

PLANNING  
STATEMENT  
(INCL. SUSTAINABILITY  
CONSTRUCTION, ENERGY  
AND WATER STATEMENT)

OUTLINE PLANNING  
APPLICATION WITH ALL  
MATTERS RESERVED EXCEPT  
FOR ACCESS FOR THE  
ERECTION OF UP TO 7  
DWELLINGS AND  
ASSOCIATED PARKING AND  
LANDSCAPING

AT

LAND EAST OF ALBURY ROAD  
LITTLE HADHAM  
HERTFORDSHIRE  
SG11 2DN



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## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared on behalf of [REDACTED] (hereafter referred to as “the Applicant”) in support of an outline application with all matters reserved except access for the erection of up to seven dwellings and associated parking and landscaping at Land east of Albury Road, Little Hadham to East Hertfordshire District Council (hereby referred to as “the LPA”).
- 1.2 The application site is located to the northern edge of Little Hadham adjacent to the existing built-up area and settlement boundary. It is accessed off Albury Road and the site forms part of the western corner of a wider agricultural field, immediately bounded by hedgerow to the front western boundary and to the southern side boundary, which also includes a Public Right of Way ‘Little Hadham 038’. To clarify, this PROW is outside of the red edge of the application site. Beyond the immediate hedgerows, there is existing residential development to the south and to the west of the application site. To the north and the east is the remaining agricultural field, which is still used for farming.

## 2.0 PLANNING HISTORY AND BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The site has been subject of two relatively recent planning applications, which are detailed below:
- 2.2 The first, under LPA reference 3/17/0975/OUT, sought outline planning permission for ‘Outline planning for the erection of up to 18 dwellings, all matters reserved apart from access’ in April 2017. However, this application was withdrawn in March 2018.
- 2.3 Secondly, under LPA reference 3/21/0588/FUL, planning permission was sought for ‘New agricultural field entrance off Albury Road’ and which was granted permission in January 2022.



### 3.0 APPLICATION PROPOSALS

- 3.1 The application is submitted in outline with all matters reserved except for access. The application comprises the erection of seven residential dwellings. An indicative Site Layout Plan showing how the dwellings could be laid out is submitted with this application. It is anticipated that the development would comprise a simple row of seven detached and semi-detached dwellings fronting Albury Road with private amenity areas extending south-eastwards to the rear. The dwellings will likely be of traditional two-storey design with the height of the dwellings kept to a minimum. The row of dwellings would follow the existing built line along this eastern side of Albury Road, which is formed by the existing built form to the south of the site and would extend that row up to the same limitations as the existing built form on the opposite side of the road. The proposed dwellings will be designed to be in keeping with the scale and character of the existing properties in this part of Little Hadham.
- 3.2 The proposed dwellings would be accessed via new junction from Albury Road, in a similar position to that previously granted under application reference 3/21/0588/FUL. This would then lead to a new private driveway running parallel with Albury Road and providing access to each of the seven dwellings. The proposed development also incorporates turning heads to ensure that domestic and emergency vehicles could re-enter the public highway in a forward gear.
- 3.3 The proposed development has been designed as a landscape-led scheme with additional hedge and tree planting to both the western front and southern side boundaries to compliment and add to the existing hedgerows. The proposals will also incorporate new hedgerows, trees and vegetation planting along the northern and eastern boundaries of the site, to provide screening and to help assimilate the proposals into the surroundings and to reflect similar boundary treatments at existing built developments (notably the housing on the opposite side of Albury Road).



3.4 Some extra land has been set-aside to the south of the main site, which is shown hatched blue (and is within the blue edged land) on the proposed plans. This land is under the same ownership and so is controlled by the applicant. It is proposed to use this land for additional planting, in order to achieve Biodiversity Net Gain and it is proposed that this land can be subject of a suitably worded condition, in order to secure the necessary BNG, in terms of both habitat and hedgerow metrics.

#### 4.0 NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY

4.1 National planning policy is contained within the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) adopted 2012 (as amended September 2023).

4.2 The NPPF identifies at paragraph 7 that: “the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development” and identifies three overarching objectives, which are economic, social and environmental.

4.3 Paragraph 10 goes onto state: “So that sustainable development is pursued in a positive way, at the heart of the Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development (paragraph 11).

For decision-taking this means:

c) Approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; or

d) 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 clear 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.”

4.4 Paragraph 11d is of specific relevance to this application as is discussed below in more detail.



- 4.5 Government seeks to encourage local planning authorities (LPA) to be positive in their decision making, stipulating at paragraph 38 that they: "... should approach decisions on proposed development in a positive and creative way. They should use the full range of planning tools available, including brownfield registers and permission in principle, and work proactively with applicants to secure developments that will improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area. Decision-makers at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible."
- 4.6 As set out in Section 5 of the NPPF, one of the Governments objectives is to deliver a sufficient supply of new homes. Paragraph 60 states that "To support the Government's objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes, it is important that a sufficient amount and variety of land can come forward where it is needed, that the needs of groups with specific housing requirements are addressed and that land with permission is developed without unnecessary delay."
- 4.7 Paragraph 69, part c) goes onto state that "Small and medium sized sites can make an important contribution to meeting the housing requirement of an area and are often built-out relatively quickly."
- 4.8 Of specific relevance to this application is Paragraph 74 which states, amongst other things, that "Local planning authorities should identify and update annually a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide a minimum of five years' worth of housing against their housing requirement set out in adopted strategic policies, or against their local housing need where the strategic policies are more than five years old".
- 4.9 The National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) on Housing supply and delivery states at Paragraph 008 that "In decision-taking, if an authority cannot demonstrate a 5 year housing land supply, including any appropriate buffer, the presumption in favour of sustainable development will apply, as set out in paragraph 11d of the National Planning Policy Framework."



## 5.0 LOCAL PLANNING POLICY

5.1 Local planning policy is contained within the East Herts District Plan adopted in October 2018. The relevant policies contained within the plan are as follows:

Policy DPS1 Housing, Employment and Retail Growth

Policy DPS2 The Development Strategy 2011-2033

Policy DPS3 Housing Supply 2011-2033

Policy GBR2 Rural Area Beyond the Green Belt

Policy VILL2 Group 2 Villages

Policy HOU1 Type and Mix of Housing

Policy HOU2 Housing Density

Policy DES2 Landscape Character

Policy DES3 Landscaping

Policy DES4 Design of Development

Policy DES5 Crime and Security

Policy TRA1 Sustainable Transport

Policy TRA2 Safe and Suitable Highway Access Arrangements and Mitigation

Policy TRA3 Vehicle Parking Provision

Policy CFLR1 Open Space, Sport and Recreation

Policy CFLR3 Public Rights of Way

Policy NE1 International, National and Locally Designated Nature Conservation Sites

Policy NE2 Sites or Features of Nature Conservation Interest (Non-Designated)

Policy NE3 Species and Habitats

Policy NE4 Green Infrastructure

Policy HA3 Archaeology

Policy CC1 Climate Change Adaptation

Policy CC2 Climate Change Mitigation

Policy CC3 Renewable and Low Carbon Energy

Policy WAT4 Efficient Use of Water Resources



Policy EQ2 Noise Pollution

Policy EQ3 Light Pollution

Policy EQ4 Air Quality

5.2 Consideration has also been given to following Supplementary Planning Documents and Guidance:

Sustainability SPD

Landscape Character Assessment SPD

Vehicle Parking Standards SPD

## 6.0 MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS

### PRINCIPLE OF DEVELOPMENT

- 6.1 The application site is located outside of the settlement boundaries of Little Hadham in the Rural Area Beyond the Green Belt wherein Policy GBR2 applies. Policy GBR2 does not support the erection of residential dwellings on greenfield land outside of development boundaries. It is a significant material consideration, however, that East Herts District Council cannot currently demonstrate a 5-year supply of housing and thus the restriction of new housing development to that within settlement boundaries cannot be afforded full weight as this would further restrict residential development and exacerbate the existing shortfall. As noted, this site is immediately adjacent on two side to the settlement Boundary of Little Hadham.
- 6.2 The 5-year housing supply shortfall was originally confirmed in the Appeal Decision to Appeal Reference APP/J1915/W/22/3303408 which is provided Appendix 1. The Appeal Decision details that “the Council’s deliverable supply of housing would fall short of the 5-year HLS requirement by approximately 760 dwellings. This would represent a moderate shortfall” [emphasis added].





6.3 The LPA have subsequently accepted that there is a 5-year housing supply shortfall, firstly in the Gilston Committee Report to Local Authority reference 3/19/1045/OUT provided at Appendix 2. The Committee Report states that “A recent appeal decision concluded that the Council cannot currently demonstrate a five year supply of deliverable housing sites. The consequence of not having a 5YHLS is that the ‘tilted balance’ is engaged in the decision-making process. The tilted balance refers to paragraph 11(d) of the NPPF which states that if the most relevant Local Plan policies for determining a planning application are out of date (such as when a 5YHLS cannot be demonstrated), the application should be approved unless the application of NPPF policies that protect areas or assets of particular importance (as defined by the NPPF) provide a clear reason for refusing permission or the harms caused by the application significantly and demonstrably outweigh its benefits, when assessed against policies of the NPPF as a whole.

In this context, the policies considered to be out of date include in particular those relating to the development strategy and delivery of housing which have been referred to earlier in this report.” [emphasis added]. This confirms that the LPA consider Policy GBR2 to be out of date as such the policy does not carry full weight in the decision-making process.

6.4 Appendix 3 contains a recent Appeal Decision to Appeal Reference APP/J1915/W/23/3318094 which confirms the current 5-year housing shortfall to be 4.41 years. It states that “It is common ground that the Council can currently demonstrate only a 4.41- year supply of deliverable housing land, less than the five-year amount specified in paragraph 74 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework).” [emphasis added].

6.5 Given the above, Paragraph 11 of the NPPF is invoked and the LPA must apply the presumption in favour of sustainable development and ‘titled balance’ in their decision-making. Clearly, there is a great need for new residential development in the District and in the locality, and thus the increase in local housing supply for 7 dwellings, should be given significant weight.



- 6.6 It should be noted that the LPA have been giving the 5-year housing supply shortfall significant weight, even for single dwellings. Appendices 4-6 contains Officers Reports which give significant weight to the 5-year housing supply shortfall.
- 6.7 Of specific note, a recent decision has confirmed the 5-year housing supply shortfall to outweigh the conflict with Policy GBR2. The Officers Report to Local Authority reference 3/23/0158/FUL (Appendix 7) concludes that “the Council's lack of a 5 Year Housing Land Supply is a material consideration which needs to be given significant weight. The 'tilted balance' is therefore engaged in decision making.

This report has concluded the proposed development would amount to a harmful intrusion into the countryside which is incompatible with the character and appearance of the rural area, as it does not fall into any of the exceptions listed in Policy GBR2 of the East Herts District Plan 2018. Whilst this disbenefit of the scheme is acknowledged, it does not significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits of the proposed development which include the provision of a sustainable new dwelling that would contribute to the Council's housing need. Therefore, as the Council currently lacks a 5 Year Housing Land Supply, on balance the proposed development is considered to be acceptable.” [Emphasis Added]. It should be noted that much like this application, the application site is a greenfield site located adjacent to a Group 2 Village and thus the conclusions in this Officers Report are considered to be comparable to the application at hand. Furthermore, Little Hadham has greater access to local shops, services and public transportation infrastructure than Ferneux Pelham (as will be discussed in more detail below) and is therefore considered to be more suitable location for residential development.

#### PRESUMPTION IN FAVOUR OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

- 6.8 The following section discusses the three strands of sustainable development contained within the NPPF.



- 6.9 Economic objective: The NPPF identifies this as contributing to building a strong, responsive and competitive economy, supporting growth and innovation and by identifying and coordinating development requirements, including the provision of infrastructure.
- 6.10 As noted above, the application site is located adjacent to the settlement boundaries of Little Hadham which is identified within Policy VILL2 as a Group 2 Village and provides access to local shops and services. The additional population associated with the proposal would therefore have a positive influence on the local economy, providing additional custom to those shops and services, thus enhancing the prospect of their future retention and growth.
- 6.11 It is likewise the case, that the construction of seven residential dwellings would generate localised economic benefits. Local tradespeople and suppliers would benefit from the construction project and the ongoing maintenance of the dwellings and services required by the occupants in future years. It is generally accepted that 1.5 full-time direct jobs are created for each new dwelling built, plus an additional 3 jobs per home in the wider supply chain.
- 6.12 Social objective: The NPPF identifies this as supporting strong, vibrant, and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering well-designed, beautiful and safe places, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural well-being.
- 6.13 This site will not provide any affordable units, as the proposal is for seven dwellings only. However, it is important to note, as a material consideration, the importance of seven dwellings within the locality. The effect of the proposal on social well-being is a matter that is capable of being a material consideration and the social needs of communities form part of the social role of sustainable development identified at paragraph 8 of the NPPF.



- 6.14 The built form of Little Hadham extends northwards to meet the southern boundary of the application site on the eastern side of the Albury Road, although on the opposite (western) side of the highway extends further northwards. As a consequence the proposed development will effectively round-off and balance up the northern extent of the settlement boundaries with that of the built form on the western side of Albury Road, located directly opposite the site. In this respect, the proposal does not represent an isolated development in the countryside.
- 6.15 The site benefits from good access to local social infrastructure. Amongst the villages within the District, Little Hadham accommodates a generous level of services and facilities for a Category 2 Village.
- 6.16 Environmental objective: The NPPF defines this as protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, improving biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.
- 6.17 The nearest designated heritage asset is the Little Hadham Conservation Area, located approximately 120 metres to the south and is separated from the site by intervening, modern residential development. The nearest listed building is Priors Cottage, near the edge of the conservation area and is located approximately 150 metres from the southern edge of the site. As such, the proposed development would have no detrimental impact on the historic environment.

Despite the site lying within the Rural Area beyond the Green Belt, it is nevertheless located adjacent to a settlement that performs well in sustainable terms, which benefits from a number of services located within the surrounding area, which include the following:

The appeal site is served by good public footways, which provide easy and safe access on foot to all parts of the village.

Bus Stops are located within 800 metres (10 minutes) walking distance from the site, with the nearest bus stops located along the A120.



Little Hadham Primary School is located within easy walking distance at 0.3 miles (0.48km) from the site and at least thirty seven schools are located within 5 miles (8km), some of which can be accessed by bus.

Employment generating uses at Church End Farm are located 0.3 miles (0.48km) from the appeal site and accessed via public footpaths, as are offices at Hadham Hall, located a further 0.3 miles (0.48km).

A car repair garage and sales room 0.3 miles (0.48km) distance linked by footways.

St Cecillia's Church located within 0.3 miles (0.48km), linked by public footpaths.

A Children's Playground and sports field within 0.5 miles (0.8km) linked by footways.

Little Hadham Village Hall within 0.8 miles (1.2km) linked by footways, which holds regular social and community events.

The Nags Head Public House within 0.8 miles (1.2km) again linked via footways.

Veterinary Surgery 0.9 miles (1.4 km).

School bus pick up and drop off services within the village at Albury Road, Stortford Road and the Nags Head PH to Bishops Stortford High School and St Mary's Schools, Bishop's Stortford.

6.18 All of these facilities can be reached on foot in approximately 5 to 19 minutes, with the bicycle a practical option for reaching these sites, which will of course reduce journey times significantly. Only the Veterinary Surgery is not linked by a footway.



- 6.19 It is worth emphasising Paragraph 79 of the NPPF which states that “To promote sustainable development in rural areas, housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities. Planning policies should identify opportunities for villages to grow and thrive, especially where this will support local services”.
- 6.20 The NPPF and the Practice Guidance acknowledge a need for rural housing and accept that transport solutions will vary between urban and rural areas. In this instance, there does not need to be a reliance on the private car due to the existence of nearby public transport infrastructure. However, whilst modern families do generally own a car this in itself does not make the development unsustainable. It is also the case that, since the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, temporary and permanent working patterns have shifted with a greater number of people now working from home and thus there is a reduced need to travel for work.
- 6.21 There are a range of opportunities to walk within the site locality via an extensive network of Public Rights of Way (PRoW) (see below). This includes Little Hadham 038 immediately adjacent to the site. The direct access afforded by the network of PRoW to the open countryside would encourage active travel and would support an active and healthy lifestyle for future occupants of the proposed dwellings.
- 6.22 It should be noted that the LPA have previously determined that locations in and around Category 2 villages, such as Little Hadham would be a sustainable location for residential development. The Officers Report to Local Authority reference 3/17/1182/FUL (Appendix 8) states that “Whilst it is acknowledged that the proposed development would be contrary to Policy GBC3 of the Local Plan, as the Council is unable to demonstrate a 5 year supply of housing, paragraph 14 of the NPPF is engaged. The site lies outside the main built up area of Widford, but having regard to the proximity of the site to the settlement of Widford (Cat 2 village) it is considered that the site is a sustainable location for development of this scale.” [emphasis added]. Whilst this report refers to Widford rather than Little Hadham, both villages are Group 2 villages and as outlined above, Little Hadham benefits from a good range of local services.



6.23 This point is also discussed within the Officers Report to Local Authority reference 3/17/1624/OUT (Appendix 9), which states that “In addition, Council cannot demonstrate a 5-year supply of housing land, Para 49 of the NPPF states that housing applications should be considered in the context of the presumption in favour of sustainable development. Para 14 of the NPPF states that permission should be granted unless there are adverse impacts which significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits”.

#### ACCESS AND PARKING

6.24 This application is accompanied by a Highway Impact Assessment, provided by Bancroft Consulting Ltd. The proposed development would be accessed via a new junction from the public highway, Albury Road. This would be in a similar location to that proposed under application reference 3/17/0975/OUT, which although was withdrawn, it is noted that no objections were raised by the Local Highway Authority, when that access was proposed to serve up to 18 dwellings, as opposed to the seven dwellings now proposed. Furthermore, the access would be in a similar position to that granted permission under reference 3/21/0588/FUL, albeit that was for an agricultural purposes.

6.25 The Highway Impact Assessment submitted with this application demonstrates that the new access would be of a suitable width and design and would benefit from sufficient vision splays to ensure that the site would benefit from a suitable and safe access and would not result in any severe impacts on highway safety. The assessment states that

“...the main findings of this report can be summarised as follows:

- Using the previously agreed trip rates, the proposed development would result in up to 6 two-way vehicle movements during the morning peak hour and 5 two-way vehicle movements during the evening peak hour. This does not represent a significant change in traffic conditions and would not result in any severe impacts on the surrounding highway network.
- Drawing Number F16177/03 retains the same access layout as previously agreed, including a 5 metres wide carriageway with 6 metres kerb radii. A 2 metres wide footway



would also be provided to the south, connecting to the existing infrastructure along Albury Road.

- Drawing Number F16177/03 also confirms that the required visibility splays based on speed survey data could be achieved at the proposed access from a 2.4 metres setback distance to the edge of the carriageway in both directions along Albury Road.
- Drawing Number F16177/04 confirms that the proposed access layout could accommodate the largest potential vehicle to the site without conflict even if vehicles were to be parked on-street along Albury Road.
- Recommendations have been provided on parking provision and servicing strategy to be included within any future detailed site masterplan. At this stage, it is considered that external refuse collection with a bin storage point would be most suitable although it has been established that the proposed access could accommodate refuse vehicles if required.

There is no evidence of an existing highway safety problem near the site, with no accidents recorded along Albury Road during the latest 5-year study period.

6.26 The Highways Impact Assessment goes on to conclude that “Based on the findings of this report, it can be concluded that the proposed development would not result in any severe impacts and that safe access could be provided for all users. The proposals therefore comply with current planning policy and subject to the delivery of the access layout shown in Drawing Number F16177/03, the Highway Authority should be in a position to provide its support of the latest proposals during any future planning application”.





- 6.27 The proposed development would incorporate a turning head for emergency vehicles and car users to ensure that all vehicles can exit onto the public highway in a forward gear. It is proposed that refuse collection would take place at the entrance to the site, with a collection point proposed.
- 6.28 To promote the uptake of electric vehicles by future occupants, each dwelling would have provision of 1 electric vehicle charging point. In order to secure provision, it is recommended that a suitably worded condition be attached to any grant of planning permission.

#### DESIGN, LAYOUT AND AMENITY IMPACT

- 6.29 Design and layout are reserved matters, however an Indicative Site Layout Plan is submitted together with this application.
- 6.30 The proposed layout has been landscape-led by considering first opportunities for on-site biodiversity net gain. As such, the proposed dwellings would be contained within extensive boundary planting, providing native shrubs, hedging and trees, all of which would provide a soft edge to the settlement boundary. Additional planting would be provided to the south-east of the site, to provide additional planting within the landscape.
- 6.31 The dwellings would be orientated in a row along the eastern side of Albury Road, to continue the pattern of existing built form, found immediately to the south of the site. The provision of seven dwellings would also provide a density which would make the best use of the land and which would also reflect the a similar density and pattern of development found on the opposite (western) side of Albury Road.
- 6.32 The proposed layout would ensure that there is minimal impact with respect to overlooking, overbearing, loss of light, loss of privacy or any other material disturbances.



- 6.33 The Indicative Site Plan shows a mix of detached and semi-detached dwellings, which would respect and which would be in keeping with the pattern of development in this part of Little Hadam, which currently includes a varying range of detached dwellings to the south of the site and collection of semi-detached dwellings to the west.
- 6.34 The Indicative Site Plan shows that ample private amenity space is provided to each dwelling.

## ENVIRONMENT

- 6.35 The application site is identified as being located within Flood Risk Zone 1 and is therefore at the lowest risk of fluvial flooding. The site is likewise identified as being in an area at low risk to surface water flooding.

### Ecology

- 6.36 A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) undertaken by ELMAW Consulting is submitted alongside this application. It concludes that the site was found to have no significantly important ecology; its development is not predicted to adversely impact designated sites of nature conservation importance, important habitats or protected species and therefore there are no significant ecological constraints to the site's development.
- 6.37 The report concludes that "Overall, whilst there appears to be some potential for the application site to support protected species, the site is considered to be of low biodiversity value, mainly due to its small size and common, widespread habitats. Precautionary measures will avoid, mitigate and compensate for any predicted potential"
- 6.38 The Ecological Appraisal also includes a Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment. Using the Biodiversity Metric 4.0, the baseline for the existing site has been found to be worth 1.30 habitat units (HUs) and that the existing hedgerow with trees to be worth 0.60 Hedgerow units (HRUs).



- 6.39 The proposals include for the removal of a section of the hedgerow to the front of the site, to allow for the proposed vehicular access, suitable visibility plays and for the access pathway. However, additional land to the rear of the site, which is shown hatched on the indicative layout plan and which is within the blue-edged land (and therefore under the ownership and control of the applicant), is available for additional planting of hedgerow and wildflowers, to enable a significant up-lift in BNG. As well as significant planting within the site itself, as shown in the proposed layout and the addition of the land to the south-east of the site (shown hatched), initial calculations indicate a BNG of approximately +28% in HUs, significantly above the minimum 10% which will be required as of April 2024. In addition, the planting of new hedgerow within the site combined with additional planting within the hatched area to the rear of the site, the proposals would achieve a BNG of +15.8% of HRUs.
- 6.40 Whilst the additional land is outside of the red-edge, as noted above this land is within the blue-edged land and is owned by the applicant and is under their control. Being within the blue-edged land, this land and the BNG proposals can therefore be controlled and secured via a suitably worded condition.
- 6.41 The overall uplift of BNG of +28% HUs and +15.8 HRUs, which are both significantly above the minimum requirement of 10%, which is not yet a national requirement, would represent a significant benefit of the proposals, in the overall planning balance.

#### Contamination

- 6.42 This application is also accompanied by a Phase 1 Desk Top Study Report for Contamination. The report identifies that “No sources of contamination are recorded within and surrounding the site” and recommends that the development of this site would not require any further investigations and only to ‘maintain a watching brief’. If considered necessary, a watching brief (or any additional investigations) can be adequately dealt with by the imposition of an appropriately worded planning condition.



## SUSTAINABILITY CONSTRUCTION, ENERGY AND WATER STATEMENT

- 6.43 This Sustainability Statement has been prepared with reference to the Sustainability SPD March 2021. The Sustainable Design and Construction checklist has been submitted with this application.
- 6.44 As this application is submitted in outline with all matters reserved except for access, sustainability measures which pertain to the design and construction of the dwellings are a reserved matter.
- 6.45 The dwellings will be constructed using insulation and double glazed windows with a high level of thermal efficiency to improve the thermal mass of the buildings. This will reduce energy demand in accordance with the Energy Hierarchy at Figure 2 of the Sustainability SPD.
- 6.46 As detailed above, the proposed development would make provision of electric vehicle charging points. This is in accordance with Policy DES4(e) and Section 8.2.5 of the Sustainability SPD.
- 6.47 Where possible the dwellings will be constructed using recycled and local sourced sustainable materials.
- 6.48 Soft landscaping will be used to reduce solar heating from direct sunlight, whilst still allowing in daylight and warmth from the sun. Passive cooling would be provided by openable windows. This is in accordance with the Cooling Hierarchy at Figure 5.
- 6.49 There will be minimal impact on Air Quality during the construction phase. Works will nonetheless adhere to good site management in terms of exhaust emissions and minimising dust.
- 6.50 Each of the dwellings would be fitted with an air source heat pump and as such will be gas free to reduce carbon emissions and improve air quality.
- 6.51 Full complement of waste and recycling receptacles would be provided in accordance with Table 13 of the Sustainability SPD. Full details will be provided at reserved matters.



- 6.52 The proposed dwellings would not exceed the residential target for water efficiency of 110 litres per person per day. This level is in line with the optional water efficiency requirement contained within Part G of Building Regulations and is supported by the Environment Agency. It is likewise in accordance with Policy WAT4 of the Local Plan. Each dwelling will have provision of a rainwater harvesting butt to reduce mains water demand for watering plants/gardens and for general cleaning tasks such as car washing in accordance with Policy WAT4 and Section 5.2.4 of the Sustainability SPD.
- 6.53 The indicative site plan demonstrates that a +28% net gain in habitat units and a +15.8% in hedgerow units can be achieved on site. A Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment is included as part of the Ecology Appraisal and the Biodiversity Net Gain Calculations are submitted alongside this application. Proposed native hedgerow planting would be incorporated into the existing hedgerow planting that fronts Albury Road as well as to the southern, eastern and northern boundaries, together with native tree planting. This would also take place on the additional land to the rear of the site (to be subject of a suitably worded condition).

## 7.0 CONCLUSIONS AND PLANNING BALANCE

- 7.1 This application is submitted in outline with all matters reserved except access and comprises the erection of seven dwellings and associated landscaping.
- 7.2 The site is located within the Rural Area Beyond the Green Belt within which residential development is typically restricted. However, it must be given significant weight that the Local Authority are currently unable to demonstrate a 5 year supply of housing and thus are required to apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development. The limited impact on the Rural Area Beyond the Green Belt is not considered to significantly or demonstrably outweigh the benefits of the development when considered against the NPPF as a whole.



- 7.3 The site is located adjacent to the built-up area and defined settlement boundary of Little Hadham and is thus in walking/cycling distance of a range of local services and public transport infrastructure. The site also benefits from pedestrian infrastructure allowing future occupants access to services in these settlements. For these reasons the site is considered sustainably located. This should be common ground with the Local Authority given they have previously identified several sites within other Group 2 villages within the district as being sustainably located for residential development.
- 7.4 The site will benefit from a suitable and safe access from the public highway and will have a negligible impact on the operation of the local highway network. The scheme also incorporates turning heads to ensure that all vehicles that can exit onto the public highway in a forward gear.
- 7.5 Design and layout are reserved matters however an indicative Site Plan is submitted with this application. The proposed layout is a landscape-led scheme which would minimise the impact on the Rural Area Beyond the Green Belt. The dwellings would be designed as to be in keeping with existing development which fronts onto Albury Road.
- 7.6 Accordingly, in light of the above material considerations, which weigh firmly in favour of the proposal and which is in accordance with both national and local planning policy, the Local Planning Authority is therefore respectfully requested to grant this application.