

# Sustainability and Energy Strategy

**Highover Farm, Hitchin**

**Phase 2a Residential Reserved Matters Application**

July 2026



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**Client**

Redrow Homes (South Midlands)

**Turley Reference**

02927\_SUST

**Document Status**

Draft

**Date**

July 2026

# 1. Introduction

This Strategy document has been prepared to demonstrate the sustainability performance of the Phase 2a residential reserved matters application at Highover Farm, Hitchin.

## 1.1 Introduction

This Sustainability Strategy Document has been prepared by Turley Sustainability, on behalf of Redrow Homes ('the applicant') for the Reserved Matters Application to North Herts District Council (NHDC) for the development of up to 157 dwellings, at Highover Farm, Hitchin.

An Outline Planning Application (OPA) was submitted to NHDC in June 2018 (reference number: 18/01154/OP). Planning permission was granted for the development in November 2024, subject to a number of conditions.

This statement relates to **Condition 12**, which requires the following:

*Condition 12: "Prior to or concurrently with each reserved matters submitted in each phase identified in Condition 5 Phasing and Delivery a sustainability strategy shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority for approval addressing renewable energy, reducing carbon emissions and water conservation."*

*Reason: To reduce carbon dioxide emissions and promoting principles of sustainable construction and the efficient use of buildings in accordance with North Hertfordshire Local Plan Policies SP9 and D1 and the Sustainability SPD 2024."*

A site wide Sustainability and Energy strategy was approved by NHDC in February 2026, and this strategy is based on these principles. The site wide strategy set out the sustainability measures proposed across the entire site. This document focusses on the specific measures proposed for Phase 2a, with reference back to the overarching strategy where necessary.

## 1.2 The Consented Development

Highover Farm, granted outline permission in November 2024, is a development of up to 700 dwellings, approximately 500 sqm of neighbourhood-level facilities, a new 2FE primary school, open space, play space, green infrastructure, and associated accesses. The development is to be delivered in four broad phases.

Phase 2 of the development relates to residential development to the north of The Avenue/south of Hitchin Meadows, part of Icknield Linear Park, and the primary school site, and is to be split into three separate reserved matters applications:

- Phase 2a residential reserved matters application – the residential dwellings and associated highway, drainage infrastructure and on plot

landscaping to be built out by Redrow (subject of this sustainability statement),

- Phase 2b Linear Park RM - the Icknield Linear Park which adjoins the Phase 2a residential RM area to the west and north-west – to be submitted by BDW Trading Ltd at the same time as Phase 2a,
- Phase 2c School Site – this will be submitted by Hertfordshire County Council (HCC), the timetable for this is currently unknown.

The Phase 2a residential reserved matters application seeks approval for:

*The construction of Phase 2 Residential comprising 157 dwellings, associated highway, drainage, servicing/utilities infrastructure and landscaping in accordance with condition 3 of 18/01154/OP (and the associated partial discharge of conditions 7, 10, 11, 12)'.*

The Illustrative Masterplan is shown in **Figure 1** overleaf.

### 1.3 Document Structure

This statement provides a summary of the key sustainability measures that proposed for the Phase 2a residential RM to reduce carbon dioxide emissions and promote principles of sustainable construction. Key sustainability measures are set out under the following themes, which reflect those presented in the overarching strategy for the site.

- Climate Change Mitigation
- Waste and Circular Economy
- Healthy Placemaking
- Promoting Biodiversity
- Sustainable Travel
- Climate Change Adaptation
- Climate Change Mitigation

Figure 1: Site Plan (Source McBains)



## 2. Phase 2a: Residential Sustainability Measures

The key sustainability measures integrated in the Phase 2a RM application are set within the table below. Each of the themes align with the topics and targets which were presented in the approved site wide sustainability strategy. Further detail on each of these themes can be found within the Strategy submitted to NHDC with the outline planning application.

Homes within the Phase 2a RM will be delivered by Redrow. The Sustainability Measures below therefore reflect how the strategy will be applied in the context of Redrow's housing specification.

| Theme                     | Sustainability measures included in Phase 2a                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
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| Climate Change Mitigation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Energy Efficiency:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The majority of homes at Highover Farm <b>Phase 2a</b> will be built to <b>Part L 2021 Building Regulations</b>. Depending on the construction timelines, some homes may fall under the Future Homes Standards regulations, which will apply to any homes where building work commences after the 24<sup>th</sup> of March 2028.</li> <li>○ Redrow comply with the 2021 Building Regulations through a robust <b>fabric-first approach</b>, prioritising enhanced thermal performance and reduced energy demand. This is achieved through increased cavity widths, the use of thermal lintels to minimise cold bridging, and high levels of airtightness and insulation.</li> <li>○ <b>Orientation and form</b> will be considered with the aim of optimising solar gain, natural daylight and ventilation, whilst reducing the risk of summer overheating from excessive direct solar gains. The layout has also been informed by wider layout factors such as topography, access and movement, and broader good design principles.</li> <li>○ New homes built to Part L 2021 typically achieve an <b>EPC rating of A or B</b> under the current methodology.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Low/Zero Carbon Technologies:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ High efficiency <b>air source heat pumps</b> will be provided for space heating and hot water. ASHP are all-electric, without the use of fossil fuels to provide heat or hot water. This means that the operational carbon emissions of the new homes will be very low from the outset, and will fall to net zero in line with the decarbonisation of the national electricity grid. The UK electric grid is legally targeted to be fully net zero by 2035.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> |

| Theme | Sustainability measures included in Phase 2a                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
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|       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Due the high thermal efficiency of the dwellings and use of ASHPs as a low carbon heat source, it is not anticipated that homes will need to utilise solar PV in order to meet the requirements of Part L 2021. However, any homes which may be required to meet the Future Homes Standard (where building work commences after the 24<sup>th</sup> of March 2028) would benefit from Solar PV to provide onsite renewable energy. The applicant considers that should any homes be built to the full FHS then a further planning condition may be required to approve the location and quantum of PV needed for these homes. The Applicant has therefore suggested a condition as follows: <i>“Prior to their installation, details of any solar photovoltaic (PV) panels to be installed shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The PV panels shall thereafter be installed in accordance with the approved details.”</i></li> <li>● <b>Embodied Carbon;</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Redrow is committed to reducing the <b>embodied carbon</b> associated with its homes through a range of responsible sourcing and material specification measures, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Prioritising local suppliers and sustainable materials wherever feasible. Redrow has set a target for 90% of products, services and labour to be sourced locally to its developments.</li> <li>▪ Incorporating lower-carbon and responsibly sourced materials within its standard specification, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Concrete roof tiles</b>, which require fewer raw materials and generate lower CO<sub>2</sub> emissions during manufacture.</li> <li>● <b>Aircrete blocks</b>, containing approximately 80% recycled content, with 99% of constituent materials sourced within the UK.</li> <li>● <b>Gypsum plasterboard</b>, manufactured using natural, synthetic or recovered gypsum and almost 100% recycled paper, reducing reliance on virgin materials and supporting circular economy principles.</li> <li>● <b>FSC-certified and other responsibly sourced timber and paper products.</b></li> <li>● <b>Johnson Tiles products</b>, supplied by a manufacturer that has eliminated single-use plastic packaging, uses 100% recycled packaging materials, and incorporates 20% recycled ceramic content in its products.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>Further detail can be found in <b>Section 4.1</b> of the Sustainability and Energy Strategy approved as part of the discharge of condition 12 of the outline permission.</p> |

| Theme                             | Sustainability measures included in Phase 2a                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
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| <b>Waste and Circular Economy</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Reducing Construction Waste:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ A <b>Site Waste Management Plan</b> (SWMP) was approved by NHDC on the 8<sup>th</sup> of September 2025.</li> <li>○ The reduction, reuse and recycling of <b>construction</b> waste is to be prioritised through measures such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Appointing a suitably qualified recycling company (BIFFA) to ensure maximum waste removal from site is recycled.</li> <li>▪ Appointing a waste champion on site who will deliver toolbox talks and site inductions to ensure that the importance of recycling correctly is well understood by all subcontractors.</li> <li>▪ The cut and fill balance will be managed so as to minimise the volume of excavation waste leaving the site.</li> <li>▪ Concrete and brick will be recycled into 6F2 and or subbase for private drives, and asphalt will be used in compound car parks, private drives where possible.</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ During the <b>operational</b> phase, full consideration will be given to the Council’s waste management infrastructure and services to ensure that the residents have the necessary infrastructure to participate in any kerbside recycling services. Provision will be made for the separate storage and collection of waste and recycling. Refuse storage areas will be designed to be easily accessible for both occupants and refuse vehicles. Refuse vehicle tracking demonstrating suitable access for refuse collection vehicles has been submitted with the RM application.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>Further detail on the measures that will be implemented to support a Circular Economy can be found within the SWMP and <b>Section 4.2</b> of the Sustainability and Energy Strategy approved as part of the discharge of condition 12 of the outline permission.</p> |
| <b>Healthy Placemaking</b>        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>A Sustainable Location:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The site is <b>close to a range of services and facilities</b>, accessible on foot, by bike, or by bus, and design of a walkable neighbourhood.</li> <li>○ The site plan provides a permeable, <b>well-connected street network</b>, helping to promote healthy and active travel.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Green Space:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Highover Park, Threshing Barn Green, and Hitchin Meadows are key aspects of the <b>Green Infrastructure</b> provision on site.</li> <li>○ Icknield Linear Park, Stotfold Linear Park and Dane Walk and Hitchin Meadows directly border the Phase 2a dwellings, providing excellent accessibility to formal and informal routes and a formal play area which will serve as a vibrant hub for social interaction and community integration.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |

| Theme                         | Sustainability measures included in Phase 2a                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
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|                               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ All homes will be within a <b>10-minute walk from a green space</b>, in line with Fields in Trust distances, as recommended by NHDC's Sustainability checklist.</li> <li>● <b>Ventilation and Light:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Good levels of ventilation</b> will be ensured the use of decentralised Mechanical Ventilation Extract systems where necessary.</li> <li>○ <b>Natural light and views of nature</b> will be prioritised where possible.</li> </ul> </li> <li>● <b>Sustainable Materials:</b> Materials and services that have <b>low emission rates</b> and pollutants will be prioritised to support indoor air quality.</li> </ul> <p>Further detail on the measures that will be implemented to support Healthy Placemaking can be found in <b>Section 4.3</b> of the Sustainability and Energy Strategy approved as part of the discharge of condition 12 of the outline permission.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| <b>Promoting Biodiversity</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Ecological Mitigation and enhancement:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The wider site plan has been informed by an Ecological Impact Assessment which was prepared by WSP. The development has been designed to avoid impacts on ecological features where possible.</li> <li>○ Within Phase 2a, landscape planting will be provided in the form of street tree, plot trees, verges, and planting.</li> <li>○ Bird and bat boxes are to be incorporated within both green space on trees, and also as integrated bricks within/on the dwellings throughout phase 2a.</li> <li>○ A BNG assessment of the wider site demonstrates that the proposals are capable of achieving a BNG of c.20% habitat units and c.63% hedgerow units. The landscaping provided within Phase 2a contributes to the overall Phase 2 and site-wide BNG target.</li> <li>○ Sustainable drainage systems in the form of rain gardens will support multifunctional drainage, water quality, biodiversity and amenity benefits.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>Further detail on how the scheme will promote biodiversity can be found in the biodiversity reports and <b>Section 4.4</b> of the Sustainability and Energy Strategy approved as part of the discharge of condition 12 of the outline permission.</p> |
| <b>Sustainable Travel</b>     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Sustainable Transport:</b> The Movement strategy for the site aims to reduce reliance on the car and to encourage the use of more sustainable modes of transport such as walking, cycling, and public transport. <b>Section 4.5.2</b> of the Sustainability and Energy statement</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |

| Theme | Sustainability measures included in Phase 2a                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
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|       | <p>for the wider development sets out the measures that will be implemented to support sustainable transport at Highover Farm, these include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>A walkable site plan</b> which provides a network of direct, legible and integrated pedestrian and cycle routes. The Phase 2a application area benefits from pedestrian links to the surrounding network of footpaths and leisure paths.</li> <li>○ <b>Pedestrian and cycle movement prioritised</b> over other modes of transport through the use of 20 mph speed limits, reduced parking at local facilities, and traffic management measures.</li> <li>○ A <b>green corridor</b> (Dane Walk) just to the south of the Phase 2a application.</li> <li>○ Improvements to the western footway on Stotfold Road which provide a cycleway/footway connection from the south-eastern corner of the wider site to the junction of Frensham Drive with Stotfold Road, allowing cyclists to <b>connect with the existing cycle infrastructure</b> on Cambridge Road.</li> <li>○ A <b>new bus stop and bus service</b> (Route 82) will be provided as part of the wider development, which will be accessible within 400m of homes within Phase 2a, supporting public transport connectivity.</li> <li>○ Hitchin railway station is the nearest <b>railway station</b> and can be accessed within a circa 25-minute walk, 5-minute cycle, or local bus services. Letchworth Garden City railway station can also be accessed within a 10-minute cycle ride.</li> <li>○ All homes will be provided with secure and covered <b>cycle parking spaces</b> in line with the NHDC Vehicle Parking at New Development SPD. Parking will be provided within sheds, storage units, or garages, and driveway widths will be wide enough to ensure adequate space for pedestrian and cycle access even when vehicles are parked.</li> <li>○ Each home will be provided with <b>Electric Vehicle (EV) charging facilities</b>, to support the uptake of low emission vehicles.</li> <li>○ A <b>travel plan</b> has been prepared with the aim of reducing reliance on the car and to encouraging the use of alternative modes of travel including walking, cycling and public transport. Each resident will be provided with a <b>travel pack and voucher</b> offering three months of free bus travel to support sustainable transport behaviours.</li> </ul> <p>Further detail on how the development will support sustainable transport can be found in the transport reports and <b>Section 4.5.2</b> of the Sustainability and Energy Strategy approved as part of the discharge of condition 12 of the outline permission.</p> |

| Theme                            | Sustainability measures included in Phase 2a                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
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| <b>Climate Change Adaptation</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Minimising Overheating:</b> All homes will be designed in accordance with the new Building Regulations Part O, which requires development to demonstrate that the risk of overheating has been mitigated.</li> <li>• <b>Water Efficiency:</b> All residential development will aim to limit <b>water consumption to 110 l/pp/pd</b>.</li> <li>• <b>Sustainable Drainage:</b> The development is located in an area of <b>low flood risk</b> and includes a number of measures that support adaptation to climate change. These include; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Attenuation is to be provided to ensure <b>no increase in surface water run-off</b> volumes for all rainfall events up to and including the 1 in 100 year + <b>40% for climate change event</b>.</li> <li>○ SuDS features in the form of rain gardens will be included within Phase 2a. The wider site drainage design includes <b>ponds/basins, swales</b> and a <b>soakaway</b> to support the delivery of multifunctional benefits.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>Further detail on the measures that will be implemented to support Climate Adaptation across the site can be found in <b>Section 4.6</b> of the Sustainability and Energy Strategy approved as part of the discharge of condition 12 of the outline permission.</p> |

### 3. Conclusion

The Highover Farm Phase 2a Residential Reserved Matters proposals have been developed in accordance with the approved **Outline Sustainability Strategy** and demonstrate a strong commitment to delivering a sustainable, low-carbon and resilient residential neighbourhood. The scheme responds to the requirements of **North Hertfordshire Local Plan Policies SP9 and D1** and the **Council's Sustainability SPD 2024** through an integrated approach to climate change mitigation, climate adaptation, healthy placemaking, biodiversity enhancement and sustainable travel.

The development will deliver highly energy-efficient homes built to current Building Regulations standards, incorporating a **fabric-first** approach and **all-electric heating** through air source heat pumps, thereby eliminating the use of fossil fuels for space heating and hot water. This approach will deliver very low carbon emissions from the outset, with emissions expected to reduce further towards net zero as the UK electricity grid continues to decarbonise. This commitment to all-electric heating is being made proactively, ahead of it becoming a mandatory requirement under the Future Homes Standard (FHS). The proposals also support the reduction of **embodied carbon** through responsible material sourcing and construction practices.

**Construction waste** will be managed in accordance with the approved Site Waste Management Plan, while the layout and design of **operational waste** and recycling facilities will provide residents with convenient

opportunities to separate and recycle waste, supporting the Council's waste management objectives.

The layout promotes **health and wellbeing** by providing access to high-quality green infrastructure, walkable streets, natural light, ventilation and opportunities for active travel. **Biodiversity** enhancements, including new planting, integrated habitat features and sustainable drainage measures, contribute towards significant site-wide Biodiversity Net Gain targets and the creation of a richer ecological network.

The development is also designed to support **sustainable transport** choices through strong pedestrian and cycle connections, public transport accessibility, EV charging infrastructure and travel planning initiatives that encourage a reduction in private car use. Measures to address **climate resilience**, including water efficiency, overheating mitigation and sustainable drainage systems, ensure the development is well adapted to future climate conditions.

Overall, the Phase 2a Residential Reserved Matters application represents a sustainable and future-focused development that will deliver environmental and social benefits for future residents whilst contributing to the wider sustainability objectives established for the Highover Farm development.

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