



Planning Department
Mid Suffolk District Council
Endeavour House
Russell Rd
Ipswich
IP1 2BX

9th September 2021

Dear Sirs

**HOUSEHOLDER PLANNING APPLICATION – RED BRICK BARN, THE GREEN,
ASHBOCKING, SUFFOLK, IP6 9JZ**

This letter is provided in support of an application for householder planning permission for the erection of a new boundary wall, creation of formal garden area, formation of new access and creation of parking spaces at Red Brick Barn, The Green, Ashbocking.

Background and Constraints

In 2018, planning permission was sought and granted for the *“Change of use and extension of disused hayloft to a 3 bedroom dwelling (re-submission of withdrawn application DC/17/04768)”* at this site, then known as *“Land To The North Of The White House The Green Ashbocking IP6 9JZ”*.

Subsequent applications were made to deal with the discharge of conditions associated with that permission and to seek a minor change to the proposal.

The development is well advanced with the property close to being completed. In reviewing the layout of the site, the applicant has identified concerns with the openness of the site

frontage where the uninterrupted views into the property give rise to a feeling of intrusion and overlooking, and where there have been trespassers wandering onto the property. As such, it has become clear that the level of privacy offered is not sufficient to offer the applicant a suitable level of amenity. This application thereby seeks to address this through the addition of a new wall to the site frontage. Due to the proposed location of the wall, the existing vehicular access would be stopped up and thereby a new access and parking area would be created beyond the walled garden.

Whilst the proposal now seeks a new wall to the site frontage, the site previously was enclosed in this way. The images below show the previous wall that ran along the frontage of the site, along with the gated access that opened onto the parking area.



Indeed, the image below shows the condition of the frontage of the site, including an outbuilding that stood gable-end to the road, in 2015.



The site is unconstrained by any landscape designations and does not fall within a Conservation Area.

There are no listed buildings in the vicinity of the site.

Planning Considerations

The National Planning Policy Framework 2019 (NPPF) contains the Government's planning policies for England and sets out how these are expected to be applied. Planning law continues to require that applications for planning permission are determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The policies contained within the NPPF are a material consideration and should be taken into account for decision-making purposes. The NPPF is supported by the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG), which assists applicants and decision makers in interpretation of the NPPF.

The Development Plan for Mid Suffolk consists of the Mid Suffolk Local Plan (1998) and the Mid Suffolk Core Strategy along with its Focussed Review. The relevant policies from these documents are considered below, with consideration also being given to the respective elements of the NPPF as far as they are relevant to a proposal of this scale.

The impacts to be considered here are primarily visual ones, coupled with the safety aspects associated with the relocation of the vehicular access. This letter will thereby address these matters separately, as follows.

Visual Impacts/Design

Saved Policy GP1 sets out the Council's design expectations through a set of criteria against which all development proposals will be assessed.

Saved policy H16 deals with how proposals impact upon residential amenity. It states;

“To protect the existing amenity and character of primarily residential areas, the district planning authority will refuse:-

- change to non-residential use where such a change would materially and detrimentally affect the character and amenity of the area by means of appearance, traffic generation, nuisance or safety;*
- the loss of open spaces which contribute to the character or appearance of an area and which are important for recreation or amenity purposes;*
- development that materially reduces the amenity and privacy of adjacent dwellings or erodes the character of the surrounding area. The cumulative effect of a series of proposals will be taken into account”.*

Policy H18 deals expressly with extensions to existing dwellings and is thereby also relevant to this proposal. It states;

“Applications for extensions to existing dwellings will be approved, provided that they:-

- are in keeping with the size, design and materials of the existing dwelling;*
- will not materially or detrimentally affect the amenities of neighbours or the character and appearance of the area;*
- will not result in over-development within the curtilage.*

The cumulative effect of a number of extensions to the existing dwelling will be regarded as a material consideration”.

The proposal seeks to provide a new walled garden to the front of the property, and relocate parking adjacent to the wall. The proposal will finish off the property frontage in a manner that reflects the historic frontage to the site, whilst offering privacy to the applicant through screening of the area immediately to the front of the property, including ground floor windows.

The new wall would be constructed of bricks that closely match those used in the existing building, such that the wall would have cohesion with the character of the existing building.

The character of this part of the site currently offers little to the streetscene, being unfinished and open to view. The proposed wall would enable the area to be used as garden, making a more efficient use of this part of the site.

The provision of dedicated parking space for two cars in close proximity to the house is a practical solution which also improves highway safety (see later comments). Vehicles would not be prominent in the streetscene, as the new walling and the existing boundary hedgerow to the north would provide screening until one was passing the access point. Therefore, the proposal does not introduce unacceptable urbanisation of this rural location.

The northern end of the site has been set to nature habitat and the applicant has already witnessed many animals, birds, insects and mammals using the land.

The NPPF makes clear, at paragraph 130, that;

“Planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments:

a) will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;

b) are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;

c) are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities);

d) establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit;

e) optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development (including green and other public space) and support local facilities and transport networks; and

f) create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users⁴⁹; and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience”.

The proposal meets with criteria a), b), c) and f), with criteria d) and e) not directly applicable to the matter in hand. Coupled with the compliance with policies GP1, H16 and H18 that can be seen to occur, the proposal offers an appropriate response to securing and landscaping the site that meets with both the development plan and the NPPF.

Highway Safety

The proposal seeks to relocate the existing access and provide an improved setting for the access that is safer for all users.

The image below shows the access arrangement as currently exist. Due to the location of he existing building and the hedgerow at the neighbouring property beyond, there is obstructed visibility when leaving the parking area outside the property.



However, the current arrangement is better than the historic position, as demonstrated below.



The site layout plan shows that visibility splays can be delivered that will improve the situation. Improving visibility from the new access will enhance road safety whilst formalising the arrangements on the site.

The proposal thereby delivers benefits and would accord with the provisions of saved policy T10 which seeks to ensure that safe access is provided to all development. The proposal also accords with paragraph 110 of the NPPF that equally seeks to ensure that *“safe and suitable access to the site can be achieved for all users”*.

In light of the above, the proposal can be seen to accord with the development plan and the NPPF in respect of all of the key issues to be considered in this case.

As such, it is respectfully requested that the LPA grant planning permission in the terms requested.

The applicant looks forward to receiving the Council’s decision in due course.

Yours faithfully

Ben Elvin MSc MRTPI
Ben Elvin Planning Consultancy Limited.