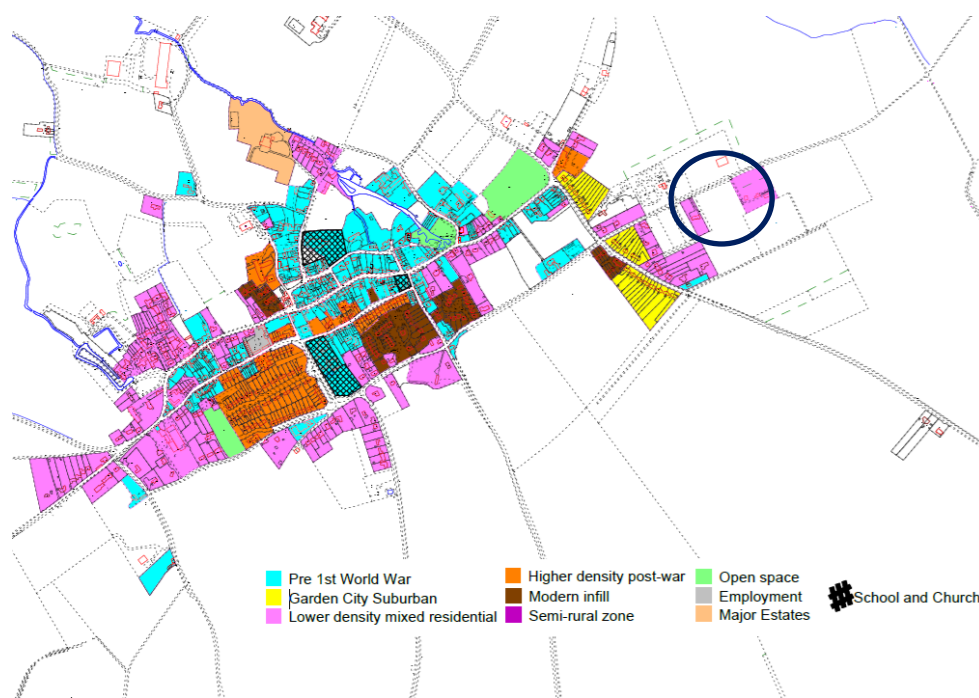


Figure 11: Village Map showing the site as a lower density mixed residential area

- 7.2.5 From a landscape perspective, Section 15 of the NPPF – Conserving and enhancing the natural environment – requires that planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by *‘protecting and enhancing valued landscapes’*, with plans to *‘distinguish between the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites’* and *‘allocate land with the least environmental or amenity value’* (See NPPF paras 180 & 181).
- 7.2.6 NHLP Policy NE 2 (Landscape) states that planning permission for proposals which do not cause unacceptable harm to the character and appearance of the surrounding area or the landscape character area in which the site is located, taking account of any suitable mitigation measures necessary to achieve this. ANP Policy ASH 9 (Natural Landscape And Rural Character) requires that Development proposals should respect the natural topography of a site, preserving and sensitively incorporating existing natural features, and be integrated into the landscape, including new landscape buffers between existing development and the countryside.
- 7.2.7 **Evaluation**
- 7.2.8 Following the submission of the pre-application scheme in March 2025, it has been established that the context of the site has evolved due to the implementation of the approved detached dwelling on the middle field. Together with No. 1 Ashwell Street, this now establishes a clearer and more coherent street frontage than was present when the earlier 6 unit scheme was considered. The pre-application response confirms that a revised approach comprising a reduced number of dwellings with development positioned closer to the site frontage, may be acceptable in principle, subject to character, amenity and streetscape considerations. This revised proposal responds directly to these recommendations and are considered to correspond with the relevant design and contextual principles on the following basis:
1. The site as existing has a domestic appearance, comprising maintained lawns and is not within or adjacent to a site designated for environmental, landscape or amenity value, such that there is no conflict with Section 15 of the NPPF from a hierarchical perspective. It is also noted that the site does not form part of any of the Locally Significant Views identified by ANP Policy ASH8.
 2. Within the settlement context, the mature landscaping along Ashwell Street to the northeast, the cluster of dwellings on Station Road to the east and south, and the residential and leisure uses on the northern side of Ashwell Street collectively limit public views of the site. This scheme presents a modestly set-back frontage, maintaining the rural character of Ashwell Street and also retains the existing hedgerows and trees along the site boundaries. Collectively, the proposed dwellings remain well-screened within the

landscape, ensuring that public views are limited, consistent with the rural edge character identified by the Council.

3. The layout for Site 1 has been shaped by its slightly narrower width and by the established pattern of development along the western boundary. In response, the two dwellings have been arranged in a tandem configuration, reflecting the linear pattern formed by Nos. 3, 7 and 5 to the west. A generous degree of separation is maintained between dwellings and between boundaries to both the east and west, moreover, the position of Plots 1 and 2 avoids opportunities for overlooking towards Nos. 3, 7 and 5.
4. For Site 2, both dwellings have been purposefully positioned closer to the site frontage. The site reads as a continuation of the existing pattern of set-back buildings, rather than a dense line of built form. A dedicated garage area, designed in the style of an agricultural timber barn, is positioned at the frontage but screened behind the existing mature trees. This not only maintains the rural lane character noted in the pre-application response, but also ensures that any public views remain filtered by vegetation.
5. This proposals incorporate dwellings of a pitched roof design which is appropriate to the local context. This, alongside the proposed landscaping measures, serves to create a legible environment, where the public and private realms are clearly distinguished and a clear sense of place established.

7.3.0 **Consideration No 3: Residential Amenity**

7.3.1 **Policy Backdrop**

7.3.2 NHLP Policy D3 (Protecting living conditions) states that planning permission will be granted for development proposals which do not cause unacceptable harm to living conditions:

“Where the living conditions of proposed developments would be affected by an existing use or the living conditions of an existing development would be affected by a proposed use, the Council will consider whether there are mitigation measures that can be taken to mitigate the harm to an acceptable level. If the Council is not satisfied that mitigation proposals would address the identified harm, development proposals will not be permitted.”

7.3.3 NHLP Policy D1 and ANP Policy ASH 4 both require that residential schemes, meet or exceed the nationally described space standards.

7.3.4 The Design SPD notes that planting can be used to create privacy, and provides the following relevant guidance regarding private spaces:

“Internal Space – dwellings...should provide adequate internal space that can be used efficiently by the occupants.

External space – private dwellings should have adequate private space to meet the needs of the occupants. The Council encourages a mix of garden sizes. Houses should have gardens which meet the needs of the occupants outdoor living requirements such as children’s play, patio for entertaining, lawn/shrub area for leisure and recreation, recycling bins and storage facilities.”

7.3.5 **Evaluation**

7.3.6 It is considered that the proposals would deliver a high standard of living conditions for both existing neighbouring residents and future occupiers. Each of the 4 dwellings is generously proportioned internally and exceeds the nationally described space standards. The internal layouts have been arranged to maximise natural light, with principal living spaces orientated to the south and larger openings positioned to optimise passive solar gain during the winter months.

7.3.7 Each dwelling benefits from an extensive and enclosed private garden, proportionate to the plot sizes and character of development on Ashwell Street. Further to the most recent pre-app response, this proposal ensures longer rear gardens, particularly on Site 2.

7.3.8 The development would provide for a wholly acceptable residential environment, with generous separation distances maintained between the proposed dwellings and surrounding properties. The spacious layout, combined with the orientation and varying roof forms, ensures that both existing and future residents would benefit from good levels of sunlight, daylight and outlook, with no material harm arising to the amenities of neighbouring occupiers.

7.5.0 **Consideration No 4: Dwelling Mix**

7.5.1 **Affordable Housing**

7.5.2 The Site falls below the threshold for affordable housing of 10 units as specified by NHLP Policy HS2.

7.5.3 **Dwelling Mix**

7.5.4 NHLP Policy HS3 (Housing mix), requires that residential proposals provide an appropriate range of house types and sizes are provided taking into account, the overall target of the plan; up to date evidence, such as the latest SHMA and details of recent completions/approvals; and the location / accessibility of the site. In addition it requires that proposals provide '*a density, scale and character of development appropriate to its location and surroundings*'. ANP Policy ASH 23 (Housing Mix) identifies the need to deliver one- and two-bedroom houses to meet the needs of older residents and younger people entering the housing market, albeit this requirement applies to major developments.

7.5.5 On this occasion, the provision of larger detached, low density family-sized housing is led by the need to respect the edge of settlement, low density form of development in the locality and, mindful of the small scale of development proposed, is thus considered to comply with the above policy requirements.

7.6.0 **Consideration No 5: Movement**

7.6.1 **Background:** In the context of Section 9 of the NPPF, consideration is given in turn to the following factors:

- Accessibility;
- Highways Safety and Capacity; and
- Parking

7.6.2 **Factor No 1: Accessibility**

7.6.3 NPPF Paragraph 110 states:

“Significant development should be focused on locations which are or can be made sustainable, through limiting the need to travel and offering a genuine choice of transport modes.”

7.6.4 Further to Sections 2.5.0 and 2.6.0 above, given the presence of key local services (including a primary school, doctors surgery, and convenience store), within genuine walking distance and the clear potential to utilise bus and rail services, it is considered that the site provides a sustainable location for residential development.

7.6.5 **Factor No 2: Highway Safety and Capacity**

7.6.6 NPPF paragraph 116 states that development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe. Given the modest scale of development proposed and the potential to provide appropriate visibility splays, it is anticipated that any impact would be modest.

7.6.7 **Factor No 3: Parking**

7.6.8 The proposal provides 3 to 4 parking spaces per dwelling, significantly exceeding the minimum standards for dwellings of two or more bedrooms set out in Appendix 4 of the NHLP. Each garage is designed to accommodate 2 cars, with additional parking space provided on the driveways, ensuring ample on-plot provision for both residents and visitors. The driveways also offer sufficient space for vehicle turning, enabling safe manoeuvring for cars and larger vehicles, including fire engines. Secure cycle parking is incorporated within the proposed garages.

7.6.9 **Conclusions**

7.6.10 In summary, the site allows for future residents to make use of sustainable modes of travel, with key local services and public transport options located close by. The modest scale of the development, together with the ability to secure suitable visibility splays, ensures that the scheme would not result in an unacceptable impact on highway safety or the efficient operation of the local road network. Furthermore, the proposals provide appropriate and

policy-compliant levels of car and cycle parking, including garages for 2 cars and additional driveway spaces with adequate turning provision. In these circumstances, the development is considered to accord with the requirements of Section 9 of the NPPF.

7.7.0 **Consideration No 6: Environment**

7.7.1 **Trees & Landscaping**

7.7.2 A detailed Arboricultural Impact Assessment has been prepared by Ligna Consultancy to accompany this application. The survey identifies a range of individual trees and tree groups located along the boundaries of the site. The site is not within a Conservation Area and no Tree Preservation Orders apply.

7.7.3 The survey identifies several low-quality ('C' category) trees and small groups to be removed, including Elder (T8), Plum (T14), Beech (T20–T21), Whitebeam (T22–T23), Ash (T28) and part of hedgerow H4. Their removal will not materially affect the site's arboricultural or ecological character.

7.7.4 All higher-quality boundary trees are retained and will be protected throughout construction. Minor incursions into Root Protection Areas are assessed as negligible and can be fully mitigated through supervised works and no-dig construction techniques.

7.7.5 The Tree Protection Scheme sets out robust protective fencing, ground protection, and an Arboricultural Method Statement to ensure all retained trees are safeguarded during the construction stages.

7.7.6 The proposal will include new soft landscaping throughout the site to reinforce boundaries, provide screening, and enhance visual amenity. New tree planting is proposed throughout the site to offset those removed, with species chosen to reflect the local landscape character and enhance biodiversity. Native hedgerows and planting will be incorporated along the boundaries.

7.7.7 **Energy**

7.7.8 A detailed Energy Report has been prepared by Monitor Energy Consultancy (August 2025) to demonstrate that the proposed dwellings meet the Council's SPD Gold Standard for sustainable design. The scheme incorporates a fabric-first approach, including enhanced insulation to walls, floors and roofs, high-performance glazing, airtight construction, and optimised south-facing layouts with shading to prevent overheating. Each dwelling will be served by an air-source heat pump, and solar panels.

7.7.9 The SAP modelling confirms that the development will achieve a 95% reduction in carbon emissions compared with a Building Regulations Part L compliant baseline, with all units achieving EPC Band A and comfortably surpassing the minimum fabric efficiency

improvements required. The report concludes that the scheme meets the Council's sustainability expectations.

8.0 CONCLUSIONS

8.1.0 Background

8.1.1 This Statement relates to a planning application for the erection of 4 detached dwellings at land at The Ruddery, Ashwell Street, Ashwell. It is promoted in the following circumstances.

- The site lies within the defined settlement boundary of Ashwell, a Category A village, where Policy SP2 supports general development. The site is therefore an appropriate and sustainable location for new housing.
- The surrounding context is residential with development on both sides of Ashwell Street and limited long-distance views. The proposals respect this pattern by providing a low-density layout with ample spacing, set-back frontage, and retention of mature boundary vegetation.
- The proposals have been shaped directly by ongoing pre-application advice, adopting a reduced number of dwellings, increased separation distances, and an arrangement that reflects the rural-lane character and spacious grain of plots along Ashwell Street.
- Each dwelling exceeds the nationally described space standards, benefits from generous private gardens, and is arranged to maximise natural light and outlook while avoiding overlooking or dominance to neighbouring properties.
- Access can be safely achieved from Ashwell Street, with appropriate visibility and turning space. The scheme provides ample parking per dwelling and secure cycle storage.
- The Arboricultural Impact Assessment confirms that only low-quality Category C trees require removal, with all higher-value boundary trees retained and protected.
- A comprehensive landscaping strategy reinforces boundaries with native hedgerows, new tree planting and meadow areas.
- The Energy Report demonstrates that the dwellings will achieve EPC A ratings and deliver a 95% reduction in carbon emissions through a fabric-first approach, air-source heat pumps and solar panels, meeting NHDC's Sustainability SPD requirements.
- Overall, the proposals accord with national and local planning policy, represents a high-quality, contextually appropriate form of development, and delivers sustainable, energy-efficient homes with no unacceptable impacts on amenity, landscape, or highway safety.

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