

West Suffolk Council  
Planning Department,  
West Suffolk House,  
Western Way,  
Bury St Edmunds  
IP33 3YU

Our ref: E848.C1.Let01  
10<sup>th</sup> November 2021

Dear Sir / Madam,

**PLANNING APPLICATION FOR PROPOSED DEMOLITION OF EXISTING HOUSE AND ERECTION OF A REPLACEMENT HOUSE TOGETHER WITH A DOMESTIC OUTBUILDING**

**RATHKELTAIR LODGE, BARTON HILL, FORNHAM ST MARTIN**

This Planning application is for the demolition of the existing property, Rathkeltair Lodge, and its replacement with a new high-quality property which is a bespoke design. The proposed house is visually attractive with a layout which respects and utilises the sites features and will enhance the site and its presence in the landscape. The proposals also include a detached garage to the west of the main house which will be used by the applicant to store their personal classic car collection.

Rathkeltair Lodge is a large two storey house located on the northern side of Barton Hill in Fornham St Martin, set at the bottom of the hill on the eastern side of the B1106. It is a significant plot of just under 2 acres with well-defined site boundaries comprising a mix of mature evergreen and native trees. These trees are an important public feature in the landscape, some of which are subject to Tree Preservation Orders particularly on the western and southern highway boundaries.

It is proposed that the existing property is demolished and replaced with a new, sustainable house which is in approximately the same position as the existing house. The new property will utilise vertical

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space by building a large basement floor and providing second storey rooms in the roof to provide additional floor space. The new house will be constructed to the highest standards, utilising high levels of insulation and environmentally friendly heating technology.

When originally granted consent, Rathkeltair Lodge was perceived as being in open countryside and as a consequence the permission was restricted by condition to its occupation in connection with the farming of the surrounding associated land. At this time the area would have been much more rural in its character. In the intervening 66 years the areas to the immediate south and have all been significantly developed with housing and the site is now perceived visually as being part of a more built-up suburban housing area. This change in the site context was recognised in the variation of the original permission by the removal of the restrictive occupancy condition in 2018 which required the occupation of the house in conjunction with cultivation of the surrounding land.

Barton Hill is acknowledged as a sustainable location for new housing by local planning policy as it has been given a settlement boundary. Whilst the application site falls just outside of the settlement boundary, in visual terms it relates strongly to the neighbouring housing to the south and east. It is positioned within walking distance of the town of Bury St Edmunds which can provide the occupants with access to services without the need to rely wholly on private vehicles for transport.

Local planning policy permits the replacement of an existing house in the countryside where the proposed replacement house respects the scale and floor area of the existing house. Whilst the new property has a larger floor area than Rathkeltair Lodge, it is of a similar scale and form as the existing house. The new property utilises a single storey section to the rear of the house on the ground floor, rooms in the basement and in the roof space to provide additional floor space without increasing the scale of the property. In any case, it would be possible to increase the floor space of the existing property significantly using permitted development rights to create a substantial extension and second floor attic conversion, as a fall back alternative.

The creation of a large house such as this on the outskirts of Bury St Edmunds will provide a property for a high-income individuals which will benefit the local area economically. The construction of this property will have the equivalent economic impact as the construction of three smaller properties, and will likely be undertaken by a local building firm.

Overall, proposes the following;

1. Replacement of a poor-quality house with a high-quality property which is highly insulated and energy efficient;
2. Create a visually attractive, individually designed home which will have a positive impact on its immediate setting and the wider;
3. Create a new home which is proportionate to the plot and respects the existing landscape, including by preserving the TPO trees on the site;
4. Implement mitigation and ecological enhancement measures to ensure that there is biodiversity gain across the site;
5. Create a new access which is compliant with the requirements of the county highways authority; and
6. Provide a bespoke high-end house for a local family which will benefit the local area economically. The construction of the new property will also have a local economic benefit.

We enclose the following documents with this application:

1. Planning Portal Planning Application forms;
2. This Covering letter (Ref: E848.C1.Let01);
3. Planning Statement (Ref: E848.C1.Rep01a);
4. Existing Site Plan (Ref 781-1-001);
5. Proposed Site and Location Plan (781-1a-002 Rev A);
6. Proposed Ground Floor Plans (781-1b-003 Rev A);
7. Proposed Other Floor Plans (781-1b-004 Rev A);
8. Proposed Elevations (781-1a-005 Rev A);
9. Proposed Elevations (781-1a-006 Rev A);
10. Tree Survey, Arboricultural Impact Assessment, Preliminary Arboricultural Method Statement & Tree Protection Plan. (Ref 8889);
11. Arboricultural Impact Assessment Plan (Ref 8889-D-AIA);
12. Contaminated Land Questionnaire;
13. Envirocheck Report (Ref: 286847782\_1\_1, E848\_PO2); and
14. Ecology Report

We trust that this is sufficient for you to progress this application and we will be in touch when an officer has been allocated.

Yours sincerely



**PLANNER**  
EVOLUTION TOWN PLANNING LTD