

**Tree Heritage, North Road, Hertford, SG13 8EQ: Ref: 3/20/0713/FUL
Redevelopment of the site and erection of 6 dwellings**

1. The above site falls within the boundary of the Bengeo Neighbourhood Area Plan. The Regulation 15 Draft Plan was submitted to East Herts District Council on the 28 February 2020.

Impact on the Green Belt

2. We note that this site falls entirely within the Metropolitan Green Belt. The Neighbourhood Plan supports the appropriate development of Brownfield land over encroachment on the Green Belt. As the ridge height of the proposed two-storey dwellings would be more than double the height of the highest existing commercial building, there would be a negative and unwelcome impact on the openness of the Green Belt, particularly when viewed from Waterford Marsh.
3. The proposed development should not detract from the character of the local area. Neighbourhood Plan Policy HBH3: Landscape Design says '*Landscaping schemes should enhance the character of the development and reflect and complement the surrounding landscape, particularly when in or adjacent to the Green Belt. All the following criteria should be incorporated:*
 - a) *welcoming, accessible, open spaces and natural play areas*
 - b) *planting of native tree and hedgerow species with green buffers between large developments and adjacent countryside and between new development and existing residential areas.*

Enhancing Biodiversity

4. The proposed development site is in close proximity to Waterford Marsh and the Waterford Heath Nature Reserve. Neighbourhood Plan Policy HBN4: Nature Conservation says that '*all development should conserve and enhance biodiversity and seek to deliver net biodiversity gains*' and '*proposals to create new natural areas and wildlife habitats, or to expand or enhance existing provision, will be supported*'. We welcome the proposal to turn the eastern half of the site over to meadow land.

Design and Layout

5. Page 14 of the Design and Access Statement says, '*The internal layout of each unit has been carefully designed to ensure that windows are not required to the side elevations of the properties.*' Images of the proposed dwellings on pages 20, 22, 24 & 25 of the Design and Access Statement show windows on both side elevations of house types B and C and on one side elevation of house types A and D. Neighbourhood Plan Policy HBH2: Design and Layout says that development proposals should aim to protect the '*amenity and privacy of existing and future residents*'. We request clarification from 'On Architecture' on whether the proposed side elevation windows would result in any negative impact on the privacy of residents in existing homes along North Road or on future residents of the proposed development.

Cycle Storage

6. We welcome the proposed provision of cycle sheds within the gardens of each property. Given the proposal to build three and four-bedroom dwellings, enough space should be provided for the secure, covered, storage of sufficient cycles for properties of this size, to encourage active travel.

Vehicle parking provision

7. The parking standards in the draft Neighbourhood Plan are set at two off-road parking spaces per dwelling, plus visitor parking. A total of 14 parking spaces are proposed for the 6 dwellings. Sufficient provision for visitor parking should also be provided to deter overspill parking onto North Road.

Electric vehicle charging points

8. We welcome the proposal, outlined in paragraph 7.2.6 of the Sustainability Appraisal, to provide all properties with standard EV charging points (on plot) with the option (subject to capacity) for residents to upgrade to faster charging points. Neighbourhood Plan Policy HBT5: Parking supports the provision of electric charging points within developments.

Sustainable Design

9. Neighbourhood Plan Policy HBH2: Design and Layout endorses sustainable design principles to the best national standards. We welcome the proposal to install air-source heat pumps in each property, reduce potable water use, and attach water butts to each downpipe. We recommend the inclusion of systems to recycle grey water.

Flood Risk

10. We note that although the site is within Flood Zones 1, 2 and 3, the proposed properties would be located within the western third of the site, within Flood Zone 1.

Community Steering Group
Bengeo Neighbourhood Area Plan