

Location: **Land South Of Turnpike Lane
Ickleford
Hertfordshire**

Applicant: **c/o Company**

Proposal: **Erection of up to 100 dwellings with means of access
from Turnpike Lane including associated landscaping,
drainage, car parking; infrastructure and all ancillary
and enabling works following demolition of all existing
structures (all matters reserved except means of
access)**

Ref. No: 25/02401/OP

Officer: **Paul Chaston**

Date of expiry of statutory period

Sunday 01 February 2026

Extension of statutory period

Wednesday 22 April 2026

Reason for Delay

Discussions and negotiations on various technical aspects including masterplanning, further information received and additional consultation exercise that was undertaken as a result.

Reason for Referral to Committee

The site area for this application exceeds 0.5 hectares and proposes residential development. Under the Council's scheme of delegation, the application must be determined by the Council's Planning Control Committee.

1.0 Site History

1.1 No planning history for this site.

2.0 Policies

2.1 **North Hertfordshire District Council Local Plan 2011-2031**

Adopted 8 November 2022.

Policy SP1: Sustainable Development in North Hertfordshire
Policy SP2: Settlement Hierarchy
Policy SP5: Countryside and Green Belt
Policy SP6: Sustainable transport
Policy SP7: Infrastructure requirements and developer contributions
Policy SP8: Housing
Policy SP9: Design and Sustainability
Policy SP10: Healthy Communities
Policy SP11: Natural resources and sustainability
Policy SP12: Green infrastructure, landscape and biodiversity
Policy T1: Assessment of transport matters
Policy T2: Parking
Policy HS1: Local Housing Allocations
Policy HS2: Affordable Housing
Policy HS3: Housing mix
Policy HS5: Accessible and adaptable housing
Policy D1: Sustainable design
Policy D3: Protecting living conditions
Policy D4: Air quality
Policy HC1: Community facilities
Policy NE1: Strategic green infrastructure
Policy NE2: Landscape
Policy NE4: Biodiversity and geological sites
Policy NE6: New and improved open space
Policy NE7: Reducing flood risk
Policy NE8: Sustainable drainage systems
Policy NE9: Water quality and environment
Policy NE10: Water conservation and wastewater infrastructure
Policy NE11: Contaminated land
Policy HE4: Archaeology

2.2 **Ickleford Neighbourhood Plan**

Policy E1 – Maintaining Separation
Policy E2 – Protecting the Landscape
Policy E3 – Rural Character
Policy E4 – Biodiversity
Policy SD2 – New Housing Development
Policy SD3 – High Quality Design
Policy SD4 – Provision of Energy Efficient Buildings
Policy SD5 – Water Management
Policy C2 – Recreation and Green Spaces
Policy MTT1 – Provision for Pedestrians, Cyclists and Horseriders

2.3 **National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)**

Section 2: Achieving sustainable development
Section 5: Delivering a sufficient supply of homes
Section 6: Building a strong competitive economy

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 13: Protecting Green Belt land
Section 14: Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change
Section 15: Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

2.4 **Supplementary Planning Documents**

Design SPD (2011)
Planning Obligations SPD (2023)
Vehicle Parking Provision at New Development SPD (2011)
North Hertfordshire and Stevenage Landscape Character Assessment

2.5 **Hertfordshire County Council**

Local Transport Plan (LTP4 – adopted May 2018)
Hertfordshire Waste Core Strategy and Development Management Policies Development Plan Document (2012)

2.6 **National Planning Practice Guidance**

Provides a range of guidance on planning matters including flood risk, viability, design and planning obligations.

3.0 **Representations**

Consultees

3.1 **Ickleford Parish Council** – Objects to the application on the following grounds:

- Loss of natural 'Green Belt Barrier' between Ickleford and Hitchin.
- Concerns over the true cost of the affordable homes to the residents.
- Existing capacity of the drainage and sewerage infrastructure.
- Effect upon the River Oughton and River Hiz chalkstream.
- Potential for archaeological interest at the site.
- Effect upon wildlife and ecology.
- Impact upon Ickleford in terms of increased traffic and congestion.
- Reliance of residents upon private car use versus sustainable modes of transport.

3.2 **NHDC Environmental Health (Contaminated Land)** – No objection regarding contamination, subject to condition requiring a Phase II Site Investigation environmental risk assessment report to be undertaken and any subsequent phases and remediation, if necessary.

3.3 **NHDC Environmental Health (Noise)** – No objection.

3.4 **NHDC Environmental Health (Air Quality)** – No objection.

3.5 **NHDC Waste and Recycling** – No comments.

3.6 **NHDC Leisure Manager** – No comments.

- 3.7 **NHDC Greenspace Manager** – No comments.
- 3.8 **NHDC Housing Supply Officer** – Based on 100 dwellings overall and a 50% affordable housing requirement, in accordance with the Local Plan, this equates to the provision of 50 affordable dwellings.
- Within the overall 50% affordable housing requirement, a 65%/35% rented/other intermediate tenure split is required in accordance with the Council's Planning Obligations SPD and the 2023 Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA). This, of the 50 affordable units: 33 rented units and 17 intermediate tenure units should be provided to meet housing need.
- 3.9 **NHDC Urban Design Officer** – No objection subject to conditions to secure parameter and framework plans and master planning principles.
- 3.10 **NHDC Ecologist** – No objection subject to conditions.
- 3.11 **HCC Highways** – No objection subject to conditions.
- 3.12 **HCC Growth and Infrastructure** – No objection subject to financial contributions via a S106 legal agreement towards Primary Education, Secondary Education, Childcare Services, SEND Services (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities), Library Services, Youth Services, Waste Services and Fire & Rescue Services.
- 3.13 **HCC Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA)** – No objection subject to seven conditions.
- 3.14 **HCC Historic Environment (Archaeology)** – No objection, subject to conditions requiring submission of a Written Scheme of Investigation incorporating a programme of archaeological works. involving a further programme of strip, map and sample excavation. This is required as the proposal is likely to have impacts on heritage assets of archaeological interest.
- 3.15 **HCC Minerals & Waste** – No objection subject to a condition requiring the submission and agreement of a Site Waste Management Plan.
- 3.16 **HCC Public Health** – No objection subject to condition requiring the submission and agreement of a Health Impact Assessment. This matter is addressed in the relevant section of this report.
- 3.17 **HCC Fire and Rescue Services** – No objection, subject to a s106 obligation for the provision of fire hydrants on site.
- 3.18 **HCC Countryside and Rights of Way Officer** – No objection.
- 3.19 **Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust** – No comments.
- 3.20 **Natural England** – No objection.
- 3.21 **Active Travel England** – No comments.
- 3.22 **NHS IBC** – No comments.

- 3.23 **Sport England** – No objection subject to s106 contributions towards off-site sports pitch and sports facilities expansion and improvements.
- 3.24 **Anglian Water** – No objection subject to strategic foul water strategy condition.
- 3.25 **Affinity Water** – No objection subject to conditions.
- 3.26 **CPRE Hertfordshire (Campaign to Protect Rural England)** – No comments.
- 3.27 **Hitchin Forum** – Objects based on the principle of development and matters relating to the impact upon existing services and infrastructure, and traffic/congestion.

Neighbour and Local Resident Representations

- 3.28 The application has been advertised via neighbour notification letters, the display of site notices and a press notice. At the time of finalising this report, a total of 252 comments have been received including 202 objections, 47 submissions in support and 3 neutral comments.
- 3.29 Neighbours objections and concerns are summarised as follows:
- Traffic and Congestion
 - Highway safety concerns
 - Insufficient parking provision for the development
 - Inadequate Masterplan documentation
 - Inappropriate density of development
 - Extent of developable area
 - Development site is outside the settlement boundary of Ickleford
 - Scale of the development will significantly alter the character of Ickleford
 - Scale and location of the development is not aligned with the Neighbourhood Plan
 - Erosion of the gap between Ickleford and Hitchin
 - Effect upon nearby historical properties and the wider Conservation Area
 - Effect upon archaeological matters
 - Inadequate existing road infrastructure
 - Will add more traffic on surrounding roads adding to congestion
 - Inadequate educational infrastructure
 - Inadequate public transport and sustainability meaning greater reliance on private vehicle use
 - Lack of capacity of existing local infrastructure, services and facilities to support the development
 - Inadequate healthcare provision
 - Concerns around the existing capacity of local utilities infrastructure
 - Flooding and drainage concerns
 - Concerns around the capacity of the existing drainage network
 - Increased noise and pollution
 - Effect of the development upon air quality
 - Loss of Green Belt and no very special circumstances
 - Impact upon rural character of the site

- Effect upon the nearby chalkstream
- Loss of/Effect upon wildlife
- Loss of green space and habitats for wildlife
- Loss of agricultural/grazing land

3.30 47 submissions have been received in support of the proposal. These are summarised as follows:

- Access to local housing
- Inclusion of affordable homes
- Inclusion of children's play area
- Variety of the different sized homes the development would offer
- Incorporation of green spaces into the scheme

4.0 Planning Considerations

4.1 Site and Surroundings

4.1.1 The application site is located on the southern edge of Ickleford, outside but adjacent to the Ickleford settlement boundary. The site itself comprises agricultural land and covers an area of approximately 6.98 hectares.

4.1.2 The topography of the site rises from a low point of 54m AOD in the southwest to a high point of 60.7m AOD along the western boundary. Existing mature vegetation along the site boundaries means the site benefits from a degree of containment when viewed from all directions.

4.1.3 The northern boundary of the site is defined by established, mature trees and scrub with Turnpike Lane beyond. Part of the eastern boundary is shared with Lodge Court. Immediately to the south-east of the site is the former Ickleford Mill site. The southern boundary is defined by mature tree and scrub vegetation, with the River Oughton beyond. To the west is Ickleford Manor house and the recently completed Ickleford Mews development which comprises 19 dwellings. The remainder of the western boundary is defined by mature tree and scrub planting, with Bedford Road beyond.

4.2 Proposal

4.2.1 Outline permission is sought for residential development with means of access from Turnpike Lane for consideration and all other matters reserved for subsequent approval; demolition of all existing structures; associated landscaping, drainage, car parking, infrastructure and all ancillary and enabling works

4.2.2 The development area is approximately 2.45 hectares in size. The key elements of the proposed development comprise:

- Up to 100 dwellings, of which 50% will be affordable housing;
- New main vehicular access point from Turnpike Lane which would also accommodate access for pedestrians and cyclists;
- Off-site highways works, including improvements to Turnpike Lane, Bedford Road and Greenfield Avenue for the benefit of pedestrians and cyclists;

- A network of cycle and pedestrian routes across the site with linkages to existing roads; and
- A network of open spaces across the site including a play area, footpath connections, and a blue/green corridor incorporating the provision of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS).

4.2.3 The application is accompanied by the following plans and documents:

- Proposed Access Arrangement Plan 'Drawing No. IMI-RGP-XX-XX-DR-T-005 Rev P04'
- Parameter Plan
- Framework Plan
- Illustrative Masterplan
- Design and Access Statement
- Planning Statement
- Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy
- LLFA Technical Note Addendum
- Energy and Sustainability Statement
- Air Quality Assessment
- Noise Assessment Report
- Ecological Impact Assessment
- Ecological Impact Assessment Addendum
- Ecology Note Addendum dated 10/12/25
- Ecology Technical Note dated 23/02/26
- Biodiversity Net Gain Statement
- Biodiversity Metric
- Draft Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan
- Arboricultural Implications Assessment
- Arboricultural Method Statement
- Tree Protection Plan
- Tree Constraints Plan
- Technical Review of Arboricultural Matters (Cycle Routes) dated 25/02/26
- Landscape and Visual Appraisal
- Landscape and Visual Appraisal – Technical Note
- Transport Assessment
- Transport Assessment Addendum
- Travel Plan
- Heritage Statement
- Archaeological Desk Based Assessment
- Phase 1 Preliminary Risk Assessment
- Geophysical Survey Report

4.2.4 This is an outline application with all matters reserved for future consideration, except for the means of access to the site. Therefore, matters relating to appearance (aspects of the building or place that determine its visual impression), landscaping (the treatment of the land to enhance or protect the amenities of the site and the surrounding area (including screening and tree planting), layout (the location, height, width, and length of the proposed buildings, streets and spaces) and scale (the height, width, and length of the proposed buildings), do not form part of this application. These matters would be secured by conditions requiring the submission of reserved matters applications in the event of

approval. For the avoidance of doubt, where details of these reserved matters are set out in supporting documents and plans, these are illustrative only. The submitted Framework Plan and Parameter Plan would be approved documents that would direct the reserved matters.

5.0 Key Issues

5.1 The key issues for consideration for this planning application are as follows:

- Principle of the development
 - Grey Belt assessment
 - Effect upon the Green Belt
 - Very special circumstances
- Affordable housing provision
- Loss of agricultural land
- Masterplanning
- Highway matters
- Landscape and visual impacts
- Heritage and archaeological impacts
- Ecology and Biodiversity
- Tree impacts
- Flood risk and drainage
- Environmental impacts (noise, land contamination and air quality)
- Sustainability
- Impact on residential amenity
- Other Matters
- Planning obligations
- Planning balance and conclusion

5.2 Principle of the development

5.2.1 Paragraph 2 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out that applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise and that the NPPF is an important material consideration in planning decisions.

5.2.2 Paragraph 11 of the NPPF sets out that decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development. For decision taking, Paragraph 11 d) states (Page 21) *‘where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permission unless:*

i. the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a strong reason for refusing the development proposed; or

ii. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole, having particular regard to key policies for directing development to sustainable locations, making

effective use of land, securing well-designed places and providing affordable homes, individually or in combination.'

- 5.2.3 North Herts Council is currently unable to demonstrate a five-year supply of deliverable housing land. The latest published figure determined that the Council can only currently demonstrate 2.6 years supply. Consequently, and in accordance with footnote 8 of the NPPF, the policies most important for determining this application are out-of-date and the 'tilted balance' is engaged in favour of the provision of housing on the application site.
- 5.2.4 Whilst the tilted balance is engaged, Paragraph 12 of the NPPF states that 'the presumption in favour of sustainable development does not change the statutory status of the development plan as the starting point for decision-making.'
- 5.2.5 With regards to housing delivery, Paragraph 61 of the NPPF sets out the Government's objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes, ensuring that a sufficient amount and variety of land can come forward where it is needed, and that the needs of groups with specific housing requirements are addressed. Paragraph 61 goes on to set out that the overall aim should be to meet an area's housing need, including with an appropriate mix of housing types for the local community.
- 5.2.6 The Council further acknowledges that the current Government has a clear message in report to the national housing crisis in an effort to deliver 1.5 million homes. This Written Ministerial Statement is a material consideration which ensures weight is given to housing delivery and to the presumption in favour of sustainable development.
- 5.2.6 Paragraph 124 of the NPPF sets out that planning policies and decisions should promote an effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses, while safeguarding and improving the environment and ensuring safe and healthy living conditions.
- 5.2.7 As set out in the report above, the policies contained within the North Hertfordshire Local Plan (NHLP) that are most important for determining the application are out-of-date. The Council can only currently demonstrate a five-year housing land supply of 2.6 years, which is a significant shortfall. Therefore, the weight given to the relevant policies contained within the NHLP are significantly reduced.
- 5.2.8 The North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011-2031 was adopted by the Council in November 2022.
- 5.2.9 Policy SP1 of the NHLP is the backbone for considering development proposals. It requires that the main role of key settlements, be the focus for new development, including housing.
- 5.2.10 Policy SP2 of the NHLP identifies a significant housing need in the district which is for 'at least 13,000 new homes' over the plan period. Ickleford is planned to accommodate around 235 homes. The site physically abuts existing residential development on Ickleford Mews. However, the site is located outside the defined settlement boundary for Ickleford in the Local Plan. Therefore, the proposal conflicts with Policy SP2 of the Local Plan.

- 5.2.11 With the site being outside of the Ickleford Settlement Boundary, it lies within the Green Belt. Policy SP5 of the NHLP sets out that the Council will only permit development proposals in the Green Belt where they would not result in inappropriate development or where very special circumstances have been demonstrated.
- 5.2.12 National Policy on Green Belt is set out in Section 13 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). Paragraph 142 of the NPPF confirms that the Government attaches great importance to Green Belts, where the fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open. The essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and their permanence.
- 5.2.13 Paragraph 143 of the NPPF sets out that the Green Belt serves five purposes, which are as follows:
- a) to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;
 - b) to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another;
 - c) to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;
 - d) to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns;
 - e) to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.
- 5.2.14 Paragraph 153 of the NPPF sets out that *“when considering any planning application, local planning authorities should ensure that substantial weight is given to any harm to the Green Belt, including harm to its openness. Inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances. Very special circumstances will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm resulting from the proposal, is clearly outweighed by other considerations.”*
- 5.2.15 Paragraph 154 of the NPPF offers several exceptions to inappropriate development within the Green Belt. The proposed redevelopment of up to 100 dwellings would not meet any of the exceptions to inappropriate development under paragraph 154 of the NPPF.
- 5.2.16 Paragraph 155 of the NPPF sets out that the development of homes, commercial and other development in the Green Belt should also not be regarded as inappropriate development where all the following apply:
- a) The development would utilise grey belt land and would not fundamentally undermine the purposes (taken together) of the remaining Green Belt across the area of the plan;
 - b) There is a demonstrable unmet need for the type of development proposed;
 - c) The development would be in a sustainable location, with particular reference to paragraphs 110 and 115 of this Framework;
 - d) Where applicable the development proposed meets the ‘Golden Rules’ requirements set out in paragraphs 156-157 below.

Grey Belt assessment

5.2.17 The revision to the NPPF in December 2024 introduced 'Grey Belt', which is defined in the NPPF glossary as follows:

“For the purposes of plan-making and decision-making, ‘grey belt’ is defined as land in the Green Belt comprising previously developed land and/or any other land that, in either case, does not strongly contribute to any of purposes (a), (b), or (d) in paragraph 143. ‘Grey belt’ excludes land where the application of the policies relating to the areas or assets in footnote 7 (other than Green Belt) would provide a strong reason for refusing or restricting development”.

5.2.18 This outline application for up to 100 dwellings is submitted on the basis that the site constitutes 'Grey Belt' land. In determining whether the site should be defined as Grey Belt, the contribution the site makes to purposes (a), (b), and (d) set out in paragraph 143 should be considered.

5.2.19 Grey Belt also excludes land where the policies relating to areas set out in footnote 7 of the NPPF would provide a strong reason for refusal. Footnote 7 refers to the policies that protect areas or assets of particular importance including habitat sites, Sites of Special Scientific Interest, Green Belt, Local Green Space, a National Landscape, a National Park, Heritage Coast, irreplaceable habitats, designated heritage assets, and areas at risk of flooding or coastal change.

5.2.20 The National Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) National Planning Policy Guidance (PPG) sets out guidance on how authorities should consider evidence in the absence of Grey Belt allocations within the Local Plan. This includes:

1. Whether the site strongly contributes to the Green Belt purposes a, b, or d (as above).
2. Whether the application of policies to areas and assets of particular importance identified in footnote 7 of the NPPF (other than Green Belt) provide a strong reason to restrict development.
3. Whether development of the site would fundamentally undermine the purposes of the remaining Green Belt across the Local Plan area (North Hertfordshire in this case), as set out in national policy and this guidance.

Contribution of the application site to the Green Belt purposes (a), (b), and (d)

5.2.21 Purpose (a) of paragraph 143 is intended to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas. The PPG is clear that villages should not be considered a large built-up area.

5.2.22 The application site is adjacent to the southern settlement boundary of Ickleford and around 70 metres at the closest point to the northern settlement boundary of Hitchin. Ickleford is classed as a village and therefore cannot be considered a large built-up area as set out within the PPG. The site is bounded by trees and vegetation, streets, rivers, and developed areas that restrict and contain development

- 5.2.23 The submitted Parameter Plan is clear the proposed developable area would be restricted roughly to the northern half of the site. It is considered that the northern half of the site containing the proposed developable areas would utilise Grey Belt land.
- 5.2.24 When the entirety of the application site within the red line boundary is considered, given that the site is free of existing development and near to the settlement of Hitchin which is classed as a large built-up area, if developed the site would result in an incongruous pattern of development. If the entire site were developed, the development would significantly weaken the separation between two currently distinct urban areas, increasing their combined sprawling influence on the wider Green Belt. It is therefore concluded that the site, has a 'strong' contribution to purpose (a) of paragraph 143 and cannot be considered 'Grey Belt' land when assessing the overall site.
- 5.2.25 Purpose (b) of paragraph 143 is intended to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another. The PPG states that 'this purpose relates to the merging of towns, not villages.'
- 5.2.26 The application site sits between the two urban areas of Ickleford and Hitchin. Hitchin is classed as a town and a large built-up area. However, Ickleford is classed as a village and therefore cannot be considered a town or large built-up area. Based on the PPG, the site is not considered to form a substantial or small part of a gap between towns that are close enough to be considered neighbouring in this location. The site therefore has a 'weak or none' contribution to purpose (b) of paragraph 143.
- 5.2.27 Purpose (d) of paragraph 143 intends to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns. The site is not considered to form part of the setting of a historic town given its location, and has no visual, physical, or experiential connection to any historic aspects of a historic town. The site therefore has a 'weak or none' contribution to purpose (d) of paragraph 143 of the NPPF.
- 5.2.28 Given the above, it is considered that the application site has a 'strong' contribution to purpose (a), a 'weak or none' contribution to purpose (b), and a 'weak or none' contribution to purpose (d) of paragraph 143 of the NPPF.

Footnote 7 Considerations

- 5.2.29 As set out in the PPG and NPPF, Grey Belt excludes land where the application of the policies relating to the areas or assets in footnote 7 of the NPPF would provide a strong reason for refusing or restricting development.
- 5.2.30 The areas/assets referenced under Footnote 7 are not relevant in this case, such that there are no strong reasons for refusing development against the application of policies relating to areas/assets in footnote 7. Notwithstanding this, the assessment already made above has concluded that the application site would not utilise Grey Belt as the site has a 'strong' contribution to purpose (a) of paragraph 143 of the NPPF.

Impact on the remaining Green Belt in the plan area

- 5.2.31 The PPG sets out that in reaching a judgement on whether the development of Green Belt land would fundamentally undermine the purposes of the remaining Green Belt across the plan area as a whole, authorities should consider whether, or the extent to which, the release or development of Green Belt land would affect the ability of all the remaining Green Belt across the area of the plan from serving all five of the Green Belt purposes in a meaningful way.
- 5.2.32 Given the site area and its location relative to built-up areas, the development of the land in the context of the proposed scheme for up to 100 dwellings is not considered to fundamentally undermine the purposes of the remaining Green Belt across the area of the plan. Therefore, it is considered that the proposed development would not affect the ability of all the remaining Green Belt in the area of the plan from serving all five of the Green Belt purposes in a meaningful way.

Paragraph 155 parts (b), (c) and (d)

- 5.2.33 Part (b) of paragraph 155 sets out that development should not be regarded as inappropriate if there is a demonstrable unmet need for the type of development proposed. As already set out previously in this report, the Council is unable to demonstrate a five-year housing land supply with a current figure of 2.6 years. There is clearly a demonstrable unmet need for housing which the proposal would deliver. Therefore, the development proposal would meet the test set out in paragraph 155 (b).
- 5.2.34 Paragraph 155 (c) of the NPPF sets out that development in the Green Belt should not be regarded as inappropriate if the development would be in a sustainable location, with particular reference to paragraph 110 and 115 of the NPPF.
- 5.2.35 The proposed development site is located outside, but adjacent to the settlement boundary of Ickleford, which is designated as a larger village under Policy SP2 of the Local Plan. The site is considered to be in an accessible location, within a short distance from the centre of Ickleford. The site is also well connected to Hitchin. The site is therefore in a sustainable location for the purposes of part (c) of paragraph 155 of the NPPF.
- 5.2.36 Part (d) of paragraph 155 refers to the 'Golden Rules'. This dictates that for major development involving the provision of housing, such as the current proposal, the development must accord with the criteria set out in paragraphs 156 and 157 of the NPPF. Although it has already been concluded that the proposed development would not utilise Green Belt land for the reasons previously set out in this report, whether the proposal satisfies the 'Golden Rules' is material consideration independent of whether the site would utilise Green Belt land and is assessed below:
- a. affordable housing which reflects either: (i) development plan policies produced in accordance with paragraphs 67-68 of this Framework; or (ii) until such policies are in place, the policy set out in paragraph 157;

The proposal is for up to 100 dwellings and would provide 50% affordable housing, which would be secured through a s106 agreement.

b. necessary improvements to local or national infrastructure;

The proposal would provide financial contributions to HCC and local infrastructure, as requested by the various stakeholders, which would be secured in a s106 agreement. Furthermore, as part of this proposal the applicant has agreed to deliver a pedestrian crossing on Turnpike Lane by the proposed main vehicular access to the site and tactile paving to the junctions at Greenfield Avenue/Turnpike Lane and London Road/Turnpike Lane. This would constitute necessary contributions to local infrastructure.

c. the provision of new, or improvements to existing, green spaces that are accessible to the public. New residents should be able to access good quality green spaces within a short walk of their home, whether through onsite provision or through access to offsite spaces”.

The submitted Framework Plan and Concept Masterplan Principles provide details of the proposed on-site green spaces and active travel routes throughout the site including a parkland area, ponds, a LEAP and a west-to-east green/blue spine running through the site which would accommodate an active travel route and recreational features. It is considered this would meet the requirements of part c.

Conclusion of Grey Belt consideration

5.2.37 In conclusion of the above, the proposal would not utilise Grey Belt land and therefore would not accord with the provisions set out in paragraph 155 (a) of the NPPF. On this basis, the proposed development would constitute inappropriate development in the Green Belt, and this is considered in greater detail below.

Effect upon the Green Belt

Whether the development would be inappropriate in the Green Belt

5.2.38 As previously set out in this report, Local Plan Policy SP5 is relevant to this case. This policy is also consistent with national policies on the Green Belt as set out in the NPPF.

5.2.39 Paragraph 153 of the NPPF sets out that “*when considering any planning application, local planning authorities should ensure that substantial weight is given to any harm to the Green Belt, including harm to its openness. Inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances. Very special circumstances will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm resulting from the proposal, is clearly outweighed by other considerations.*”

5.2.40 It has already been established that the proposal does not fall within any of the exceptions to this approach as set out at paragraphs 154 and 155 of the NPPF.

5.2.41 Before considering whether very special circumstances exist, the effect of the proposed development on openness and purposes of the Green Belt are considered.

Impact upon openness and purposes of including land within the Green Belt

5.2.42 The fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open. The NPPG confirms there is both a spatial and visual dimension to openness.

5.2.43 The application site currently comprises an irregular-shaped field with pockets of woodland areas and is characterised by trees and other vegetation along the boundaries of the site. The land is almost entirely devoid of any form of built structures.

5.2.44 Whilst the proposal would incorporate significant areas of green open space throughout the site and particularly in the southern half of the site, the proposed development of 100 residential units, including dwellings and flats, would constitute a significant body of new development within the Green Belt which in turn would materially change the openness of the site in both visual and spatial terms. Therefore, in a physical sense, the proposal would inevitably result in a very significant reduction in openness, therefore conflicting with the primary aim of paragraph 153 of the NPPF. This harm attracts substantial weight when considering whether there are very special circumstances to justify the proposed development.

5.2.45 In terms of the application site itself, beyond the western boundary of the site is existing built form, with residential properties in Ickleford Mews, Bedford Road, and to the west of Bedford Road on Ansell Grange. Beyond the northern boundary of the site is existing built form on the northern side of Turnpike Lane and to the south-east of the site is built form associated with the former Ickleford Mill. Along most of the boundaries of the site are well-established trees and vegetation which makes the site feel more enclosed. Notwithstanding this, beyond the southern boundary of the site are the playing fields and school grounds associated with the nearby Priory School and an agricultural field on the east of Bedford Road between the school and the application site, which are relatively large open areas like the application site.

5.2.46 In light of the above observations, the impact of the proposals on the openness of the Green Belt across the site is substantial. This harm attracts substantial weight.

5.2.47 As discussed earlier in this report, the NPPF sets out five Green Belt purposes: (a) to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas; (b) to prevent neighbouring towns from merging into one another; (c) to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment; (d) to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns and (e) to assist in urban regeneration by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.

5.2.48 As part of the Green Belt assessment, it was concluded that the application site has a 'strong' contribution to purpose (a) of paragraph 143 of the NPPF. When considering the impact of the development on the site's contribution to purpose (a), the developable area and site layout is a key consideration. As above, the developable area within the site would not have a 'strong' contribution to restricting the sprawl of large built-up areas. The

contribution of that part of the site to the restriction of urban sprawl of large built-up areas would be 'moderate'. The parts of the site that, if developed, would result in an incongruous pattern of development, are proposed to remain open and free of built form. The development would thus result in only 'moderate' harm to the site's contribution to purpose (a). In relation to purposes (b) and (d) of paragraph 143 of the NPPF, it was concluded that the application site has a 'weak or none' contribution. It is considered this would result in a no harm to the Green Belt in respect of purposes (b) and (d).

- 5.2.49 In relation to purpose (c) of paragraph 143 of the NPPF, which aims to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment, the proposed buildings and associated infrastructure would be located on a site which is currently an undeveloped, open, green field outside the settlement boundaries of both Ickleford and Hitchin. Although the proposed development would have an urbanising effect, there are clearly urban features in the immediate area, such as the existing dwellings on Ickleford Mews, Bedford Road and Ansell Grange to the west of the site and existing dwellings on Turnpike Lane to the north of the site. Nevertheless, the proposed development is inappropriate within the Green Belt and there would be moderate harm to the purpose of safeguarding the countryside from encroachment.
- 5.2.50 In relation to purpose (e) of paragraph 143 of the NPPF, which seeks to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land, it is noted that there is little in the way of brownfield land in Ickleford and Hitchin to be able to meet identified housing needs. That being said, approving a development on open Green Belt land would inherently fail to encourage the recycling of derelict and other urban land. As such, it is considered that this site and the proposal currently under consideration would have a moderate" degree of harm in respect of purpose (e).
- 5.2.51 In conclusion, the proposed development would conflict with the development plan and national policy as they relate to the Green Belt. The proposed development would be inappropriate development within the Green Belt that would result in significant harm to openness, and moderate harm to purposes (a) and (c). It is therefore concluded that substantial weight should be attached to the totality of harm that would be caused to the Green Belt as required by paragraph 153 of the NPPF.

Very special circumstances

Provision of market and affordable housing

- 5.2.52 As already set out previously in this report, the Council is unable to demonstrate a five-year housing land supply with a current figure of 2.6 years. There is clearly a demonstrable unmet need for housing which the proposal would deliver. The development of up to 100 dwellings including 50 affordable homes, representing 50% of the total number of homes proposed, would make a positive contribution to the overall housing need identified in the District. The preferred affordable housing mix has been set out by NHDC's Housing Supply Officer later in this report. Overall, the proposal would contribute significantly towards meeting the Council's five-year housing land supply needs and affordable housing. This weighs significantly in favour of the proposal.

Economic benefits

5.2.53 There would be economic benefits associated with the development proposal through the following:

- Generation of jobs and employment opportunities during the construction process.
- Increased expenditure from the new residents by utilising existing local shops, services and facilities.

5.2.54 These benefits are afforded moderate weight in favour of the proposed development.

Social benefits

5.2.55 There would be social benefits associated with the development proposal through the following:

- Delivery of 100 homes of which 50% (50 homes) would be affordable housing.
- Utilisation of a sustainable and deliverable site to assist with meeting the Council's housing needs.
- Provision of significant amount of on-site public green open spaces for recreational purposes.
- Provision of on-site active travel routes to provide improved connections to off-site destinations.
- Improvements to Turnpike Lane for pedestrians and cyclists through introduction of new pedestrian crossing.
- Improvements to Turnpike Lane, Bedford Road and Greenfield Avenue for pedestrians and cyclists.
- Financial contributions secured via s106 agreement towards Henlow Camp and Stotfold cycle routes improvements scheme, walking and cycling improvements to the Turnpike Lane junction/roundabout, and improvements to walking and cycling connections from Ickleford to North Hitchin (A600).
- Financial contributions secured via s106 agreement towards primary and secondary education, SEND school places, childcare services, youth services, library services and waste services.
- Financial contributions secured via s106 agreement towards sports-related facilities and infrastructure.

5.2.56 These above benefits are afforded significant weight in favour of the proposed development.

Environmental benefits

5.2.57 There would be environmental benefits associated with the development proposal through the following:

- Provision of significant amount of on-site green open spaces and SUDs features.
- Ecological benefits through tree planting and landscaping.
- Delivering a minimum 10% Biodiversity Net Gain.
- Financial contribution secured via s106 agreement towards enhancements to the chalk stream environment at Oughtonhead.

5.2.58 These benefits are afforded moderate weight in favour of the proposed development.

Other material considerations/benefits

5.2.59 The following social and environmental benefits listed above are accommodated within the site area which contributes strongly to purpose (a) of the Green Belt, and preserve that contribution moving forwards –

- Provision of significant amount of on-site green open spaces and SUDs features.
- Ecological benefits through tree planting and landscaping.
- Delivering a minimum 10% Biodiversity Net Gain.
- Provision of significant amount of on-site public green open spaces for recreational purposes.
- Provision of on-site active travel routes to provide improved connections to off-site destinations.

5.2.60 The development is considered Green Belt as a result of the site area expanding in order to provide the benefits listed above. This weighs significantly in favour of the proposed development in addition to the benefits themselves.

Summary on very special circumstances

5.2.61 The benefits of the proposed development and the weight attributed to these will be set against the harm outlined in this report as part of the 'Planning Balance' section set out later in this report, in order to assess whether very special circumstances exist to justify a permission in the Green Belt.

Any other harm

5.2.62 Paragraph 153 of the NPPF states that '*...Very special circumstances' will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm resulting from the proposal, is clearly outweighed by other considerations* (emphasis added in this instance). Having assessed the harm to the Green Belt, outlined above, this report will now go through each of the key material considerations applicable to this proposal to identify and attribute weight to *any other harm* which may arise as a result of the proposed development.

5.3 Affordable Housing Provision

5.3.1 The supporting documentation confirms that the site will deliver 50% affordable housing in line with paragraph 157 of the NPPF. This would also exceed the minimum of 40% affordable housing as required by Local Plan policy. Within this requirement, a 65% rented (social and affordable) and 35% (discounted market sale housing and other affordable routes to home ownership including shared ownership, shared equity and rent to buy) intermediate affordable housing tenure split is required, in accordance with the Local Plan and the Council's Developer Contributions SPD, supported by the 2023 Stevenage and North Hertfordshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) Update. Based on the provision of 100 dwellings, the affordable housing requirement would be 50 dwellings.

5.3.2 Within the 65% rented affordable housing element, NHDC's Housing Supply Officer has confirmed the following mix best meets housing needs, as identified in the 2023 SHMA:

65% Social Rent	
Tenure %	Number of housing units
8% x 1 bed flats	3
9% x 2 bed flats	3
21% x 2 bed houses	7
50% x 3 bed houses	16*
10% x 4 bed houses	3
2% x 5+ bed houses	1
Total	33

Table 1: Affordable housing tenure mix (rented)

*Evidence from the housing register suggests the number of three bed houses recommended in the SHMA is greater than required and there is higher need for two-bedroom family homes and some need for larger (4+ beds) family homes. A reduction in the number of three-bedroom houses and the provision of more two-bedroom houses would therefore be considered favourably.

5.3.3 For the 35% affordable rent and home ownership tenure, NHDC's Housing Supply Officer has confirmed the 2023 SHMA shows the following mix best meets housing needs:

35% Affordable Rent		35% Affordable Home Ownership	
Tenure %	Number of housing units	Tenure %	Number of housing units
5% x 1 bed flats	0	22% x 1 bed flats	2
10% x 2 bed flats	1	15% x 2 bed flats	2
23% x 2 bed houses	1	43% x 2 bed houses	4
52% x 3 bed houses	4 ⁱ	20% x 3 bed houses	2
8% x 4 bed houses	1 ⁱⁱ		
2% x 5+ bed houses	0		

Total	7	Total	10
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Table 2: Affordable housing tenure mix (intermediate)

Note (i) affordable rents for 3 bed homes must be up to 70% of market rents (including service charges if applicable and (ii) only social rents are accepted for 4+ bed homes.

- 5.3.4 *Local Plan Policy HS5: Accessible and adaptable housing* requires applicants to demonstrate that at least 50% of homes can be built to the M4(2) Accessible and Adaptable standard; and on schemes where 10 or more affordable units will be delivered, 10% of the units can additionally be built to the M4(3) wheelchair user standard. There is a growing need for larger (3 and 4 bed) M4(3) wheelchair adapted homes for rent, for families with a member with a disability and/ or limited mobility, which should be secured through the s106 and any future Reserved Matters submissions.
- 5.3.5 *Local Plan Policy HS4: Supported, sheltered and older persons housing* is also a relevant policy consideration. There will be a substantial increase in the number of and proportion of older residents in North Hertfordshire over the plan period. Older people are living longer, and government policy seeks to support people living at home for as long as possible. Other groups will also have support needs, including people of all ages with physical or learning disabilities.
- 5.3.6 In accordance with *LP Policy HS3: Housing mix* a modest proportion of sheltered and/ or supported housing should be provided on the site to contribute towards the modelled demand for older persons housing. This should include affordable housing provision where appropriate.
- 5.3.7 The affordable homes should be owned and managed by a registered provider, be evenly distributed on the site, rather than on one part, and be physically indistinguishable from any market housing. The 2023 SHMA provides evidence that many more people require social rented homes, and this tenure is recognised in the NPPF. It should be noted that the affordable rent for one or two bedroom dwellings should be no more than 80% of the equivalent local market rent (including service charges, where applicable). For three bedroom dwellings the affordable rent should be no more than 70% of the equivalent local market rent (including service charges, where applicable) and for a four+ bedroom dwellings the rent should be no more than the equivalent rent (excluding service charges, where applicable) for a social rented home in the locality, to ensure affordability.
- 5.3.8 Affordable housing should be spread across the site in small clusters rather than be situated on one or two parts of the site and should be physically indistinguishable from the market housing. These matters can be secured as part of any subsequent Reserved Matters applications.
- 5.3.9 In conclusion on this matter, the development proposal would deliver 50% affordable housing in line with paragraph 157 of the NPPF and would exceed the minimum of 40% affordable housing required by Local Plan policy. This weighs substantially in favour of the proposal in the planning balance.

5.4 **Loss of Agricultural Land**

- 5.4.1 Chapter 15 of the NPPF Conserving and enhancing the natural environment confirms that planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by protecting and enhancing...soils (in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan) and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services – including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land (defined as land in Grades 1, 2 and 3a).
- 5.4.2 Paragraph 188 confirms that when allocating land in development plans, there should be a preference to identify land with the least environmental or amenity value, where consistent with other policies in this Framework and in a footnote that ‘Where significant development of agricultural land is demonstrated to be necessary, areas of poorer quality land should be preferred to those of a higher quality.’
- 5.4.3 The Natural England classification maps show the land to the south of Ickleford and north of Hitchin to fall within the ‘Grade 3 – good to moderate’ category.
- 5.4.4 In conclusion, the proposal would result in some loss of agricultural land in respect of the land associated with the proposed development. This is considered to be a harm which attracts limited weight in the planning balance.

5.5 Masterplanning

- 5.5.1 A key policy consideration is Local Plan Policy SP9, which addresses design and sustainability, and in line with the NPPF, requires a strategic masterplan for larger housing applications generally over 100 dwellings. The policy also supports new development where it is well designed and located and responds to its local context.
- 5.5.2 Local Plan Policy SP9 allows for masterplans to be agreed “prior to **or as part of** the grant of planning permission” (emphasis added). A Parameter Plan, together with a Concept Masterplan and masterplanning details within a Design and Access Statement were submitted with the application in September 2025. The proposed development is for a scheme of approximately 100 dwellings which is on the threshold for requiring a strategic masterplan in line with the requirements of Policy SP9. Officers have therefore taken the view it would be overly onerous to require the application to be accompanied by a full strategic masterplan accompanied by a suite of framework and parameter plans, and a supporting Masterplan document. Instead, officers have sought to secure key details and design principles that are commensurate with the size and scale of the proposed scheme.
- 5.5.3 The applicant has worked positively with officers to revise several aspects of the relevant submitted plans, the Design and Access Statement and agree masterplanning details. This has culminated in the submission of the following plans and documents:
- Revised Parameter Plan;
 - Framework Plan;
 - Concept Masterplan Principles;
 - Revised Illustrative Concept Masterplan;
 - Revised Design and Access Statement;
 - Supplementary technical notes relating to landscaping, ecological, tree, and access (active travel) related matters.

- 5.5.4 These plans and documents were submitted in March 2026 and there was a general re-consultation following their submission. The Council's urban design officers, senior ecologist and senior transport policy officer have considered these and confirm that the details demonstrate general conformity with Policy SP9. The content of the plans and documents relevant to the masterplanning are discussed in greater detail below.
- 5.5.5 The Parameter Plan details the following:
- Fixed location of the proposed developable area (2.45ha)
 - Location of the main vehicular access from Turnpike Lane into the application site and the developable area.
- 5.5.6 The Framework Plan details the following:
- Details of green and open spaces;
 - Approximate location of proposed LEAP;
 - Approximate location of proposed SUDs features;
 - Approximate location of the west-to-east green/blue corridor which would incorporate green spaces, SUDs features as well as an active travel route linking the site with Bedford Road to the west, and the Ickleford Mill site to the east;
 - Indicative size/shape of development parcels with key vista and views;
 - Location of retained trees and vegetation throughout the site and along site boundaries.
- 5.5.7 The eight concept masterplan principles set out on page 23 of the Design & Access Statement are as follows:
- A Green/Blue Spine linking to the adjacent Ickleford Mill scheme and running through the site. This accommodates an Active Travel Route, recreation features and could include SuDS features (e.g swales);
 - The LEAP is positioned within the green spine, creating a destination space and focal point;
 - A continuous, hard surfaced edge lane incorporating private drives, roadways and paths "hugs" the southern part of the scheme, creating a pedestrian/ cycle route benefitting from passive surveillance;
 - A minimum of 1 No. on-plot parking space is suggested for 3 bedroom units or smaller;
 - The Active Travel Route incorporates a footway and cycleway and connects the adjacent Ickleford Mill site in the east to Bedford Road in the west. This allows easy access through to local services and amenities of Ickleford in the east and Hitchin to the south;
 - The plot and parcel structure allows multiple views through the development to the landscape to the south to create a sense of openness;
 - Affordable units are distributed evenly across the site, and all benefit from access to open space, amenities and public transport; and
 - The SuDS attenuation basin in the southwest has been designed to accommodate a permanent wet area alongside ecological enhancements and seating opportunities to enhance resident and visitor amenity.
- 5.5.8 The Illustrative Concept Masterplan provides an indicative site layout demonstrating how the site could be developed within an example layout that could accommodate the 100 proposed dwellings. The layout shown on the plan considers different dwelling sizes and types, plot structures and sizes, internal access roads, active travel routes, green spaces,

parking strategy, trees and vegetation to be retained and landscaping. It is reiterated however that the site layout shown is for illustrative purposes only and this plan would not be approved as part of the outline permission. It is a supporting document only.

- 5.5.9 A condition has been recommended to approve the Parameter Plan drawing. A further condition has also been recommended requiring the submission of a Masterplan Compliance Statement prior to or alongside the submission of any future reserved matters application(s) to demonstrate how the proposal accords with the Framework Plan and the eight concept masterplan principles.
- 5.5.10 As this application has been through a formal, collaborative masterplanning exercise with extensive negotiations and improvements, it is officers' view that the proposals represent a high standard of urban design, in keeping with its context and which would include high quality green infrastructure and multi-functional green spaces. As such, it is considered that the development proposal would comply with Local Plan Policy SP9.
- 5.5.11 In conclusion, the proposal is in general accordance with the Local Plan, as well as Policy SP9 concerning design and sustainability, and the requirement for Strategic Masterplans. This matter weighs neutrally in the planning balance.

5.6 Highway Matters

- 5.6.1 *Chapter 9 Promoting sustainable transport* of the NPPF sets out the overarching objectives and considerations to ensure development provide sustainable options for travel i.e. travel by foot, bicycle and public transport. Paragraphs 110, 115 and 116 confirm the following:
- *Paragraph 110 – The planning system should actively manage patterns of growth in support of these objectives. 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. This can help to reduce congestion and emissions and improve air quality and public health. However, opportunities to maximise sustainable transport solutions will vary between urban and rural areas, and this should be taken into account in both plan-making and decision-making.*
 - *Paragraph 115 – In assessing sites that may be allocated for development in plans, or specific applications for development, it should be ensured that:*
 - a) *sustainable transport modes are prioritised taking account of the vision for the site, the type of development and its location;*
 - b) *safe and suitable access to the site can be achieved for all users;*
 - c) *the design of streets, parking areas, other transport elements and the content of associated standards reflects current national guidance, including the National Design Guide and the National Model Design Code 48; and*
 - d) *any significant impacts from the development on the transport network (in terms of capacity and congestion), or on highway safety, can be cost effectively mitigated to an acceptable degree through a vision-led approach.*
 - *Paragraph 116 – 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, following mitigation, would be severe, taking into account all reasonable future scenarios.*

- 5.6.2 *Local Plan Policy SP6: Sustainable transport* confirms that the Council will seek to secure accessibility improvements and promote the use of sustainable transport modes insofar as reasonable and practicable. *Local Plan Policy T1 Assessment of transport matters* and *Policy T2 Parking* are also relevant considerations.
- 5.6.3 The application is accompanied by a Transport Assessment prepared by RGP (dated August 2025) and a Transport Addendum prepared by RGP (dated December 2025). These have identified the anticipated transportation and highways matters associated with the proposed development.
- 5.6.4 In terms of vehicular access to the application, an access is proposed at the northern end of the site on Turnpike Lane. This would provide the main vehicular access to/from the site with the intention of serving all homes within the development. Further details are provided in the accompanying technical drawing, 'Proposed Access Arrangement Plan – Drawing No. IMI-RGP-XX-XX-DR-T-005 Rev P04'.
- 5.6.5 In relation to proposed car and cycle parking details, this is an outline application with all matters reserved except for the means of access, therefore, no parking details are provided at this stage. Notwithstanding this, general principles for site wide car parking will be secured via the Masterplan Compliance Statement condition. Any future reserved matters applications will need to demonstrate that adequate provision is made for car and cycle parking for the relevant uses having regard for the relevant guidance and policies at the time of submission.
- 5.6.6 In terms of walking and cycling (active travel), initial details and design principles have been set out in the Masterplan Framework Plan and the eight concept masterplan principles detailed on page 23 of the submitted Design & Access Statement. This includes details of proposed active travel routes throughout the site and proposed connection points to the west of the site on Bedford Road, the north of the site on Turnpike Lane and in the south-east corner of the site to the Ickleford Mill site. Further details will be secured through the Masterplan Compliance Statement condition, other recommended conditions and future reserved matters submissions.
- 5.6.7 The issue of increased traffic generated by residents of the proposed development and issues relating to existing highway capacity is of great concern to many local residents, and this has been raised in many of the objections received on this proposal. Concerns have been raised about the levels of congestion currently experienced particularly along Turnpike Lane and at the Turnpike Lane/Bedford Road roundabout.
- 5.6.8 In terms of the analysis of the submitted Transport Assessment, HCC Highways notes that the applicant has undertaken a TRICS assessment to determine the likely level of trip generation resulting from the proposed development. The Transport Assessment summarises the anticipated trip generation in paragraph 4.2.2 (Figure 5). The assessment indicates that the development is expected to generate a total of 74 two-way trips in the AM peak and 67 two-way trips in the PM peak. This includes 47 car trips during both the AM and PM peak hours. The Highway Authority is satisfied with the submitted TRICS assessment and considers that the predicted trip generation would not result in any significant impact on the surrounding local highway network.

- 5.6.9 Chapter 6 of the submitted Transport Assessment (TA) provides details of the trip distribution methodology and the capacity assessments undertaken at the nearest junctions. The following junctions were assessed to determine the potential traffic impacts associated with the proposed development:
- Bedford Road / Turnpike Lane / Westmill Lane Roundabout (AM & PM peak)
 - Arlesey Road / Turnpike Lane Roundabout (AM & PM peak)
- 5.6.10 The assessment indicates that the Turnpike Lane / Arlesey Road roundabout is expected to operate within or close to capacity during both the AM and PM peak periods. Based on the submitted modelling, the Highway Authority considers that the development would not result in any material impact on the operation of this junction or lead to unacceptable levels of congestion.
- 5.6.11 HCC Highways operate two levels of mitigation agreements (Strand 1 and Strand 2). Strand 1 mitigation works being works that are directly required to unlock the development and solely the responsibility of the development. Strand 2 mitigation works being works that address the wider cumulative impact of the development for which the development isn't solely responsible for but does derive benefit from.
- 5.6.12 In the first instance, HCC Highways would envisage that the agreed pedestrian crossing and tactile paving improvements are delivered via a Strand 1 through a combination of conditions and via a s278 agreement.
- 5.6.13 In the second instance (Strand 2) HCC calculate an appropriate headline figure based on the findings of HCC's adopted Developers Planning Obligation Toolkit (2021). Strand 2 contributions should address the cumulative impacts of all development, large and small, facilitating delivery and enhancement of the necessary active and sustainable transport networks. These local sustainable networks must be provided in their entirety to provide the sustainable connections to the key trip generators, as such contributions will be pooled to fund these networks within the local area (subject to any legislative restrictions), as supported by National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). This second strand contribution is intended to help implement broader transport measures in the catchments of new development from which contributions are secured. The need for second strand contributions will be balanced against the level of first strand contributions and any other relevant planning matters.
- 5.6.14 For the development proposal, HCC Highways calculates the Strand 2 contribution at £968,100 index linked by SPONS from March 2024 to be pooled towards the following schemes:
- SM95, Package 14 of the North Central GTP (P86); Cycle Routes to Henlow Camp and Stotfold.
 - NHDC's LICWIP Schemes – Walking and Cycling improvements to the Turnpike Lane junction/roundabout (one of the highest priorities identified in the Ickleford Neighbourhood Plan).
 - NHDC's LICWIP Schemes – Walking / cycling connections from Ickleford to North Hitchin (A600).

- 5.6.15 Therefore, on the basis of the Strand 1 improvements being delivered through a combination of conditions and via a s278 agreement, and the £968,100 contribution towards improving the greater sustainable network within the locality that the development impacts upon HCC Highways recommends approval of the application in respect of highway related matters.
- 5.6.16 In conclusion, this outline planning application seeks to secure the vehicular access arrangements to this site. Conditions are recommended to ensure the proposal is acceptable from a highways perspective and to secure mitigation measures. The applicant has agreed to pay the requested financial contributions. The proposal is considered to be acceptable from a highways perspective, and the absence of harm weighs neutrally in the planning balance.

5.7 Landscape and visual impacts

- 5.7.1 This is a large-scale housing development. Given its nature and scale there will inevitably be impact on the landscape. Within the context, national and development plan policies adopt an approach where development should only be approved where the harm would be outweighed by the benefits of the development.
- 5.7.2 *Landscape character*
Paragraph 187 of the NPPF indicates that the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside should be recognised. The NPPF does not seek to protect the countryside for its own sake from development, rather it concentrates on seeking to protect valued landscapes. The site does not form part of any designated landscape.
- 5.7.3 The NPPF does not define what is a valued landscape, albeit most landscapes are valued in one form or another, but case law demonstrates that value lies in it being considered more than just open countryside. North Herts Local Plan Policy NE2 confirms that planning permission will be granted for development proposals that respect the sensitivities of the relevant landscape character, 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, ensure the health and future retention of important landscape features and have considered the long-term management and maintenance of any existing and proposed landscaping.

Landscape character assessment

- 5.7.4 The application site is located in the far eastern end of National Character Area (NCA) 110 for The Chilterns. NCA110 The Chilterns is a large area, wider than the designated Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and comprises extensive wooded and farmed areas, underlain with chalk bedrock that creates the north-west facing escarpments, long views out and small streams that provide a major source of public water supply.
- 5.7.5 The Council published the North Herts Landscape Study as part of the Local Development Framework in 2011 which is based on the Hertfordshire Landscape Character Assessment and subsequent sensitivity and capacity work. The site is within Region 3 The

East Anglian Chalk, North Hertfordshire Ridge and detailed LCA 217 River Oughton and Purwell Valleys. The key characteristics of the River Oughton and Purwell Valleys LCA are listed as: *'grazed water meadows, meandering water course with associated ponds and water bodies, and linear woodland belts following the water course'*.

5.7.6 The built development guidelines for the character area LCA 217 include:

- *Avoid any development in the floodplain of the rivers;*
- *Retain the character of River Oughton and Purwell Valley, ensuring that any new development is appropriately sited and of a scale, form and style appropriate to the character area;*
- *Planting should reflect existing patterns, to mitigate buildings;*
- *Avoid the location of new development in visually intrusive locations;*
- *Ensure that lighting associated with new development does not create additional urbanising influences on the character area;*
- *Manage and enhance the river valley as a corridor for green infrastructure proposals and habitat creation; and*
- *Create new and enhanced landscapes in visually prominent urban fringes softening the interface between urban and rural landscapes.*

5.7.7 A small portion of the northern boundary of the application site containing the woodland boundary along Turnpike Lane is located within detailed LCA 218 Pirton Lowlands. The key characteristics of Pirton Lowlands are listed as: *'large scale, open, flat, farmland landscape, arable production, remnant hedgerows and woodland shelter around settlements'*.

5.7.8 The built development guidelines for the character area LCA 218 include:

- *Conserve the traditional character of settlements, ensuring that any development located on the edge of or within the villages uses appropriate vernacular materials and features to avoid inappropriate visual intrusion;*
- *Protect and preserve the pattern of rural lanes and associated hedgerows*
- *Encourage the planting of appropriate broadleaved woodland and vegetation to screen new development that could intrude in panoramic rural views;*
- *Retain the rural character of Pirton Lowlands, ensuring that any new development is appropriately sited and of a scale, form and style appropriate to the character area;*
- *Avoid the location of new development in visually intrusive locations;*
- *Ensure that new development does not necessitate the removal of existing woodland blocks or the loss of surviving species-rich grassland habitats and ancient hedgerows;*
- *Ensure that lighting associated with new development does not create additional urbanising influences of the character areas;*
- *Conserve the open chalk landscape with its expansive views protecting the landscape from inappropriate land uses, structures and built development which would conflict with openness.*

Review of the submitted Landscape and Visual Appraisal (LVA)

- 5.7.9 The application is accompanied by a Landscape and Visual Appraisal document produced by The Environmental Dimension Partnership Ltd, which identifies the landscape and visual effects of the proposed development. In applying a standard methodology and professional judgement, the LVIA sets out conclusions.
- 5.7.10 The LVIA identifies the sensitivity/value of landscape elements, landscape character and visual receptors, the magnitude of impact on each of these assessed, and then the significance of these impacts were evaluated. The LVIA also undertakes an assessment of visual and landscape effects during the construction phase, and operational phase.
- 5.7.11 The identified residual effects and conclusion in the LVIA indicate that there would be major/moderate adverse level of effect upon the inherent landscape character of the site at ear 1. At year 15, once the robust landscape proposals would have had time to mature, the magnitude of change has the opportunity to reduce to medium, resulting in a moderate adverse predicted level of effect on the inherent landscape character of the site.
- 5.7.12 In terms of the visual effect, the report concludes the proposed development would result in varying degrees of harm to road users of Turnpike Lane, the A600 Bedford Road, and nearby residents of Turnpike Lane and Ickleford Manor/Ickleford Mews ranging from negligible up to major/moderate. This is detailed in Chapter 6 of the LVIA.
- 5.7.13 In summary, the LVIA report concludes that, *'the visual and sensory character of the site would change notable as a result of the proposed development. This change is not an indication of bad design but is to be expected as a result of the change of use of any greenfield site to residential development. However, the site already has a settlement edge character and is influenced by the surrounding residential built form. Furthermore, the dominant landscape features on the site (existing trees and hedgerows around the site perimeter and its functional relationship to the river and river valley will be retained and enhanced'*.
- 5.7.14 Key design considerations and initial mitigation details are set out in the Landscape Strategy, the Framework Plan, the eight concept masterplan principles detailed on page 23 of the submitted Design & Access Statement, the remainder of the Design & Access Statement the LVIA and supporting drainage and ecology reports. Together, these documents are considered positive steps toward addressing potential visual and landscape impacts. The documents express a broadly landscape-led approach and demonstrate an intention to deliver a high-quality and multifunctional green infrastructure network.
- 5.7.15 The submitted Framework Plan shows how the green infrastructure would be divided throughout the site and around the residential development parcels. The plan also shows the retention of as much as possible of the existing trees and vegetation throughout the site, particularly along the site boundaries as well as the existing pockets of woodland. The plan also shows the incorporation of a west-to-east green/blue active travel corridor which will incorporate green spaces, SUDs features and a LEAP.
- 5.7.16 Conditions have been recommended to ensure the future implementation of a comprehensive Green Infrastructure network which include a Masterplan Compliance Statement condition, tree-related conditions, and a soft landscaping provision condition.

Conclusion on the impact on wider landscape and visual setting

- 5.7.17 In conclusion, it is considered that the proposal would inevitably have some adverse landscape and visual impacts. However, through a combination of topography, existing screening, and the provision of landscaping, it is considered that the adverse effect would be localised and limited. Mitigation measures can be secured by conditions, and such measures would be beneficial to the landscape and biodiversity. Therefore, there would be some conflict with Local Plan policies. Overall, therefore, it is considered that the identified visual and landscape harm should be attributed moderate weight in the planning balance.

5.8 Heritage and archaeological impacts

- 5.8.1 The application submission is accompanied by a Heritage Statement prepared by FWA Heritage & Design, that identify the designated heritage assets, potential archaeological interest within the site and the significance of these assets.

Heritage

- 5.8.2 The site is not subject to any local or national designations. Designations within the local area include the Ickleford Conservation Area to the north-east of the application site, but it is considered that this conservation area is not in immediate proximity to the site. It is therefore considered there is no intervisibility between this designated area and the site.
- 5.8.3 The nearest listed building to the site is the Grade II listed 'Waltham Cottage' which is on Turnpike Lane and is located around 120m from the eastern boundary of the site. To the east of Waltham Cottage is a small cluster of other Grade II listed buildings which includes 'The Clock House', 'Barn House', 'The Old Manor' and 'The Old Manor Cottage'. It is considered that the current agricultural land within the application site does not contribute to the significance of any of these listed building and views to/from the site do not contribute to the architectural interest of any of these buildings. On this basis, it is considered that the development proposal would not adversely impact the significance of any of these five Grade II listed buildings.
- 5.8.4 In accordance with the NPPF and North Herts Local Plan policies, the proposal is considered to be compliant regarding the impact on heritage assets. Therefore, this matter weights neutral in the planning balance.

Archaeology

- 5.8.5 North Herts Local Plan Policy HE4 on Archaeology states that permission for development proposals affecting heritage assets with archaeological interest will be granted provided that: a. developers submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where justified, an archaeological field evaluation. Policy HE4 as modified also states that '*Areas of as yet, unknown archaeology may be identified during research, or through the planning or plan making process. These sites or areas should be treated in the same way as archaeology areas and areas of archaeological significance*'. The NPPF paragraph 212 sets out the same approach to sites of archaeological significance as other heritage assets, in that '*great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be)*'. Paragraph 216 also requires '*in weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.*'

- 5.8.6 The site has been subject of a desk-based assessment which confirms there are no designed archaeological Heritage assets (Scheduled Ancient Monuments, Registered Battlefields or World Heritage Sites within the study area of the wider 1km study area.
- 5.8.7 A review of the available evidence has confirmed that the study site has a low potential to contain archaeological finds and features dating from the prehistoric, Roman and Saxon periods, and a moderate potential for the medieval, post-medieval and modern periods. A recent geophysical survey of the site recorded traces of former ridge and furrow cultivation across the site, along with the probable remains of a modern structure to the south of Turnpike Lane. Any archaeological remains which may have been present on the site are likely to have survived, although these are likely to be of local significance only. The groundworks associated with the proposed development have the potential to disturb or destroy any archaeological remains which might be present on the site.
- 5.8.8 HCC Historic Environment have confirmed they do not object to the proposal and consider the impact of the proposed development can be adequately addressed by planning conditions. This would require the submission and agreement of an Archaeological Written Scheme of Investigation.
- 5.8.9 In conclusion, the proposal has the potential for archaeological remains. A WSI would address this matter. Subject to conditions, there are no objections to the proposals on archaeological grounds. This matter weights neutral in the planning balance.

5.9 Ecology and Biodiversity

- 5.9.1 *Chapter 15 Conserving and enhancing the natural environment of the NPPF requires decisions to contribute to and enhance the natural environment. Local Plan policies SP1 – Sustainable development in North Hertfordshire, SP12 – Green infrastructure, biodiversity and landscape, NE4 – Biodiversity and geological sites and NE6 – Designated biodiversity and geological sites and NE8 Sustainable drainage systems seek to protect, enhance and manage the natural environment.*
- 5.9.2 The 2021 Environment Act introduced an automatic requirement for every planning permission granted to achieve a 10% Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG). This is applicable to the current application.
- 5.9.3 The application is accompanied by an Ecological Impact Assessment report, together with a draft Habitat Monitoring and Management Plan, a Biodiversity Metric and a Biodiversity Net Gain Statement which demonstrates that the proposal would result in a measurable on-site 14.56% net loss of biodiversity units. The applicant is therefore required to deliver the minimum 10% net gain off-site. NHDC's Senior Ecologist is satisfied in this instance that the biodiversity hierarchy has been appropriately followed and has recommended a condition requiring details to be submitted as to how this will be achieved through a Biodiversity Net Gain plan. Conditions have also been recommended requiring the submission of a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP), a Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan, and a lighting strategy.

5.9.4 Overall, it is considered there are no ecological impacts arising from the proposals that cannot be mitigated. The applicant has confirmed that the mandatory 10% biodiversity net gain will be achieved off-site and this can be secured by condition. Further details of mitigation measures can be secured by conditions. This is considered a moderate positive benefit in the planning balance.

5.10 Tree Impacts

5.10.1 *Chapter 15 of the NPPF – Conserving and enhancing the natural environment* – confirms that proposals should protect and enhance the natural environment. *Local Plan Policy SP1: Sustainable development in North Hertfordshire* seeks to protect key elements of North Hertfordshire’s environment. *Local Plan Policy NE2 Landscape* seeks to ensure the health and future retention of important landscape features and their long-term management and maintenance.

5.10.2 The site contains areas of existing trees and hedgerows throughout the site, including pockets of woodland. The application is supported by an Arboricultural Implications Assessment prepared by Merewood and other tree-related supporting documents including the associated plans. This sets out tree constraints, impacts and preliminary mitigation measures arising from the development. To facilitate the installation of the main vehicular access from Turnpike Lane, the report identifies that one category ‘B’ tree, four category ‘C’ trees and one category ‘U’ tree would need to be removed. It also recommends the removal of several dead/dying category ‘U’ elm trees in this area as part of the ongoing management of the site.

5.10.3 The remainder of the proposed development would require the further removal of two category ‘B’ trees and one category ‘C’ tree located in the developable area of the site to facilitate the development.

5.10.4 In relation to the proposed active travel connections on the west of the site at Bedford Road, and a possible connection on the east to the Ickleford Mill site, the Framework Plan provides details of where these connections are likely to be located. At this stage, the current supporting information anticipates no further tree loss to facilitate these active travel connections. Full details will need to be submitted at the reserved matters stage so the proposals can be fully assessed.

5.10.5 Some low-quality trees and vegetation will need to be removed to facilitate the new main access into the site from Turnpike Lane. Other minor tree impacts can be appropriately managed by way of condition at the appropriate phase. This matter weighs neutral in the planning balance.

5.11 Flood Risk and Drainage

5.11.1 National policy on issues relating to flooding is set out in the NPPF at paragraphs 170 to 182. This emphasises the importance of considering the potential for flooding for new developments, particularly in areas identified at high risk. It also requires the consideration of incorporating sustainable drainage solutions where necessary and appropriate.

- 5.11.2 *Local Plan Policies SP11, D1, NE7 and NE8* collectively seek to ensure that development does not result in unacceptable flood risk, prioritises the development of land at low risk from flooding and the use of sustainable drainage systems (SuDS).
- 5.11.3 The site lies within flood risk zone 1, where there is a low probability of flooding from fluvial and tidal sources. However, given the size of the application site and that residential development is proposed, the application is accompanied by a Flood Risk Assessment (FRA).
- 5.11.4 The FRA confirms the proposed development has designed the built development away from the areas shown to be at surface water flooding risk. This would be approximately 130m away from the river channel level of the River Oughton. This also reduces the risk of groundwater emergence occurring. In conclusion, thresholds and finished floor levels should be set 75-150mm above surrounding ground levels in accordance with CIRIA Design for Urban Exceedances to prevent any unforeseen or exceedance event entering dwellings.
- 5.11.5 A SuDS assessment has been undertaken, and the proposals are to attenuate surface water in a above ground attenuation basin prior to outfall to the River Oughton. The flow rate to the River Oughton will be restricted at 3.1 l/s. The SuDS design has considered the existing private surface water sewer on the site, and the design work undertaken to date indicates that there should be no pipe clash between the existing sewer and the proposed drainage infrastructure. The SuDS basin is proposed to connect to the existing private sewer via a new manhole; therefore, no upgrading works to the riverbank or modifications to the existing sewer are anticipated. However, this will need to be confirmed at the detailed design stage.
- 5.11.6 The LLFA confirmed the withdrawal of their initial objection to the proposed development on 9 February 2026 subject to seven conditions being attached to any consent if the application is approved.
- 5.11.7 In relation to the foul water drainage strategy, the applicant has engaged with Anglian Water to establish a possible sustainable point of connection for the proposed development site. This will require a foul network connection point to the south of the site. Further to this, a pre-commencement condition has been recommended requiring the applicant to submit details of a strategic foul water strategy in consultation with Anglian Water.
- 5.11.8 In summary on this matter, it is concluded there would no harm arising to matters relating to flood risk and drainage, and this matter weighs neutral in the planning balance.

5.12 **Environmental Impacts**

- 5.12.1 *Chapter 15 Conserving and enhancing the natural environment* of the NPPF requires decisions to contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by preventing new and existing development from contributing to, being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by, unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution or land instability. Development should also seek to improve local environmental conditions such as air and water quality (paragraph 187). *Local Plan Policy D3 Protecting Living Conditions* confirms that new development should protect residential amenity for existing local residents. *Local Plan Policy D4 Air Quality* requires developments to consider air

quality impacts arising from development, carry out assessments and identify mitigation measures where necessary.

Noise

- 5.12.2 The application is accompanied by a Noise Assessment Report prepared by Hawkins Environmental (dated August 2025). The assessment considers the site suitability in terms of noise impacts from existing sources including nearby roads.
- 5.12.3 The report confirms that due to noise from surrounding roads and the wider environment, the site is considered a 'low risk' site and that the maximum internal noise levels of each room in each proposed home can be achieved through the provision of suitable glazing and ventilation the details of which would be assessed at the reserved matters stage.
- 5.12.4 In respect of the construction phase of the development, the report confirms that in order to minimise construction noise impacts, all construction works should take place during standard construction hours, which are between 8am to 6pm on Mondays to Fridays, 9am to 1pm on Saturdays, with no work on Sundays and Bank Holidays. These hours would be in accordance with expectations of the Council's Environmental Health Protection team. This and other noise mitigation measures for managing noise during the construction phase can be secured through a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) condition.

Land Contamination

- 5.12.5 The application is accompanied by a 'Phase 1 Preliminary Risk Assessment' prepared by CK Consulting and Geotechnical. The Council's Environmental Health Officer confirmed they did not object to the application with respects to contamination on land. However, given the report recommends that given the sensitive nature of the proposed use (residential), and the potentially contaminative current use of the site (agricultural), intrusive investigation should be undertaken at this site. A condition has therefore been recommended relating to a Phase II environmental risk assessment being undertaken and appropriate remediation if required undertaken, all pre-commencement of development.

Air Quality

- 5.12.6 Paragraph 110 of the NPPF states that *'The planning system should actively manage patterns of growth in support of these objectives. 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. This can help to reduce congestion and emissions and improve air quality and public health'*. NPPF paragraph 199 (under section 'Ground conditions and pollution') states that *'Planning policies and decisions should sustain and contribute towards compliance with relevant limit values or national objectives for pollutants, taking into account the presence of Air Quality Management Areas and Clean Air Zones, and the cumulative impacts from individual sites in local areas. Opportunities to improve air quality or mitigate impacts should be identified, such as through traffic and travel management, and green infrastructure provision and enhancement'*.

- 5.12.7 The application is accompanied by an Air Quality Assessment prepared by Entran. The report confirms that during the construction phase of the proposed development, limited releases of dust and particulate matter are likely to be generated from on-site activities. However, through good sit practice and the implementation of suitable mitigation measures, the impact of dust and particulate matter releases may be effectively mitigated and the resultant impacts are considered to be negligible. In terms the overall impact of the operation of the proposed development, the impact with regards to new exposure to air quality is considered to be negligible.
- 5.12.8 NHDC's Environmental Health Officer has confirmed that air quality mitigation measures will be necessary for both the construction and operational stages of the development. Air quality impacts can be suitably controlled and mitigated through a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) which can be secured by condition.

Conclusion on environmental impacts

- 5.12.9 The supporting documentation confirms that there are likely to be minimal impacts in relation to air quality and noise pollution. Any impacts can be reasonably mitigated through conditions. Further investigative work is required in relation to contaminated land, and this can also be secured via condition. Given the foregoing, there is not considered to be any harmful environmental impacts arising. This matter weighs neutrally in the planning balance.

5.13 Sustainability

- 5.13.1 Chapter 2 of the NPPF Achieving sustainable development requires the sustainability credentials of proposals to be considered. Paragraph 8 requires that all three objectives – *economic, social and environmental* – of the planning system would be met. Chapter 14 Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change confirms that the planning system should support the transition to a low carbon future in a changing climate.
- 5.13.2 The Council passed a Climate Emergency motion in 2019 which pledged to do everything within the Council's power to achieve zero carbon emissions in North Hertfordshire by 2030. The Council has adopted a Climate Change Strategy to promote carbon neutral policies. LP Policy SP1: *Sustainable development in North Hertfordshire is an overarching policy whereas LP Policy SP11 Natural resources and sustainability* gives broad support for proposals for renewable and low carbon energy development in appropriate locations.
- 5.13.3 Local Plan Policy DE1 *Sustainable Design requires developments to consider a number of criteria including the need to reduce energy consumption and waste. LP Policy NE12 Renewable and low carbon energy development* supports the principle of renewable energy subject to a technical impacts being satisfied. Local Plan Policy SP9 relates to Design and Sustainability and seeks the inclusion of a broad range of sustainability measures in developments.
- 5.13.4 The application submission is accompanied by an Energy and Sustainability Statement prepared by Daedalus Environmental (dated August 2025). The statement confirms that:
- The dwellings will be highly energy efficient, adopting a fabric first approach. They will be orientated to maximise solar gain where possible;
 - There will be no natural gas connection to the site;
 - Heating and hot water will be supplied via low carbon air source heat pumps;

- Solar photovoltaic panels will be installed where appropriate;
- The development will employ a combination of highly efficient fixtures, fittings and appliances to reduce domestic water use to achieve the 110 l/p/d target;
- Buildings will be designed and specified to adapt to a changed climate:
 - Overheating will be managed through considered design;
 - The retention of existing trees and additional planting will provide more comfortable microclimates in warmer weather;
 - The landscape design will provide multi-functional benefits, supporting increased biodiversity and enhancing the overall aesthetic;
 - Surface water will be managed via the integration of SuDS into the development.
- Electric vehicle charging points will be installed in line with policy requirements;
- High quality broadband will be provided in line with Approved Document R;
- The embodied carbon of the development will be considered and addressed through sustainable material choices and flexible and durable design;
- Construction and operational waste will be managed in accordance with the principles of the Waste Hierarchy.

5.13.5 In respect of the site wide Energy and Sustainability strategy, a suitably worded condition has been imposed which also addresses the future submission of details in relation to the proposed air source heat pumps for each dwelling. This is considered a moderate positive benefit in the planning balance.

5.14 **Impact upon residential amenity**

5.14.1 In terms of matters that relate to the effect upon the living conditions of occupiers of neighbouring dwellings, such as loss of outlook, privacy, daylight and sunlight, these matters will be considered at the reserved matters stage, when approval of scale and layout will be sought. However, considering the existing vegetation, and the proposed enhancements, there is no reason to believe that the effect upon the residential amenities of occupiers of nearby residential properties would not be able to be satisfactorily addressed. Therefore, it is considered that the proposal would comply with Local Plan Policy D3, which permits proposals that do not cause unacceptable harm to living conditions. The absence of harm weighs neutral in the planning balance.

5.15 **Other Matters**

Health Impact Assessment

5.15.1 HCC's Public Health Healthy Places Officer has recommended in their consultation response that given the scale of the proposed development, Public Health will require the developer to undertake a Health Impact Assessment to assess the potential positive and negative health impacts of this development. The response also comments on twelve specific subject areas in relation to the development proposal.

5.15.2 Although a condition can be recommended requiring the applicant to submit a Health Impact Assessment, it is considered that this would be overly excessive in this instance. The reasons below demonstrate how the ten subject areas have either been considered or addressed as part of the current outline application submission:

- **Air quality** – The application is accompanied by an Air Quality Assessment report. This matter is fully addressed in the relevant section of this report. A condition has been recommended for a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP). As per the Highway Authority's comments, the applicant will also be required to submit a revised Travel Plan which would be secured through a s106 agreement.
- **Indoor air quality** – The application is accompanied by a Noise Impact Assessment report. NHDC's Environmental Protection Officer has confirmed they are satisfied with the conclusions in the report and considers it is not necessary to recommend any noise mitigating related conditions in this instance.
- **Creating access for all** – Details have been set out in the masterplan framework and parameter plans detailing the main active travel routes within and beyond the application site. Measures to cater for the needs to the ageing population and individuals with physical disability and limiting illnesses can be incorporated into the scheme. The final site layout would be assessed at the reserved matters stage. In addition, a hard landscaping and boundary treatment provision condition has been recommended.
- **Adoption of active travel behaviours from the new occupants** – The Highways Authority have assessed the current application and confirmed the proposed access strategy is acceptable. NHDC officers have also worked collaboratively with the applicant on the masterplan framework and parameter plans to formulate an active travel strategy for the site to encourage sustainable modes of transport amongst residents. The details would be finalised at the reserved matters stage.
- **Active Design** – In addition to the on-site active travel strategy, the development proposes the introduction of green spaces and play areas throughout the site for leisure and recreation purposes.
- **Community Sports Facilities** – Sport England have also sought financial contributions for infrastructure in relation to sports pitches, changing rooms, sports halls and swimming pools which the applicant has agreed to.
- **Affordable Housing** – The development proposal would provide 50% affordable housing on-site. This would be secured through a s106 agreement.
- **Provision of healthy, affordable food** – This element is not relevant given that the development proposal seeks outline planning permission for up to 100 dwellings.
- **Contributions towards modal shift and active recreation** – Financial contributions have been sought towards an 'Evaluation and Support Contribution' towards a Travel Plan, to cover the County Council's costs of administering and monitoring the objectives of the Travel Plan and engaging in any Travel Plan Review.
- **Charging points for electric vehicles** – This matter is addressed by building regulations.
- **Car Club** – The development would provide a Car Club Bay in a suitable location within the development site.
- **Safe crossing points beyond site perimeter** – The Highways Authority have assessed the current application and confirmed the proposed access strategy is acceptable. The proposed development includes measures to improve infrastructure beyond the application site and promote better highway safety for pedestrians through the introduction of a pedestrian crossing on Turnpike Lane and further upgrades to Turnpike Lane, Bedford Road and Greenfield Avenue.

5.16 Planning Obligations

5.16.1 In considering Planning Obligations in relation to this development, the Framework advises that:

“Planning obligations should only be sought where they meet all of the following tests:

- *necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms;*
- *directly related to the development; and*
- *fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development”*

5.16.2 Policy SP7 sets out infrastructure requirements and developer contributions that are ‘necessary in order to accommodate additional demands resulting from the development’. This policy reflects the NPPF principles set out above. It also cites the Development Contributions SPD adopted by the Council and the update to Development Contributions adopted by the County Council.

5.16.3 The section below outlines the Heads of Terms and financial contributions sought by statutory bodies.

5.16.4 The applicant has agreed to the following obligations and a draft S106 Legal Agreement is well progressed. It is recommended that should Members accept this recommendation and resolve to grant outline planning permission, this should be subject to the completion of the S106 Agreement, with the following obligations:

Element	Details and Justification	Justification
Affordable Housing	Based on 100 units, on site provision of 50% (approx. 50 units) which should be 65% rented tenure (approx. 33 units) and 35% intermediate tenure (approx. 17 units)	NHDC Developer Contributions Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) Feb 2023 Policy HS2 of the Local Plan and the NPPF.
Nursery Education	Included within the Primary Education contribution.	
Primary Education (HCC)	£1,256,845 (which includes land costs of £17,549) index linked to BCIS 1Q2024 and BCIS Regional Factor.	Towards new primary school provision within Ickleford and/or provision serving the development.
Secondary Education	£941,071 index linked to BCIS 1Q2024 and BCIS Regional Factor.	Towards the expansion of The Priory Secondary School, Hitchin and/or provision serving the development.

Childcare Service 0-2 years	£20,114 index linked to BCIS 1Q2024.	Towards increasing the capacity of facilities in the North Herts Rural West Family Centre Reporting Locality and/or provision serving the development.
Childcare Service 5-11 years	£1,454 index linked to BCIS 1Q2024.	Towards increasing the capacity of facilities at Ickleford Primary School and/or provision serving the development.
Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)	£171,848 index linked to BCIS 1Q2024 and BCIS Regional Factor.	Towards new Severe Learning Difficulty (SLD) special school places (EAST) and/or provision serving the development.
Youth Service	£15,580 index linked to BCIS 1Q2024.	Towards increasing capacity through resource requirements to support the delivery of youth work with young people in the area and/or provision serving the development.
Library Services	£26,391 index linked to BCIS 1Q2024.	Towards increasing the capacity of Hitchin library and/or provision serving the development.
Waste Service Recycling Centre	£18,892 index linked to BCIS 1Q2024.	Towards increasing capacity at Letchworth Recycling Centre or a new recycling centre in Baldock and/or provision serving the development.
Waste Service Transfer Station	£26,420 index linked to BCIS 1Q2024.	Towards increasing capacity through the new Northern Transfer Station and/or provision serving the development.
Fire and Rescue Service Contribution	£2,487 index linked to BCIS 1Q2024.	Towards increasing operational capacity through the provision of new appliances and/or equipment necessary to

		support additional fire and rescue service delivery at Hitchin Fire Station and/or provision serving the development.
HCC Highways – Sustainable Transport Contributions	<p>Strand 1 – Off-site highways works via s278 agreement to include pedestrian crossing and provision of tactile paving. Travel Plan evaluation and support fee of £1,200 per annum. Overall sum of £6,000 and index-linked RPI March 2014.</p> <p>Strand 2 – Contribution of £668,100 (index linked by SPONS from March 2024) to be pooled towards the following schemes: i. North Central GTP schemes: SM95, Package 14 of the North Central GTP (P86); Cycle Routes to Henlow Camp and Stotfold ii. INHDC’s LICWIP Schemes: Walking and Cycling improvements to the Turnpike Lane junction/roundabout (one of the highest priorities identified in the Ickleford Neighbourhood Plan) and Walking / Cycling connections from Ickleford to North Hitchin (A600)</p> <p>Contribution of £300,000 (index linked by SPONS from March 2024 towards the 9D Bus Service operated by Stagecoach from May 2026 will provide an hourly service, Mon to Sat and every 2-hour service on Sunday between Ickleford, Hitchin and Stevenage. This is currently being funded by BSIP for three years. However, the additional funding of £300k from this development will ensure its long-term viability.</p>	<p>Policy SP7</p> <p>Policy SP17</p> <p>Policy D1</p> <p>Developer Contributions SPD</p> <p>HCC LTP4</p> <p>HCC ‘Guide to Developer Infrastructure Contributions’ 2022</p>

<p>Sports Contributions – Adult/Youth/Mini Football</p>	<p>The recommendations in the PPS for Ickleford Sport and Recreation Club are for improved ancillary facilities. The recommended contribution for football should be focused on the aggregated figures for changing rooms for adult (£23,782) and youth changing rooms (£49,317). The provision of a new changing pavilion at Walsworth Common is also an alternative project for the changing facility contributions. The recommended overall contribution would be £73,099.</p>	<p>Developer Contributions SPD (2023)</p> <p>Policy SP10</p> <p>Policy NE6</p> <p>Emerging North Herts Playing Pitch Strategy</p> <p>Emerging North Herts Indoor Sports Strategy</p>
<p>Sports Contributions – Cricket</p>	<p>Hertfordshire Cricket have previously identified that improving the cricket square at Ickleford Sport and Recreation Club through a non turf or hybrid wickets have been a priority. As above the priority in the PPS for Ickleford Sport and Recreation Club are for improved ancillary facilities which are shared by football and cricket clubs. The cricket pitch and changing facility contributions should therefore be used towards these projects at Ickleford Sport and Recreation Club. The recommended contribution would be £33,752.</p>	<p>Developer Contributions SPD (2023)</p> <p>Policy SP10</p> <p>Policy NE6</p> <p>Emerging North Herts Playing Pitch Strategy</p> <p>Emerging North Herts Indoor Sports Strategy</p>
<p>Sports Contributions – Rugby Union and Rugby League</p>	<p>The PPS identifies that sports lighting and drainage plus RFU specification changing rooms are priority projects for the Hitchin Rugby Club site at King George V Playing Field in Hitchin which are also used by North Herts Crusaders Rugby League Club. The rugby union and rugby league pitch and changing facility contributions should therefore be used for pitch and changing facility works</p>	<p>Developer Contributions SPD (2023)</p> <p>Policy SP10</p> <p>Policy NE6</p> <p>Emerging North Herts Playing Pitch Strategy</p> <p>Emerging North Herts Indoor Sports Strategy</p>

	at King George V Playing Fields. The recommended contribution would be £26,215 .	
Sports Contributions - Hockey	The PPS has identified that resurfacing the Hitchin Boys School and Lucas Lane Sports Ground artificial grass pitches (both used by Blueharts Hockey Club) are the priorities for meeting hockey needs. Sand based AGP pitch contribution should therefore be used to either of these projects. No need for changing facility contribution to be secured for hockey as no needs or projects identified. The recommended contribution would be £7,552 .	Developer Contributions SPD (2023) Policy SP10 Policy NE6 Emerging North Herts Playing Pitch Strategy Emerging North Herts Indoor Sports Strategy
Sports Contributions – 3G Artificial Grass Pitches	The Playing Pitch Strategy identifies a need for an additional 3G AGP in Hitchin and the Priory School has been identified as a site for accommodating a second 3G AGP. The 3G AGP contribution should be used towards this project. Therefore, no need for changing facility contribution to be secured for 3G AGP as no needs or projects identified. The recommended contribution would be £22,037 .	Developer Contributions SPD (2023) Policy SP10 Policy NE6 Emerging North Herts Playing Pitch Strategy Emerging North Herts Indoor Sports Strategy
Sports Contributions – Sports Halls	The ISS has identified priorities for improving the quality of the sports halls at Priory School and Fearnhill School as well as the squash courts at Ickleford Sport and Recreation Club so the sports hall contribution should be used towards any of these projects. The recommended contribution would be £48,090 .	Developer Contributions SPD (2023) Policy SP10 Policy NE6 Emerging North Herts Playing Pitch Strategy Emerging North Herts Indoor Sports Strategy
Sports Contributions – Swimming Pools	Hitchin Swimming Centre would be the priority project. The specific project(s) for using the	Developer Contributions SPD (2023)

	swimming pool contribution will be identified in due course. The recommended contribution would be £62,499 .	Policy SP10 Policy NE6 Emerging North Herts Playing Pitch Strategy Emerging North Herts Indoor Sports Strategy
Sports Contributions – Tennis	the PPS identifies that improved court quality is a priority at King George V Playing Field in Hitchin and this has also been a priority for NHDC Green Spaces. The tennis contribution should therefore be prioritised for this project. The recommended contribution would be £3,942 .	Developer Contributions SPD (2023) Policy SP10 Policy NE6 Emerging North Herts Playing Pitch Strategy Emerging North Herts Indoor Sports Strategy
Chalk Stream Conservation	The chalk stream runs directly to the south of the site boundary and will be subject to run off from the site. A project has been identified by the Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust at Oughtonhead to enhance the chalk stream environment. The recommended contribution is £77,000 . NHDC’s Greenspace Manager is currently in the process of finalising the details for this project, and the practicalities around implementing the project.	Developer Contributions SPD (2023) Ickleford Neighbourhood Plan Policy E2
HCC Monitoring Fees	£420 (adjusted for inflation against RPI January 2024) for each distinct trigger point.	
NHDC Monitoring fees	2.5% of NHDC contributions capped at £25,000.	

Table 3: Heads of Terms for S106 Agreement

5.16.5 Discussions are ongoing regarding the wording of the s106 Agreement, such as trigger points. However, it is considered that the s106 Agreement is advanced enough to refer this matter to Planning Committee and that the outstanding issues are minor in nature and can be resolved prior to issue of the decision.

5.16.6 All the elements of these Obligations are necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms, are directly related to the development, and are fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development. In the light of the detailed evidence, all the elements of the Obligation meet the policy in paragraph 256 of the NPPF and the tests in Regulation 122 of the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 (as amended).

5.17 Planning Balance and very special circumstances

5.17.1 As set out in this report, there are matters that weigh in favour and against the proposed development. The table below identifies the benefits and harms of the development and the weight attributed to these. Notwithstanding the weight attributed to different matter, some carry greater importance than others and whilst this will not be reflected in the table below, this is addressed in this section of the report.

Table 4 – Benefits and harms

Issue	Effect	Weight
Green Belt Openness	Harm	Substantial
Green Belt Purposes	Harm	Substantial
Overall effect on the Green Belt	Harm	Substantial
Loss of agricultural land	Harm	Limited
Landscaping and visual impacts	Harm	Moderate
Delivery of Market Housing	Benefit	Significant
Delivery of above LP policy requirement of 50% Affordable Housing	Benefit	Very Significant
Economic Benefits	Benefit	Moderate
Social Benefits	Benefit	Significant
Environmental Benefits	Benefit	Moderate
Other material considerations/benefits**	Benefit	Significant
Biodiversity (BNG)	Benefit	Moderate
Sustainability credentials	Benefit	Moderate
Compliance with Golden Rules	Benefit	Significant
Heritage and Archaeology	Neutral*	None*
Tree Impacts	Neutral*	None*
Environmental Impacts – Noise, Air Quality, Land Contamination	Neutral*	None*
Highway Safety	Neutral*	None*
Flood Risk/Drainage	Neutral*	None*
Masterplan compliance	Neutral*	None*

* subject to conditions

** detailed at paragraph 5.2.59

- 5.17.2 The proposal would deliver up to 100 dwellings which would include 50% market housing. The proposal would boost the supply of housing in a sustainable location with access to services and facilities in Ickleford and Hitchin. It is considered that this is a **benefit** to which **significant** weight should be attributed. The proposal would deliver 50% on-site affordable housing which would exceed the minimum 40% Local Plan policy requirement. It is considered that this is a **benefit** to which **very significant** weight should be attributed.
- 5.17.3 The proposal would deliver significant public benefits, all of which are set out in the 'very special circumstances' section earlier in this report. In terms of the social benefits, it is considered this is a **benefit** to which **significant** weight should be attributed. In terms of the environmental benefits, it is considered this is a **benefit** to which **moderate** weight should be attributed. In terms of the economic benefits, it is considered this is a **benefit** to which **moderate** weight should be attributed.
- 5.17.4 A site specific other material consideration is that the developable area is restricted to land which would fit the definition of Green Belt. The land within the site that results in the conclusion that the whole site is Green Belt is utilised for an appropriate form of development in the Green Belt, providing for a lot of the environmental and social benefits considered above. This is a **benefit** that is attributed **significant** weight in the planning balance.
- 5.17.5 The proposal will provide a minimum 10% biodiversity net gain (BNG) which would be delivered off-site. This is a **benefit** to which **moderate** weight should be attributed. The sustainability credentials associated with the development proposal are considered a **benefit** to which **moderate** weight should be attributed.
- 5.17.6 In terms of the overall effect upon the Green Belt, this is considered a **harm** which attracts **substantial** weight in the planning balance. The proposal would result in some loss of agricultural land. This is considered a **harm** which attracts **limited** weight in the planning balance. The effect upon landscape and visual impact matters are considered a **harm** which should be attributed **moderate** weight in the planning balance.
- 5.17.7 Whilst it has been found that the whole of the site would not utilise Grey Belt land, the proposal would comply with the Golden Rules as set out at NPPF paragraph 156. Therefore, as indicated at NPPF paragraph 158 this compliance with the Golden Rules should be given **significant** weight in favour of the grant of planning permission.
- 5.17.8 In terms of matters relating to masterplan compliance, heritage, archaeology, highway safety, flooding and drainage, tree impacts, and environmental impacts, it is considered that each of these elements of the development proposal would have a **neutral** effect in terms of the planning balance. Suitable conditions have also been recommended in respect of each subject area.
- 5.17.9 There should not be a significant adverse impact upon the living conditions of occupiers of nearby residential properties. Effects in terms of outlook, privacy and overshadowing would be considered at the reserved matters stage.

Overall Assessment

- 5.17.10 This is an unallocated housing site in the adopted Local Plan and the site lies outside the settlement boundary of Ickleford. However, it will make a significant contribution to the housing land supply delivering both market and affordable housing. As the Council is currently unable to demonstrate a 5-year housing land supply, the tilted balance of paragraph 11(d) of the NPPF is engaged. The collective benefits of the development as set out in the report and as summarised in the table above would be significant. The adverse effects of the proposal have been identified and weight attached to these. There would be substantial harm to the openness of the Green Belt, and moderate harm to purposes (a) and (c) of the Green Belt, with moderate harm to purpose (e), as well as moderate harm in relation to landscape and visual matters, and limited harm to the loss of agricultural land. However, it is considered that when assessing this application submission as a whole, the public benefits associated with the proposed development would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the identified harms. When assessed against the policies in the NPPF taken as a whole, the planning benefits would clearly outweigh that harm to the Green Belt and any other harm. As such, it is considered that very special circumstances exist. The scheme therefore benefits from the presumption in favour of development which is a further material consideration.
- 5.17.11 It is considered that very special circumstances have been demonstrated which clearly outweigh the identified harm to the Green Belt. The tilted balance set out at paragraph 11 (d) of the Framework therefore is not disengaged and it is considered that the identified harms do not clearly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits that would arise from the proposed development. Accordingly, it is recommended that planning permission be granted.

6.0 Alternative Options

- 6.1 None applicable (see 'Key Issues' section of this report above).

7.0 Pre-Commencement Conditions

- 7.1 I can confirm that the applicant is in agreement with the pre-commencement conditions that are proposed.

8.0 Legal Implications

- 8.1 In making decisions on applications submitted under the Town and Country Planning legislation, the Council is required to have regard to the provisions of the development plan and to any other material considerations. The decision must be in accordance with the plan unless the material considerations indicate otherwise. Where the decision is to refuse or restrictive conditions are attached, the applicant has a right of appeal against the decision.

9.0 Recommendation

9.1 That planning permission is resolved to be GRANTED subject to:

A) The completion of a satisfactory legal agreement and the applicant agreeing to extend the statutory period in order to complete the agreement if required; and

B) Providing delegated powers to the Development and Conservation Manager to (i) resolve outstanding matters including financial contributions and (ii) update conditions and informatives with minor amendments as required; and

C) Conditions as set out below.

Time Limit

1. Before the development hereby permitted is commenced, approval of the details of the siting, design and external appearance of the development, the means of access (other than access details shown on the 'Proposed Access Arrangement Plan' Drawing No. IMI-RGP-XX-XX-DR-T-005 Rev P04) and the landscaping of the site (hereinafter called "the reserved matters") shall be obtained in writing from the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To comply with the provisions of Article 3 of the Town and Country Planning (General Development Procedure) Order 1995 as amended.

2. Application for approval of the reserved matters shall be made to the Local Planning Authority before the expiration of 3 years from the date of this permission, and the development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of 2 years from the date of approval of the last of the reserved matters to be approved.

Reason: To comply with the provisions of Section 92 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

3. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in complete accordance with the details specified in the application and supporting, approved documents and plans as listed above, together with the Reserved Matters approved by the Local Planning Authority, or with minor modifications of those details or Reserved Matters which previously have been agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority as being not materially different from those initially approved.

Reason: To ensure the development is carried out in accordance with details which form the basis of this grant of permission or subsequent approval of Reserved Matters.

Masterplanning

4. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the submitted masterplan 'Parameter Plan – Drawing No. HAWR.250207 PPL-01 R3'.

Reason: To ensure the development is carried out in accordance with details which form the basis of this grant of planning permission and in accordance with Policy SP9 of the North Herts Local Plan 2011-2031.

Masterplan Compliance

5. Prior to or concurrent with the submission of the first Reserved Matters application, and any subsequent Reserved Matters applications, a Masterplan Compliance Statement shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The Masterplan Compliance Statement shall explain how the proposal accords with the masterplan 'Framework Plan – Drawing No. HAWR.250207 FWP-01 R3' and the eight concept masterplan principles detailed on page 23 of the submitted Design & Access Statement dated March 2026. Where the proposal does not accord with either document, the Masterplan Compliance Statement should provide clear and robust justification for the departure.

Reason: To ensure that the development as envisaged by the outline application is satisfactorily implemented in accordance with Policy SP9 of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan.

Waste and Recycling Storage

6. No dwelling shall be occupied until a scheme setting out details of all on-site household storage facilities for waste including waste for recycling and/or composting (including details of any enclosures or screening) to serve each dwelling in accordance with the Council's Waste and Recycling Strategy at the time of submission, has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Such details shall identify the specific position of where wheeled bins will be stationed, and the specific arrangements to enable collection from the kerbside of the adopted highway/refuse collection vehicles access point in accordance with the walk distances set out in the Council's approved waste collection strategy.

The scheme shall also include arrangements for management of any other waste generated by the development. All such facilities shall be provided in accordance with the approved details prior to the first occupation of the corresponding dwellings and shall be maintained and retained thereafter.

Reason: To facilitate refuse and recycling collection. To protect the amenities of nearby residents and occupiers in the interests of visual amenity and to comply with Policies D1 and D3 of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011-2031.

Site Waste Management

7. No development shall take place until a Site Waste Management Plan (SWMP) has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority in consultation with the Waste Planning Authority. The SWMP should aim to reduce the amount of waste produced on site and should contain information including estimated types and quantities of waste to arise from construction and waste management actions for each waste type. The development shall thereafter be implemented in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To promote the sustainable management of waste arisings and contribution towards resource efficiency, in accordance with Policy 12 of the Hertfordshire Waste Core Strategy and Development Management Policies Development Plan Document (2012).

Tree Conditions

Trees

8. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the Arboricultural Implications Assessment and Arboricultural Method Statement both prepared by Merewood and dated August 2025 unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To safeguard and enhance the trees on the site and in accordance with Policy NE2 of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan (2011-2031).

Tree Retention

9. None of the trees to be retained on the application site shall be felled, lopped, topped, uprooted, removed or otherwise destroyed or killed without the prior written agreement of the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To safeguard and enhance the appearance of the completed development and the visual amenity of the locality.

Tree Replacement

10. Any tree lopped, topped, felled, uprooted, removed or otherwise destroyed or killed contrary to the provision of the tree retention condition above shall be replaced during the same of next planting season with another tree of a size and species as agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority, unless the LPA agrees in writing to dispense with this requirement.

Reason: To safeguard and enhance the appearance of the completed development and the visual amenity of the locality.

Landscaping

Soft Landscaping Provision

11. Notwithstanding any details included in the submitted plans, no development above ground level (except any demolition, site clearance, ground investigation and remediation work) shall take place within the relevant phase (or part thereof) until details of soft landscaping for such relevant phase have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. These details shall include planting plans; written specifications (including cultivation and other operations associated with plant and grass establishment); schedules of plants noting species, plant sizes and proposed numbers/densities and tree pit construction and soil volumes.

The approved scheme of soft landscaping works shall be implemented not later than the first planting season following commencement of the development (or within such extended period as may first be agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority). Any planting removed, dying or becoming seriously damaged or diseased within five years of planting shall be replaced within the first available planting season thereafter with planting of similar size and species unless the Local Planning Authority gives written consent for any variation.

Any trees, hedges, shrubs or turf identified within the approved landscaping details (both proposed planting and existing) which die, are removed, seriously damaged or seriously diseased, within a period of 10 years of being planted or in the case of existing planting within a period of 5 years from the commencement of development, shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of similar size and species.

Reason - In the interests of character and visual amenity and ensuring compliance with North Herts Local Plan Policies KB4, SP9 and NE2 and the National Planning Policy Framework.

Hard Landscaping and Boundary Treatment Provision

12. Notwithstanding any details included in the submitted plans, no development above ground level (except any demolition, site clearance, ground investigation and remediation work) shall take place within the relevant phase (or part thereof) until details of hard landscaping and boundary treatments for such relevant phase have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Hard landscape details should include proposed finished levels and contours showing earthworks and mounding; surfacing materials; hard surfacing material specifications; minor artefacts and structures (for example furniture, refuse and/or other storage units, signs, lighting and similar features); boundary treatments and proposed and existing functional services above and below ground (for example drainage, power, communications cables and pipelines, indicating lines, manholes, supports and other technical features).

Reason: In the interests of character and visual amenity and ensuring compliance with North Herts Local Plan Policies KB4, SP9 and NE2 and the National Planning Policy Framework.

Biodiversity

Biodiversity Net Gain

13. The effect of paragraph 13 of Schedule 7A to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 is that planning permission granted for the development of land in England is deemed to have been granted subject to the condition “(the biodiversity gain condition)” that **development may not begin** unless:
 - a) A Biodiversity Gain Plan has been submitted to the planning authority, and
 - b) The planning authority has approved the plan.

The planning authority, for the purposes of determining whether to approve a Biodiversity Gain Plan if one is required in respect of this permission would be North Hertfordshire District Council.

There are statutory exemptions and transitional arrangements which mean that the biodiversity gain condition does not always apply.

Based on the information available this permission is considered to be done which will require the approval of a biodiversity gain plan before development is begun because none of the statutory exemptions or transitional arrangements are considered to apply.

Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan

14. No development shall take place until a Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan (the HMMP), prepared in accordance with the approved Biodiversity Gain Plan and including:
- a) a non-technical summary;
 - b) the roles and responsibilities of the people or organisation(s) delivering the HMMP;
 - c) the planned habitat creation and enhancement works to create or improve habitat to achieve the biodiversity net gain in accordance with the approved Biodiversity Gain Plan;
 - d) the management measures to maintain habitat in accordance with the approved Biodiversity Gain Plan for a period of 30 years from the completion of development; and
 - e) the monitoring methodology and frequency in respect of the created or enhanced habitat to be submitted to the local planning authority, has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the local planning authority.

Notice in writing shall be given to the Council when the:

- a) HMMP has been implemented; and
- b) habitat creation and enhancement works as set out in the HMMP have been completed.

The created habitat specified in the approved HMMP shall be managed and maintained in accordance with the approved HMMP.

Reason: To ensure the development is ecologically sensitive and secures biodiversity enhancements in accordance with North Herts Local Plan Policy NE4.

Ecological Enhancement Plan (EEP)

15. No development shall take place until an Ecological Enhancement Plan (EEP) for the creation of new wildlife features such as the inclusion of integrated bird/bat and bee bricks in buildings/structures, swift bricks should be used where building heights allow, and hedgehog holes in fences has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure development is ecologically sensitive and secures biodiversity enhancements in accordance with the North Herts Local Plan Policy NE4.

Lighting Strategy

16. No dwelling hereby permitted shall be occupied unless and until an external lighting strategy has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The strategy shall be designed to minimise the potential adverse effects of external lighting on the amenity and biodiversity of the site and its immediate area. The strategy shall also:
- a) identify those areas/features on site to which bats and other nocturnal species are particularly sensitive and that are likely to cause disturbance in or around their breeding sites and resting places, or along important routes used to reach key areas of their territory, for example, for foraging; and

- b) show how and where external lighting will be installed (through the provision of appropriate lighting contour plans and technical specifications) so that it can be clearly demonstrated that areas to be lit will not disturb or prevent the above species using their territory or having access to their breeding sites and resting places.

The development shall be carried out and maintained thereafter in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: In the interests of biodiversity and local amenity and to ensure compliance with North Herts Local Plan Policies NE4 and D3.

Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP)

17. No development shall take place (including ground works or vegetation clearance) until a construction environmental management plan (CEMP: Biodiversity) has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The CEMP (Biodiversity) should be informed by the Ecological Impact Assessment dated September 2025 and include the following:
- a) Risk assessment of potentially damaging construction activities;
 - b) Identification of “biodiversity protection zones”;
 - c) Practical measures (both physical measures and sensitive working practices) to avoid impacts to protected species during construction (may be provided as a set of method statements);
 - d) The location and timing of sensitive works to avoid harm to biodiversity features;
 - e) The times during construction when specialist ecologists need to be present on site to oversee works;
 - f) Responsible persons and lines of communication;
 - g) The role and responsibilities on site of an ecological clerk of works (ECoW) or similarly competent person;
 - h) Use of protective fences, exclusion barriers and warning signs.

The approved CEMP shall be adhered to and implemented throughout the construction period strictly in accordance with the approved details, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure the environmental impacts of the development are controlled in the interests of minimising disruption nearby residents during construction, minimising any environmental impacts, in the interests of highway safety and amenity and in accordance with Policies D3, T1 and NE12 contained in the North Hertfordshire Local Plan.

Open Space Management and Maintenance

18. Any reserved matters applications shall include a detailed Open Space Management and Maintenance Scheme for the management and maintenance of all areas of open space (to include parks, greenways, allotments, play areas, informal open space, semi-natural green space, public squares) shall be submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Details to be submitted shall include:
- a) Management organisation;
 - b) Details of landscape management and maintenance plans;
 - c) Details of planting, grass cutting, weeding and pruning;
 - d) Management of sustainable urban drainage features;
 - e) Inspection, repair and maintenance of all hard landscaping and structures;

- f) Management, monitoring and operational restrictions; and
- g) Maintenance and planting replacement programme for the establishment period of landscaping.

The open spaces provided shall be retained for their intended purpose and in accordance with the approved management plan unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure adequate open space and amenity provision as per Policy NE6 of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan.

Energy and Sustainability

19. The development hereby approved shall be constructed in accordance with the submitted Energy and Sustainability Statement prepared by Daedalus Environmental (dated August 2025), and details of the proposed air source heat pumps submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to their installation, and the identified sustainability measures shall be maintained and retained thereafter.

Reason: To reduce the carbon footprint of the development 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 adopted Sustainability SPD (2024).

Drainage Conditions

20. Prior to or in conjunction with the submission of each Reserved Matters application, a detailed Site SuDS Phase plan which aligns with the site phasing plan shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. This SuDS Phasing Plan shall ensure that each phase does not exceed the agreed discharge rates for that phase and that source control measures are installed within each phase to adequately address the phases own surface water runoff. The plan shall ensure that each SuDS component is adequately protected throughout the development of the scheme. The plan shall show all exceedance routes throughout the site clearance and construction of the scheme ensuring flood risk is not increased elsewhere or to the site itself and that the site remains safe for all exceedance event flow routes for the lifetime of the development during rainfall (i.e. greater than design events or during blockage) and how property on and off site will be protected.

Reason: To ensure that the development achieves a high standard of sustainability and ensure the flood risk is adequately addressed for each new dwelling and not increased in accordance with NPPF and Policies of North Herts District Council.

21. No development shall take place until details and a method statement for interim and temporary drainage measures during the demolition and construction phases have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. This information shall provide full details of who will be responsible for maintaining such temporary systems and demonstrate how the site will be drained to ensure there is no increase in the off-site flows, nor any pollution, debris and sediment to any receiving watercourse or sewer system. The site works and construction phase shall thereafter be carried out in accordance with approved method statement, unless alternative measures have been subsequently approved by the Planning Authority.

Reason: To prevent flooding and pollution offsite in accordance with the NPPF.

22. No development shall take place until a detailed construction phase surface water management plan for the site has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority including details to address surface water control measures during each phase of construction. The scheme shall subsequently be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To ensure that the construction of the site does not result in any flooding both on and off site and that all Surface water Drainage features are adequately protected.

23. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the submitted and approved Flood Risk Assessment (Ref: GB/VL/P25-3474/01 dated August 2025). This includes all new residential dwellings to have a finished floor level raised a minimum of 300mm above any design flood level and 150mm above the surrounding proposed ground level unless otherwise first approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure the flood risk is adequately addressed and not increased in accordance with NPPF and Policies of North Herts District Council.

24. Prior to or in conjunction with the submission of each reserved matters application, in accordance with the submitted FRA and or Drainage Strategy (GB/VL/P25-3474/01 dated August 2025), detailed designs of a surface water drainage scheme incorporating the following measures shall be submitted to and agreed with the Local Planning Authority. The approved scheme will be implemented prior to the first occupation of the development. The scheme shall address the following matters:

a) The applicant must submit a drawing that illustrates the ground levels and or Finished Floor Levels (FFLs) across the entire development, along with the flood exceedance path under a drainage network failure scenario for the 1% AEP plus climate change event. This is to ensure that exceedance flows are directed away from buildings, entrances, and critical utilities.

b) The applicant must provide the cross-sectional layouts and detailed specifications of the proposed storage structures and the attenuation basin.

c) The pumped discharge is proposed to connect into a new surface water sewer network, which will subsequently flow into the existing 150 mm private surface water sewer on site before discharging to the watercourse. A failure assessment of the pump should be submitted, including hydraulic calculations.

d) The drainage strategy drawing must show the Finished Floor Levels, manhole IDs, invert levels, cover levels, network IDs, and pump IDs exactly as represented in the hydraulic calculations to ensure consistency.

Reason: To ensure the satisfactory management and local flood risk, surface water flow paths, storage and disposal of surface water from the site and ensuring the SuDS proposed operates as designed for the lifetime of the development.

25. Upon completion of the surface water drainage system, including any SuDS features, and prior to the first use of the development; a survey and verification report from an independent surveyor shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The survey and report shall demonstrate that the surface water drainage system has been constructed in accordance with the details approved. Where necessary, details of corrective work to be carried out along with a timetable for their completion, shall be included for approval in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Any corrective works required shall be carried out in accordance with the approved timetable and subsequently re-surveyed with the findings submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure the flood risk is adequately addressed, not increased and users remain safe for the lifetime of the development in accordance with NPPF and Policies of North Herts District Council.

26. No development shall take place until a strategic foul water strategy has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, in consultation with Anglian Water. This strategy should identify the connection point to the MH9901 (NGR. TL 17923 30959) and MH4102 (NGR. TL 18404 31177) to the south of the development site. Prior to occupation, the foul water drainage works must have been carried out in complete accordance with the approved scheme.

Reason: To reduce the impacts of flooding and potential pollution risk.

Archaeology

27. (A) No development shall take place until an Archaeological Written Scheme of Investigation has been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority in writing. The scheme shall include an assessment of archaeological significance and research questions; and:

1. The programme and methodology of site investigation and recording
2. The programme and methodology of site investigation and recording, preservation in situ of heritage assets and no dig areas as required by the evaluation
3. The programme for post investigation assessment
4. Provision to be made for analysis of the site investigation and recording
5. Provision to be made for publication and dissemination of the analysis and records of the site investigation
6. Provision to be made for archive deposition of the analysis and records of the site Investigation
7. Provision to be made for public engagement and interpretation
8. Nomination of a competent person or persons/organisation to undertake the works set out within the Archaeological Written Scheme of Investigation.

(B) The development shall take place/commence in accordance with the programme of archaeological works set out in the Written Scheme of Investigation approved under condition (A)

(C) The development shall not be occupied until the site investigation and post investigation assessment has been completed in accordance with the programme set out in the Written Scheme of Investigation approved under condition (A) and the provision made for analysis and publication where appropriate.

Reason: To ensure the implementation of an appropriate archaeological investigation, recording, reporting and publication, and the protection and preservation of archaeological features of significance, in accordance with North Hertfordshire Local Plan HE4 and Section 16 of the NPPF 2021.

Contaminated Land

28. (A) No development shall take place until a Site Investigation (Phase II environmental risk assessment) report has been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority which includes:
- (i) A full identification of the location and concentration of all pollutants on this site and the presence of relevant receptors, and;
 - (ii) The results from the application of an appropriate risk assessment methodology.
- (B) No development approved by this permission (other than that necessary for the discharge of this condition) shall be commenced until a Remediation Method Statement report; if required as a result of (a), above; has been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority.
- (C) This site shall not be occupied, or brought into use, until:
- (i) All works which form part of the Remediation Method Statement report pursuant to the discharge of condition (b) above have been fully completed and if required a formal agreement is submitted that commits to ongoing monitoring and/or maintenance of the remediation scheme.
 - (ii) A Remediation Verification Report confirming that the site is suitable for use has been submitted to, and agreed by, the Local Planning Authority.
- (D) Any contamination, other than that reported by virtue of condition (b), encountered during the development of this site shall be brought to the attention of the Local Planning Authority as soon as practically possible; a scheme to render this contamination harmless shall be submitted to and agreed by the Local Planning Authority and subsequently fully implemented prior to the occupation of this site.

Reason: To ensure that any contamination affecting the site is dealt with in a manner that safeguards human health, the built and natural environment and controlled waters in accordance with North Hertfordshire Local Plan Policy NE11.

Construction Management Plan (CMP)

29. Full details of a Construction Management Plan (CMP) for the development hereby permitted shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to the commencement of each phase of development (including any pre-construction or enabling works). The construction of the development shall thereafter be carried out in complete accordance with the approved details unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The Plan shall include the following:
- a) Details and timing of the removal of any site waste;
 - b) measures to minimise dust during construction;
 - c) site set up and general arrangements for the delivery and storage of plant including cranes, materials, machinery and equipment, temporary offices and other facilities, construction vehicle parking and loading/unloading and vehicle turning areas;
 - d) construction traffic route signage, monitoring and enforcement measures;

- e) any temporary screening and hoarding details to protect neighbouring residents;
- f) end of day tidying procedures to ensure protection of the site outside the hours of construction. The construction activities shall be designed and undertaken in accordance with the code of best practice set out in British Standard 5228 1997 and with the agreed details unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority;
- g) wheel washing facilities for construction vehicles leaving the site;
- h) storage and removal of building waste for disposal or recycling;

Reason: To ensure the environmental impacts of the development are controlled in the interests of minimising disruption nearby residents during construction, minimising any environmental impacts, in the interests of highway safety and amenity and in accordance with Policies D3, T1 and NE12 contained in the North Hertfordshire Local Plan.

Fire Safety

30. Before the first occupation of any dwellinghouses hereby permitted, details of a fire hydrant(s) shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Such details shall include provision of the mains water services for the development whether by means of existing water services, new mains, or extension to or diversion of existing services where the provision of fire hydrants is considered necessary. The hydrant(s) shall be provided in accordance with the approved details prior to the first occupation of the development.

Reason: To ensure adequate fire protection for the development by way of appropriately located hydrant facilities.

Highways

Detailed Plans – Parking, Internal Roads and Turning Areas

31. As part of any reserved matters applications, full details (in the form of scaled plans and / or written specifications) shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority of the following:
- a) The details of the indicative pedestrian access point as proposed (in para 4.1 of the Transport Addendum dated December 2025) to Bedford Road near the newly built signalised junction and the Ickleford Mill site.
 - b) A robust audit for walking and cycling to key local facilities and services should be submitted to assess an accessibility audit that details the challenges and opportunities for improving provision for active travel to these places on a map showing isodistance contours based on available routes.
 - c) The details of all hard surfaced areas within the site. This includes, but is not limited to, all roads, footways, forecourts, driveways, parking and turning areas, and foul and surface water drainage.
 - d) The level of footways and carriageway visibility from each individual vehicle access, and the level of visibility from and around each main junction within the site, within which there shall be no obstruction to visibility between 600mm and 2 m above the carriageway level.
 - e) The service vehicles, including refuse and emergency vehicles, can safely and conveniently access and route through the site, to include the provision of sufficient turning and operating areas.
 - f) The provision of sufficient facilities for cycle storage.

All these features shall be provided before first occupation and maintained in perpetuity.

Reason: To ensure suitable, safe and satisfactory planning and development of the site in accordance with Policy 5 of Herfordshire's Local Transport Plan (adopted 2018).

Vehicular Access and Pedestrian Crossing

32. Before commencement of the development, additional plans must be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority in consultation with the Highway Authority, which show the detailed engineering designs and construction of the main site access off Turnpike Lane including safe movement of refuse vehicles, footways, pedestrian crossing with refuge island (in compliance with the road safety audit report) and visibility onto Turnpike Lane as indicated on the drawings (Ref: IMI-RGP-XX-XX-DR-T-005, Rev P04). These works shall be constructed to the specification of the Highway Authority and Local Planning Authority's satisfaction and completed before first occupation of the development via a s278 agreement with the highways.

Reason: To ensure satisfactory access into the site and to ensure residents and visitors of the development have the realistic option of travelling by local bus routes, and not a reliance on the private motorcar, in accordance with paragraphs 115–117 of the NPPF (December 2024).

Wider Highway Works

33. Before commencement of the development, plans must be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, in consultation with the Highways Authority, which show the provision of providing of tactile crossing at the junction of Turnpike Lane / Greenfield Avenue and at the junction of Turnpike Lane / Bedford Road. These works shall be implemented to the specification of the Highways and Local Planning Authority's satisfaction before first occupation.

Reason: In the interests of right of way users, and compliance with LTP4.

Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP)

34. No development shall take place until a Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP) has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority in consultation with the Highways Authority. Thereafter, the construction of the development shall only be carried out in accordance with the approved Plan. The Construction Traffic Management Plan shall include details of:
- a) Construction vehicle numbers, type, routing;
 - b) Access arrangements to the site;
 - c) Measures to minimise dust, noise machinery and traffic noise impacts during construction;
 - d) Screening and hoarding details to protect neighbouring residents;
 - e) Traffic management requirements, including the location of routes to and from the site, details of their signing monitoring and enforcement measures;
 - f) Construction and storage compounds (including areas designated for car parking, loading / unloading and turning areas);
 - g) Siting and details of wheel washing facilities;
 - h) Cleaning of site entrances, site tracks and the adjacent public highway including end of day tidying procedures to ensure protection of the site out of the hours of construction. The construction activities shall be designed and undertaken in

accordance with the code of best practice set out in BS 5228 1997 and the agreed details unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority and Highways Authority;

- i) Timing of construction activities (including delivery times and removal of waste) and to avoid school pick up / drop off times;
- j) Provision of sufficient on-site parking prior to commencement of construction activities;
- k) Post construction restoration / reinstatement of the working areas and temporary access to the public highway;
- l) Where works cannot be contained wholly within the site, a plan should be submitted showing the site layout on the highway including extent of hoarding, pedestrian routes and remaining road width for vehicle movements;
- m) Phasing Plan, if applicable.

Reason: In order to protect highway safety and the amenity of other users of the public highway and rights of way in accordance with Policies 5, 12, 17 and 22 of Hertfordshire's Local Transport Plan (adopted 2018).

Proactive Statement:

Planning permission has been granted for this proposal. The Council acted proactively through positive engagement with the applicant during the determination process which led to improvements to the scheme. The Council has therefore acted proactively in line with the requirements of the Framework (paragraph 38) and in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015.

Informatives:

Highways

HCC as Highway Authority recommends inclusion of the following Advisory Note (AN) / highway informative to ensure that any works within the highway are carried out in accordance with the provisions of the Highway Act 1980:

AN1) Storage of materials: The applicant is advised that the storage of materials associated with the construction of this development should be provided within the site on land which is not public highway, and the use of such areas must not interfere with the public highway. If this is not possible, authorisation should be sought from the Highway Authority before construction works commence. Further information is available via the County Council website at:

<https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/highways-roads-and-pavements/business-and-developer-information/business-licences/business-licences.aspx> or by telephoning 0300 1234047.

AN2) Debris and deposits on the highway: It is an offence under section 148 of the Highways Act 1980 to deposit compost, dung or other material for dressing land, or any rubbish on a made-up carriageway, or any or other debris on a highway to the interruption of any highway user. Section 149 of the same Act gives the Highway Authority powers to remove such material at the expense of the party responsible. Therefore, best practical

means shall be taken at all times to ensure that all vehicles leaving the site during construction of the development and use thereafter are in a condition such as not to emit dust or deposit mud, slurry or other debris on the highway. Further information is available by telephoning 0300 1234047.

AN3) Obstruction of highway: It is an offence under section 137 of the Highways Act 1980 for any person, without lawful authority or excuse, in any way to wilfully obstruct the free passage along a highway or public right of way. If this development is likely to result in the public highway or public right of way network becoming routinely blocked (fully or partly) the applicant must contact the Highway Authority to obtain their permission and requirements before construction works commence. Further information is available via the County Council website at:

<https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/highways-roads-and-pavements/business-and-developer-information/business-licences/business-licences.aspx> or by telephoning 0300 1234047.

AN4) New or amended vehicle crossover access (section 184): Where works are required within the public highway to facilitate a new or amended vehicular access, the Highway Authority require the construction of such works to be undertaken to their satisfaction and specification, and by a contractor who is authorised to work in the public highway. If any of the works associated with the construction of the access affects or requires the removal and/or the relocation of any equipment, apparatus or structures (e.g. street name plates, bus stop signs or shelters, statutory authority equipment etc.) the applicant will be required to bear the cost of such removal or alteration. Before works commence the applicant will need to apply to the Highway Authority to obtain their permission, requirements and for the work to be carried out on the applicant's behalf. Further information is available via the County Council website at:

<https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/highways-roads-and-pavements/changes-to-your-road/dropped-kerbs/dropped-kerbs.aspx> or by telephoning 0300 1234047.

AN5) Works within the highway (section 278): The applicant is advised that in order to comply with this permission it will be necessary for the developer of the site to enter into an agreement with Hertfordshire County Council as Highway Authority under Section 278 of the Highways Act 1980 to ensure the satisfactory completion of the access and associated road improvements. The construction of such works must be undertaken to the satisfaction and specification of the Highway Authority, and by a contractor who is authorised to work in the public highway. Before works commence the applicant will need to apply to the Highway Authority to obtain their permission and requirements. Further information is available via the County Council website at:

<https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/highways-roads-and-pavements/business-and-developer-information/development-management/highways-development-management.aspx> or by telephoning 0300 1234047.

AN6) Construction Management Plan (CMP): The purpose of the CMP is to help developers minimise construction impacts and relates to all construction activity both on and off site that impacts on the wider environment. It is intended to be a live document whereby different stages will be completed and submitted for application as the development progresses. A completed and signed CMP must address the way in which any impacts associated with the proposed works, and any cumulative impacts of other nearby construction sites will be mitigated and managed. The level of detail required in a CMP will depend on the scale and nature of development. The CMP would need to include

elements of the Construction Logistics and Community Safety (CLOCS) standards as set out in our Construction Management template, a copy of which is available on the County Council's website at:

<https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/highways-roads-and-pavements/business-and-developer-information/development-management/highways-development-management.aspx>

AN7) The Public Right of Way(s) should remain unobstructed by vehicles, machinery, materials, tools and any other aspects of the construction during works. Safe passage past the site should be maintained at all times for the public using this route. The condition of the route should not deteriorate as a result of these works. Any adverse effects to the surface from traffic, machinery or materials (especially overflows of cement & concrete) should be made good by the applicant to the satisfaction of the Highway Authority. No materials shall be stored or left on the Highway including Highway verges. If the above conditions cannot reasonably be achieved, then a Temporary Traffic Regulation Order (TTRO) would be required to close the affected route and divert users for any periods necessary to allow works to proceed, for which a fee would be payable to Hertfordshire County Council. Further information is available via the County Council website at <https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/recycling-waste-and-environment/countryside-access/rights-of-way/rights-of-way.aspx> or by contacting Rights of Way, Hertfordshire County Council on 0300 123 4047.

AN8) Travel Plan (TP): A TP, in accordance with the provisions as laid out in Hertfordshire County Council's Travel Plan Guidance, would be required to be in place from the first occupation/use until 5 years post occupation/use. A £1,200 per annum (overall sum of £6000 and index-linked RPI March 2014) Evaluation and Support Fee would need to be secured via a Section 106 agreement towards supporting the implementation, processing and monitoring of the full travel plan including any engagement that may be needed. Further information is available via the County Council's website at: <https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/highways-roads-and-pavements/business-and-developer-information/development-management/highways-development-management.aspx> OR by emailing travelplans@hertfordshire.gov.uk